



Interreligious Harmony Week Event with World Peace Blessing

Hamburg, Germany, February 2, 2018

By Ulrich Ganz

Our cultural festival in Hamburg drew about sixty participants, representing Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and other faiths from a wide variety of countries of origin such as Iran, Afghanistan, India, Japan and various African and European countries. This interreligious audience had been invited by two of our Ambassadors for Peace, Frank Busch and Thomas Maib.

After a delicious buffet, our guests enjoyed a cultural program, opened by two songs on the guitar by Reinhold Merta – one of which was, appropriately, "The Wedding Song" by Peter, Paul and Mary. Frank Busch then introduced a video highlighting the work of volunteer ministers worldwide, and another on the importance of communication, helpfulness, and good interpersonal relationships as fundamental prerequisites for peace.

The pianist Manu then set the atmosphere for the „World Peace Blessing“, ceremony by playing some Persian music. After some words of explanation about the meaning of the World Peace Blessing, Ulrich Ganz and his wife Hilke led the participating couples through this profound

ceremony, first held in 1960 by our True Parents. Since then many millions of couples world-wide have participated in this ceremony as part of a global family.

On this occasion there were thirteen couples, including some where one of the partners could not attend, who followed solemnly the various steps of the ceremony, demonstrated by Josef and Mikiko Eder as the lead couple.

Three cakes were then symbolically cut by Thomas and Ruth Maib, Frank and

Ulla Busch and Ulrich and Hilke Ganz, and the African band "FuFu" struck up a lively rhythm. A party spirit developed quite spontaneously, and all started to dance to the band's rendering of "Oh Happy Day".

In a spirit of deep connectedness as members of God's worldwide human family, going beyond the boundaries of skin color, nationality and religion, we spent time in discussion, and many expressed that they had been very moved by this successful event.



