

ACLCL's Special Faith Education Workshop underway at IPEC in Las Vegas

Luonne Rouse
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A special faith education workshop hosted by the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLCL) is currently underway in Las Vegas, bringing together religious leaders from across the country in the heart of Sin City. 'Chosen: Returning the Christian Foundation to God' is a week-long program where ACLCL members and clergy guests are diving deeper into the Divine Principle, the teachings of Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and his wife Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, co-founders of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) and affectionately known as True Parents.

"The atmosphere here is so incredible," said FFWPU Director of Education and Chosen Co-Director Rev. Mari Curry. "We're not a huge number, but our spirit fills up the space." The space of an intimate and inviting conference room at the International Peace Education Center (IPEC), where a powerful energy swept among more than 40 ministers, pastors, evangelists, and other esteemed guests. "It's hard to shake one of the clergy's hands and not feel God's energy just zap through you," said Rev. Curry. "I feel God's timing, man's timing, and everything is in alignment right now."

The workshop kicked off February 19 as several speakers took the stage. Guests listened to presentations in four sessions over the first two days, with intermittent Christian music, topic discussions, pair-share and breakout activities. "The Divine Principle really addresses the fact that the Christian faith is 'chosen' to spearhead the building of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth," said ACLCL National Co-President Rev. Mark Abernathy, pastor of Connect Point Church in Snellville, Georgia. Rev. Abernathy gave multiple presentations, drawing on corresponding elements of the Bible and the Divine Principle. "I hope that

participants will really grasp God's heart and His original Will for us to be His sons and daughters," said Rev. Abernathy, as he emphasized the importance of the workshop's content.

Although 7-day Divine Principle workshops are nothing new to ACLC members, organizers and speakers point out its imminent role in shaping greater understanding of our responsibility as human beings and co-creators of the world we live in. "God never established a religion; He established a relationship -- with people," said ACLC National Co-Chairman Emeritus and workshop speaker Archbishop George Augustus Stallings, Jr. "The purpose of religion is to be a bridge to connect us, not separate us."



The Chosen workshop was designed to enable speakers to create and present their own Divine Principle content -- including slides, stories, quotes, and more -- a first in its longstanding ACLC program history. "This aspect makes it extra special and inspiring, taking it to the next level than previous workshops," said Rev. Curry. "There's an increased value to this workshop because it's about ownership. The true mark of transformation, of victory and the prolific nature of True Parents' message, is if people can inherit it, digest it, and share it."

Workshop organizers said they aim to build broader, deeper relationships with ACLC pastors to become true partners who work together as they embark on True Parents' mission. "This whole process challenges us as Unificationists to really see how we actually portray things and also to really value what we have," said Rev. Curry. "We want to focus more on universal principles instead of doctrine. The Divine Principle isn't a replacement, but an enhancement of God's Word and the Bible."