

Religions Re-Unite for Sixth Annual Peace Walk in Dunedin

After being separated by the pandemic, the annual United Faiths Walk of Peace was attended by hundreds from different religions.

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, USA, November 4, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On Sunday, October 24, hundreds of people of different faiths such as: Islam, Christianity, Bahá'í, Judaism, Taoist Tai Chi, Scientology, Friends (Quakers) and more, came together at Our Lady of Lourdes in Dunedin, Florida for the annual [United Faiths Walk of Peace](#) event to promote greater understanding and respect between people of different religious beliefs.



On October 24, Rev. Becky Robbins-Penniman, founder of the UFWP and former pastor of a local Episcopal church led about 150 members of Christian churches, a Jewish synagogue, Muslim mosques, the Clearwater Baha'i Center the Church of Scientology and other faith groups.

According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, during fiscal year 2020, there were 2,404 charges filed for religious discrimination. In the last decade there were 37,773 charges filed.

The mission statement of the United Faiths Walk of Peace is to promote peace, justice, and mutual respect by bringing the faith communities of the region together for fellowship, dialogue and increased knowledge of each other's faith beliefs.

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The 2021 United Faiths Walk of Peace started at Our Lady of Lourdes Church and stopped halfway at the Al Salaam Mosque where children of the mosque auctioned off

handmade quilts, paintings and drawings in exchange for donations. Participants also got to bond and ask questions about each other's beliefs. “We are not really there to talk about our differences, but about our similarities,” said Hend Elhady, an organizer of the Peace Walk. “It felt

so good to be back together and have people visit our mosque.” Elhday said that her favorite part of the walk was the art auction, an idea she proposed herself, to raise funds for the Walk. “We had about ten Friends there this year,” said Mike Flanery, an organizer of the Peace Walk. “The homemade food at the mosque was really good and it was great to see all of the religions coming together again. It shows that we can have empathy and love for each other.”

Once participants got their refreshments and made their bids on the art pieces, toured the Al Salaam Mosque and took a group photo, they continued the Peace Walk to Josiah Cephas Weaver Park.

In the park they wrote prayers and messages of peace and unity on “prayer cloths” and tied them to strings in the park. At the park the event culminated with a performance by musician Tony Ballard, a story of peace by Katie Green of Clearwater Friends and an African Drum Circle led by Steven Turner, founder of Giving Tree Music.

Elhady and Flanery represented just two of about 20 different groups involved in the planning and organizing stages. Another organizer, Kamran Rouhani, of the Bahá’í said the walk has a definite contribution to the community: “The Peace Walk lays the foundation for us to build other things in the community. Peace is more important than anything else. Peace will not come by itself. It will only come with the desire of those who want it.”

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