

## Washington, DC Family Church Children's Choir sings at Afghanistan's Embassy

Achille Acolatse

July 1, 2019



On August 1, an ad hoc meeting took place at the Afghanistan Embassy in Washington, D.C. Fawzia Etemadi, a long-time Ambassador for Peace, invited the Washington, D.C. Family Church Children's Choir to perform during the event. This is the 100th year of Afghanistan independence from Britain, and the 100th year of cooperation with America.

The cultural ambassador and the military attaché both greeted the Washington, D.C. Family Church delegation. The Ambassador asked each of the children to introduce themselves and share about their heritage. He was very impressed that the group was so international, and thanked each one of them for coming.

The Children's Choir, led by Mrs. Rhonda Williams, sang a song written by Hamid Naweed in 2001 shortly after the 9/11 attacks. The children sang in the Afghan language, Dari, while being filmed and photographed. The song lyrics recognize the suffering of children in Afghanistan and seek to comfort them.

*My brothers and my sisters in Afghan  
So innocent within your war-torn land  
I long to draw you safely  
Across a bridge of peace  
Away from all your suffering until all battles cease  
If I could take away your fear and pain  
I'd build a world where harmony would reign  
All men would be as brothers; all women sisters true  
All children would be safe and loved – this I wish for you  
We are the buds to bloom  
Pure in the coming spring  
Within our hearts the seeds of friendship let us bring  
Though distant we are one – limbs on the tree of all humanity*

The children practiced the song so many times they knew the words by heart. All of the Afghans present were deeply moved, and two of them personally thanked each child afterwards.

Yuriko Arakawa, Children's Choir Director, shared about the heart of filial piety which was displayed on the children's t-shirts, and about the Peace Starts With Me initiative.

On September 7, a large celebration will take place in Virginia at Manassas Bull Run Park. Window of Peace Afghan Academy of Mustafa Mosque in Virginia and the embassy are working together to make this event possible. The Washington, D.C. Church Children's Choir will perform at the event.