

Message from the Chairperson for SOPP 2013

Welcome! It is with great joy and gratitude to all of you that we celebrate the ninth annual Symphony of Peace Prayers today.

Built upon a foundation of many decades of prayer, the first SOPP ceremony was held here at Fuji Sanctuary in 2005. That event, which brought together people of different faiths and cultures to pray with one voice for peace on earth, was like nothing that had been seen before. And now, the SOPP is celebrated in over 52 countries each year, and more than one million people around the world have taken part.

This Symphony of Peace Prayers ceremony, in which participants unite their voices in prayer, guided by prayer leaders from different faiths and spiritual traditions, began here in Japan, and compared with the world's population, the number of people who take part in the SOPP is still relatively small. However, for those of us who have joined in this symphony of prayers from a wonderful array of faiths and traditions, it has been a deeply moving and even life-changing experience.

As we join together in sounding out this solemn, beautiful, exalted symphony of prayers for peace, a selfless love and a desire for peace come flowing out from our very soul. The lofty consciousness of each participant envelops Fuji Sanctuary in a profound sense of oneness, and powerful prayers for peace are sent resonating through the world.

People from abroad who experienced this inexpressibly pure and joyful emotion felt a desire to celebrate the SOPP in their home countries, and in 2008, the first SOPP ceremonies took place outside Japan. Since then, SOPP events have taken place in all parts of the world. It is as if droplets of the light cultivated at Fuji Sanctuary have fallen at various points around the world and, from there, have reverberated outward in great expanding waves, allowing this Symphony of Peace Prayers to be played all across the globe. In addition, peace prayer and meditation gatherings are being held in many more locations worldwide on this day through the Global Link network. Together, these prayers course throughout the world, creating a grand symphony.

On February 14 of this year, we celebrated a historic day at the United Nations General Assembly Hall. A Symphony of Peace Prayers symphony was held as part of the special event, United for a Culture of Peace through Interfaith Harmony. To have religious prayers offered at the UN General Assembly

Hall, which is mainly a place for settling disputes, was unprecedented. On this day, however, the eleven prayers that reverberated through the hall wove a beautiful harmony and sent sacred currents wafting through the world.

From here on, I believe that the Symphony of Peace Prayers will expand on a grand scale, spreading to more and more corners of the globe. The number of people who know when and where the SOPP began may be few indeed, but regardless of whether others are aware of it, we will continue praying and resonating waves of light. In our prayers, we will send the message that the whole world is one.

In 2015, people with a high-dimensional consciousness working in a wide range of fields—religious and spiritual leaders, scientists, politicians, and others—will gather at Fuji Sanctuary from around the world. Together, they will establish a new charter for the rebirth of humanity's sacred, peace-loving consciousness.

Today's ceremony is a drop of exquisite light that will send expanding circles of brightness through the world. 2015 represents the time when this brightness will envelop the entire planet. We will continue sending out our peace-filled prayers in anticipation of this radiant moment to come.

May peace prevail on Earth.

Masami Saionji
Chairperson, Byakko Shinko Kai