

WFWP Cascade, Oregon celebrates International Day of Peace

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The International Day of Peace ("Peace Day") is observed around the world each year on September 21st, and as it fell on a Saturday this year, activities were planned globally for the entire weekend. Established in 1981 by a unanimous United Nations resolution, Peace Day provides a shared date for all humanity to commit to peace above all differences and to contribute to building a culture of peace. The WFWP Cascade chapter (Oregon and southwest Washington), the Portland Family Peace Fellowship, Dances of Universal Peace, and others have been collaborating to celebrate this special day for more than 10 years now, and this year we held it on September 22nd.

The diverse program included a keynote speaker, meditation, prayers, a water ceremony for unity and a panel discussion with interfaith leaders, and it closed with a peace dance with the powerful message of caring for the earth.



Michael Sheehan, who, together with his wife Michelle, facilitates the monthly Dances of Universal Peace at the Portland Family Peace Fellowship, delivered the day's keynote: "Caring for the Earth Together." Togetherness is a key element to advance peace and protect the earth successfully.

Quoting from the Bible, Michael shared that "perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18). Achieving successful results requires unity of heart and faith along with consistent practice over time. When faced with barking dogs and other times of fear, Michael determined to chant "I'm holding the presence of love!" Eventually, the fear decreased and finally disappeared. Even the dogs finally stopped disturbing him. By practicing such love, we can better serve others through our good example and raise them step by step rather than judging them, as noted in Matthew 7:1. If we embrace others in heavenly love and even forgive our own shortcomings, we can gather, rather than scatter, other people and ourselves in our pursuit of peace and love.