

South London UPF and WFWP Christmas Celebration - December 14th, 2024

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Deputy Civic Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Richard Chatterjee, eloquently highlighted the various dimensions of the concept of "Peace", ranging from the absence of conflict to the balance between different areas of life, which can include freedom from anxiety as well as harmony in personal relationships. Addressing a 75-strong audience on the theme "Peace and Goodwill in our Community" at the annual Christmas Celebration organized by the South London chapters of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) and the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), the Deputy Civic Mayor lauded the exceptional work of the hosting organisations in bringing people together to give hope for the future. He then led the participants in a seasonal toast which represented God's blessing on families as the cornerstone of peace in our communities.



Mrs. Annerose Adams as MC warmly welcomed the diverse multi-cultural and multi-faith audience of all ages to a Peace Embassy (Haslemere Hall) in Thornton Heath that was beautifully adorned with Christmas decorations, and coordinated the varied programme with her lively charm and insight. An engaging slide presentation by Mrs. Martina Coombs, former European President of WFWP and current UPF trustee, showcased activities during the past year conducted by the hosting organisations, including contributions to national or international projects. Several events focussing on supporting special UN commemoration days, such as the International Day of Peace, were complemented by impactful initiatives exemplified by the Young Women's Speech Contest by WFWP and the Peace Road commemoration by UPF of the 30th anniversary of the Channel Tunnel.

Three individuals were appointed as Ambassadors for Peace in recognition of their dedicated service to their communities, and were presented with award certificates by the Deputy Civic Mayor. These included Mrs. Pat Dale, a volunteer for the Soroptimist International organization, Ms. Rosaleen Bloomfield, an inspirational holistic wellbeing practitioner, and Mr. Mohammed Mir, a committed Thornton Heath local volunteer, who have all offered their time and energy to help people on a practical level and improve the community environment.



A charity raffle, with a bountiful Christmas hamper as first prize, was held to raise funds for the construction of eco-friendly biodigester toilets for over 100 children aged 3-6 at Destiny Junior School in Uganda, a project of the International Relief Friendship Foundation (IRFF), which is a sister organization of UPF and WFWP. Delightful musical performances by Kai Gardiner, Brenda Garrick, and Rev. Professor June Boyce-Tillman accompanied the proceedings as an integral part of the festive celebration. The participants joined in an enthusiastic rendition of "Let There be Peace on Earth" in a resounding finale to the formal programme. Everyone then enjoyed Christmas-themed refreshments and warm fellowship with both new friends and old to round off a most memorable occasion.



