



A President's Reflections "This Is Theology"

Tyler Hendricks

As Seminary President, I am all-too aware that "theology" gets a bad rap in the Unification Church. I was struck by a recent student reflection that articulated this most clearly, "Theology is not so important. Instead, I want deeper understanding of True Father's word." This is strange, because True Father's words are theology! John Locke defined theology as "containing the knowledge of God and his creatures, our duty to him and our fellow-creatures, and a view of our present and future state... the comprehension of all other knowledge, directed to its true end." (Alan Richardson, ed., *A Dictionary of Christian Theology*, 335) Theology should not be relegated to the dustbin of history. If God is alive, theology is alive. If we are thinking about God, we are doing theology. A deeper understanding of True Father's word is exactly a theological enterprise. The academic approach to theology includes study of what the greatest minds expressed about God. To consider them benighted and ourselves enlightened is like an adolescent judging their parents as ignorant. When we grow up, we are amazed at how much our parents learned.

A more positive note came from another new student, Gerhard Bessell, who shared that UTS is a "crowning effort, a time to evaluate my mission life." For individuals who have established a life-long foundation, a time of retreat, of reflection and recalibration, is invaluable. I understand via the grapevine that our Founder enjoined upon all church leaders over a certain age to come to UTS, and I think this is the reason why. Many of the new students value UTS' spirituality,

with Gillian's Labyrinth ministry and Hyung Jin Nim's Chun Hwa Dang retreats, with the cloistered library and sanctuaries, with the community prayer life. Another student wrote, "I have a regular and healthy lifestyle here." When I hear these things, I am encouraged that UTS is fulfilling its mission as place where theology lives. I just hope that our movement can realize that this is theology, and allow a few of the stepping-stone lives that got us here—people called Moses and David, Jeremiah and Isaiah, Paul and Peter, Athenasius and Augustine, Thomas and Occam, Luther and Calvin, Edwards and Wesley, Schleiermacher and Newman, Barth and the Niebuhrs—to participate.

This helps us appreciate the significance of discussions taking place between the church and seminary on how to develop our movement's next generation of leaders. It is time to insure that our True Parents' foundation, to which this generation has dedicated itself, will endure and increase. The recently established Young Oon Kim Scholarship Program will be a means to bring together candidates and scholarship support. The inaugural YOK event was held in Washington, DC, on October 16. At that event, the Unification community, led by its UTS alumni, pledged \$12,000 to scholarship a young person from their community. We are grateful to our Washington DC community and pledge that we will work with them to insure their investment will bear fruit.

The church and seminary are coming to grips with the task of implementing our proper relationship, with UTS responsive to the needs and wants of the church leaders and communities, and the church sensitive to the aerial of UTS. On November 12, following Dr. David Kim's 90th birthday, church and seminary leadership spent a very fruitful hour together discussing this. That evening I opened some accumulated mail and one item was the journal of the ATS, entitled *Theological Education*. Now, each issue of this journal has a focus, and this issue's focus is "Hearing the Voice of the Congregation in *Theological Education: Toward the Assessment and*

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A publisher's note

(E Cornerstone)

"Reverend Sun Myung Moon is the Founder of UTS. Several Cornerstone contributors recognize him with this title. Others may use the terms True Parents, True Father, or Father. These are various expressions of personal faith that Rev. Moon is fulfilling the mandate of Heaven to establish a Kingdom of Peace on Earth and that he and his wife are the first to establish a family centered on God's original ideal. The alumni/ae of UTS are a diverse group who relate to and understand Reverend Moon in diverse ways. We appreciate your consideration when reading the newsletter."

Additionally: the views and opinions expressed within do not necessarily represent those of UTS, UTS AA, its faculty, administration or its supporters. The UTS AA Newsletter seeks to promote robust, healthy, productive and authentic dialogue for the sake of honest self-reflection and responsible improvement"



UTS CORNERSTONE — A NEWSLETTER FOR UTS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

A President's Reflections - continued from page 1

Revision of MDiv Curriculum." You see, we are not alone in our struggle to create resonance between church and seminary. It is a live issue for all churches and all seminaries. I will share a few interesting words from the various articles.

"Contextual education requires a change in faculty culture, identity and vocation. It challenges faculty to walk out the seminary doors and see the congregation as a classroom setting. It requires a different style of teaching where the text to be interpreted is the congregation, people's faith experience, and the demands of ministerial responsibility. It requires different contractual arrangements to be formed with the school." (ix)

"Areas in which curriculum might be strengthened include, for example... greater attention to the more applied side of pastoral counseling, working with congregational conflict, evangelization, and mobilizing a congregation for greater mission involvement... greater attention to the theology and polity of other Christian groups, especially the more aggressively evangelical, decisional theology that many graduates see as the biggest 'competition' for their parishes... greater attention in the formal curriculum, campus activities and student 'advising' process to the student's spiritual nurture." (13)

"While graduates were globally aware, their interest or ability to bring the global to the congregation was sometimes lacking..." (13)

"Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary [initiated]... a church relations council, a gathering of clergy that met with the faculty twice a year for two years to talk about their interests in the seminary's ministry degree program curricula, especially regarding the development of spiritual leaders." (51)

"The ecology of institutions that previously recruited for ministry and supported congregations engaged in profound ministries has almost dissipated... [with] numerous congregations dropping below the size and strength necessary to support a clergy leader with a seminary degree... The contrast is stark: a number of congregations are growing in vitality as well as membership... Moreover, [this contrast is] placed within denominational theological and value conflicts." (58)

"...while [growing] congregations are infected with a market-driven consumerism... there are also many expressions of congregational vitality, demonstrations of that vitality in ecclesial practices, and spiritual fruits manifested in growth of several kinds, in faithful and effective service, and in effective spiritual leaders. From these vital congregations, the seminary should learn. (60)

"We ... assumed that the church is an essential stakeholder in the ministry degree program curricula and that direct conversation between faculty and other ecclesial stakeholders was a good way to proceed. We now think that the assumption regarding the church being a stakeholder in the seminary curriculum

still holds but that the method should change to focus on constructing and discussing shared, good problems." (61)

"...contextual approaches that place students in congregations early in their seminary education. These approaches represent a 'decentering' of theological education, moving away from a three-or four-year residential program in order to provide greater access, geographical diversity, and supervised congregational involvement. While incorporating certain aspects of these new approaches, other seminaries are committed to a vision of theological education that focuses upon the formation of pastoral leaders within a residential worshipping and learning community." (96)

"We have to ask how it is that there is such a divide between seminary teaching and congregational life, and perhaps especially the teaching and preaching of those who have been trained in biblical studies and theology but somehow keep the benefits of these studies to themselves. By contrast, many students of theology, engaged in some form of pastoral placement, complain that their seminary or college studies are not relevant to the practical demands of these ministries. There is a common perception that a great gulf divides the churches and their practical concerns from the academic interests of theological education." (101)

We come full circle from the voice of one seminary student saying that theology is not important to a discussion reverberating throughout the mainstream Christian community. Next month I will have the privilege of participating in a four-day meeting of some thirty-five seminary presidents from the United States and Canada. I will be listening closely. If my past experience at such meetings is a trustworthy indicator, the concerns I will hear from these leaders will coincide with those that the Unification seminary and church are facing. My intention is to break down the boundaries and humbly give and take with my peers. I'm looking forward to it.





International Development. UTS Development

Robin Graham

There are two areas of my work where the concept of development is used. I work for UTS as the Director of Alumni Relations and Development and I also work for the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO) leading an international development project, called Play Soccer Make Peace.

Definitions of development include the terms improvement, expansion, advancement and growth. In the world of international development the issue is framed within an economic equation. The traditional economic argument has been that the key way to improve living standards is through an increase in capital investment. This has been the basic strategy pursued by the major "developed" economies in their aid to the "developing" countries for over half a century. The traditional economic model teaches that with no other variables, capital investment will stimulate growth. However, in spite of vast inflows of capital investment many developing countries are worse off today than they were in the 1960's.

Given those dismal statistics, there is now a growing concern that the economic equation is not infallible. A simple logic of life suggests that if all men can live in peace, then prosperity will follow. But there continues to be a lack of capacity to live at that level of trust and relationship. Acknowledging the limitations of the traditional model, there is a growing interest to include an appreciation of cultural factors in the development process. The case suggests that cultural values, behaviors and relationships, can trump the mechanistic formula of the traditional economic model. Successful growth seems to have taken place where the culture was fed by solid values which were then practiced. Prof. Robert H. Nelson of U. Maryland has said "Religion seemed to play an important practical role in an economic system by providing the normative foundations that make economic interactions workable. A sound market also requires honesty and concern for the public good. How can people be both self-interested and altruistic? Which ethics do we teach-to work for one's own interest or for society? Most societies have not resolved this tension satisfactorily, and this has resulted in major economic problems in many parts of the world, including Russia, most of Africa, and much of the Islamic world. And one reason that these societies have not been able to resolve this tension is that they lack an ethical or theological framework that can encompass a modern market economy." (*Nelson: Religion, Economics and the Market Paradox.* <http://www.acton.org>)

The key point is that culture is a variable and plays a powerful role as a driver for economic development. "If culture is central to economic progress... to stimulate greater progress, then we have to talk about changing the culture..." (Nelson). Religion and culture are increasingly being seen as essential to real change.

There is a lesson to be learned. At UTS, development has tended to focus on the capital input approach, not unlike the solution offered in the traditional international development model. The "build it and they will come" theory may work in the movies and the cornfields of Iowa. The real world demands more than a fairy story ending. What brings the crowd back night after night is not the stadium, but the game played in the stadium. Sport is organic and involves team spirit and teamwork. The supporters feel it, enjoy it, and keep coming back. What can make alumni and friends keep coming back to support UTS?

In college and higher education, the term development connotes fund-raising which supports the institutional mission e.g. capital improvements, scholarships, and program development. This funding might come from foundations, corporations, individuals and alumni. Seeking to raise funds places UTS within a huge market of funding opportunities, on local, national and international levels, and to a multitude of charities. People are called to respond to a variety of needs.

But in the midst of all those giving opportunities, why give to UTS? Of course the seller may believe she has the most beautiful product in the world, but if the consumer is not buying, then there is no business relationship. In development, as in business, there needs to be a strong emphasis on the value received by the customer, the client, the donor. For some people the fact that Rev Moon has given a direction may be enough to persuade them to support UTS. However, these mandates will not persuade all people, all of the time. Historically UTS has had more in common with a command economy than a market economy. A command economy is one similar to those found in communist and totalitarian societies, where supply and demand have little to do with each other. In a market economy, demand drives supply and depends on the value received. In the UTS case, financial inputs through fees, scholarships and donations are crucial, but do not solely determine successful outcomes. The command economy system of top-down directives has shown that it cannot be sustained.

Is UTS better off today than it was 30 years ago? Professor Nelson's comment: ".....an ethical or theological framework that can encompass a modern market economy" seems particularly relevant to the UTS context. UTS does have an ethical and theological theory, which provides a blueprint, and there is an opportunity to build a social framework which is consistent and sustainable. The challenge is to create an exemplary and dynamic culture of heart, and that culture of heart cannot be mandated, but grows through teamwork and relationship. Such a UTS culture, balanced with good financial inputs can "encompass" the educational market it seeks to serve. A good and thriving culture is essential for the development of a vibrant economy in developing countries, and a good and thriving culture is a powerful driver for the success of UTS.

The student seeks a valuable education which gives the graduate the capacity and tools to be successful in their career or vocation. Supporters and donors who provide student

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UTS Development

scholarships also want to see evidence of value: to see a positive influence through the life, friendships and work of the graduates. This win-win opportunity comes together in the mission statement of UTS Development is:

"To harness the resources needed to support UTS education, maintaining faith, spiritual growth and effective stewardship at the core of development and fund raising".

This mission statement helps guide UTS to emphasize and link fund raising with the maintenance of faith, the growth of spirituality and the efficient and responsible use of resources. The concentration is not on the contribution alone, but rather the wise use of resources and the implicit value transaction which is taking place when a giver gives. The giver's voice and heart need to be heard and felt. There is work to be done to make those values important and consistent within the UTS development process. In Alumni Relations, the Annual Fund is now organized to be a measure of success, not a goal in and of itself. When money is the goal, then there can be a tendency to overlook the relationships, the value, and the culture. The development process is being reorganized to see the money received is the result of successful relationship, added value, and responsiveness to the spiritual needs of the givers.

Many alumni have voiced an interest in leaving a legacy of their life's achievement. UTS Development aims to help alumni secure that legacy and to ensure that the alumni voice is heard through the pages of E Cornerstone, and at the UTS Board of Trustees level. The overall vision of UTS Development is committed to an active partnership with the alumni and friends of UTS:

"God is abundant. He created the world and remains faithful. In a reciprocal expression of faith and love, the alumni and friends of UTS give of their time, talents and treasure to reveal the Kingdom of Peace on earth".

The Kingdom of Peace is not merely a certification, or a ceremony. It is a way of life. As such it is exemplified in the art of giving and caring for people. It involves maintenance of responsible activities. It involves good and constant ethics. It is a kingdom of prosperity and abundance; an abundance that begins in the heart and spirit, but which promises to be manifest in the physical too.

"If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost: that is where they should be. Now put foundations under them."

Henry David Thoreau

Martin Luther King Day

On January 16, 2006, United States citizens will celebrate a national holiday commemorating the life and achievements of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Rarely do we find men who willingly engage in hard, solid thinking. There is an almost universal quest for easy answers and half-baked solutions. Nothing pains some people more than having to think." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

"If we do not learn to live together as friends, we will die apart as fools."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

"I am coming to feel that the people of ill will have used time much more effectively than the people of good will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people. We must come to see that human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use time creatively, and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right."

(Martin Luther King, Jr., writing from a Birmingham jail)



"Idealism increases in direct proportion to one's distance from the problem."

- John Galsworthy



UTS CORNERSTONE – A NEWSLETTER FOR UTS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

Building a Stronger Leadership Engine for God

Even if we understood what that might mean, can we and will we do it?

Don Sardella

First and foremost, we are challenged to build a Culture of Heart - this article is about strengthening ourselves and the leadership development process for the Kingdom.

Have you noticed that there is a dearth of compassionate, highly effective God-centered leadership in today's world? If not us, who? If not now, when? If not here, where?

In addition to our spiritual foundation and character development work, I believe God's needs us to be better trained in the fundamentals of effective leadership. I especially think God needs us to equip those who are to follow us, regardless of their future mission or calling. What we have done so far has certainly been necessary - my question is, has it also been sufficient?

For years, True Father's leadership training basics (paraphrased as best as I can remember) have included versions of the following:

- **Teaching Principle**
- **Diplomacy and human relationship skills**
- **Entrepreneurship and financial foundations**

If you will, let me ask - as a community of faith, how do you think we are doing so far?

I applaud the growing number of Unificationists who are participating in the Minister Leadership Development Program being offered for free by Dr. Dean Radtke (www.ministryinstitute.org). After I participated for the second time a few weeks ago, I feel inspired to partner with him long-term. Given his sincere heart for God and higher end skill sets to train effective leaders for ministry, I can see what he is working to do - to create a Leadership Engine for God. And he plans to invest the balance of his life doing so until "God calls him home". Given that he is probably only in his mid '60's and is well-balanced and healthy, I envision that he has a good run ahead of him.

Dr Radtke is also directly linked to the emerging "Graduate School of Ministry Management" (GSMM), (<http://www.gsmm.org/>) which involves leading ministries collaborating with Christian business and market leaders. Its goal is to address the vacuum of highly skilled leaders needed to successfully address and turnaround today's eroding moral conditions. I recently had lunch with Tom Ryan, their Chief Financial Officer and VP Academics, to better understand their intent. I think we need a version of this for UTS and that we can learn from these folks. I invite and challenge you to briefly visit their website and see this for yourself.

Now, what is a Leadership Engine?? From the world of business consultants, Noel Tichy explains in his book, *The Leadership Engine: How Winning Companies Build Leaders at Every*

Level, that "good leaders who nurture the development of other leaders at all levels of the organization."

In his next major book, *The Cycle of Leadership : How Great Leaders Teach Their Companies to Win*, Tichy shows how great companies and their leaders spend a great portion of their time giving their learnings to others, sharing best practices, and how they in turn learn and receive ideas from the people they are teaching.

Another great leadership book I recommend is "Organizing Genius: The Secrets of Creative Collaboration" by Patricia Ward Biederman, Warren G. Bennis. They describe the leadership engine in terms of the "collaborative advantage" and the assembling of powerful teams.

One of my favorite leadership engine books is *Leaders Who Make a Difference : Essential Strategies for Meeting the Nonprofit Challenge* by Burt Nanus and Stephen M. Dobbs. They outline how an effective leader fills the roles of visionary, strategist, change agent, coach, politician, and campaigner.

Finally, I recommend *Managing the Non-Profit Organization: Principles and Practices*. This book emphasizes the needed expertise for service sector leaders.

Along with Dr Radtke's work and the emerging program at the Graduate School of Ministry Management, these books represent cutting edge ideas to help strengthen our leadership engine process within UTS. I believe God is guiding us in this direction.

To this end, I can see that UTS is already working to strengthen the curriculum for these areas and how it can help students develop their capabilities to effectively lead and serve. As alumni & friends, maybe we can help with field internships and mentoring programs.

In that light, we can learn a lot about Leadership Engines from the accomplishments of the former CEO of General Electric (GE), Jack Welch. During his 20 years at the helm, GE achieved a 55 fold increase in market value of company, from \$1billion to \$45 billion. If we could apply his core ideas at UTS to help substantiate the Heavenly Kingdom of True Love, where might we all be in 20 years?

Mr. Welch built a world class training center, where he established leadership development as a core competence for all his people, while maintaining a state of the art learning organization. This led to incredible productivity, quality customer service, efficient management systems and great profitability. Welch was brilliant as a strategist because he coupled his highly energized learning attitude with a voracious appetite for facing reality and addressing it head on.

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Mr. Welch groomed his people as if everyone would become Chief Executive Officers and remained in virtually continuous communication. While systematically raising their standards and taking the organization to higher and higher levels, he created the largest leadership development platform in the world, eventually rivaling the US Military. Think we can do a version of this? Can we be the "West Point" for God's Providence? Will we?

At UTS and in the field, I believe we need to create a Leadership Engine for God. We need a Providential version of GE, creating hundred's of top caliber Western based leaders, especially amongst our 2nd and 3rd Generation Blessed Families and contacts.

A bit lofty, you might say? Next to impossible, given our current realities? Maybe - and yet, we can certainly learn from world business systems and from other successful ministries and make it happen better for God. We can collaborate with others more.

We have all heard the idea (from the classic success author Napoleon Hill) -

"If you can conceive it and believe it, you can achieve it"

I am seriously interested to make this happen - it is a critical for our Providential future.

For me, the litmus test of our collective success is how effectively UTS can help to develop loving, compassionate, empathetic, highly effective leaders. I believe we must focus on this as a priority. Dr Radtke's work is serving as a catalyst to cause me to raise my standards. I feel compelled to create a much more effective environment for God's Providence and our members. I will whole-heartedly do whatever it takes to make this happen in the US. As far as I can tell, the best place to Build a Stronger Leadership Engine for God at this time in the United States? The Unification Theological Seminary.



Some suggested next steps and action items for us all to consider?

Make myself a leadership engine (or locomotive, as True Father used to say) - continuously read, build energy and learn - choose a good book to study, now.

Create a Leadership Development Club - with an e mail list and conference calls

Help a scholarship fund, be a mentor or offer an internship for a UTS student.

Help strengthen UTS, including a distance learning or self-paced education track

Special thanks to the dozens of people who offered helpful feedback for this article.

Til the next time, see you around our "Global Campus". With my best love and respect,

Don Sardella, UTS '80
don@leadfromwithin.com



WANGO Conference in Dominican Republic

The World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO) www.wango.org

held its annual conference in the Dominican Republic. I was invited to give a presentation on Play Soccer Make Peace, a project of WANGO which I organize. It was only on the way back to New York that I reflected upon the many UTS alumni that I happened to see at this conference.

Taj Hamad (UTS'86) is Secretary General of WANGO, Dr Frederick Swarts (UTS'82) is Assistant Secretary General of WANGO, and Jean Rondon (UTS'82) is Director of Publications for WANGO. Dr. Kathy Winings (UTS'87) V-P of the Board of International Relief and Friendship Foundation, serves on the International Council of WANGO, as does Cesar Regalado (UTS'81) General Director, Tiempos del Mundo D.R.

Dr Thomas Ward (UTS'81) Dean of the International College, Bridgeport University, was elected to the WANGO International Council at this year's annual general meeting.

Dr. Charles T. Phillips (UTS'92) International President of Service for Peace, gave presentations on non-profit management and networking.

Conference attendees included Mel Haft (UTS'79) VP American Forum for Jewish-Christian Cooperation; Gareth Davies (UTS'91) Regional Director, Service for Peace; Eric Olsen (UTS'85) Managing Editor, World and I; and Gordon Anderson (UTS'78) Secretary General, Professors World Peace Academy.

These alumni have all made great contributions in each of their fields.

Robin Graham (UTS'80)



UTS CORNERSTONE – A NEWSLETTER FOR UTS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

Inaugural Meeting of the Barrytown Nature Club



November 30 marked the inauguration of the Barrytown Nature Club. It was a humble, but exciting beginning to a new and hopefully longlasting relationship between UTS and the local community.

Flyers were given to the residents of the Barrytown hamlet, consisting of around 50 houses, last week, inviting our friends and neighbors to join the Nature Club and share an enjoyment of the outdoors and social activities together with UTS staff, professors and students.

5 local residents came to the club's first meeting, along with Alumni Assistant Director Gillian Corcoran, Labyrinth founder; Howie Callies, UTS groundskeeper; Jeff Olsen, resident woodsman and his wife LeeAnn; and Admissions Director Henry Christopher, founder of the club and his wife and daughter Enryka.

Officers were elected, dues set, and monthly meetings scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month.

Proposed activities of the club include: starting a community garden on campus; hiking, bird watching, kite flying, picnics, boating on the Tivoli Bay, and community service projects.

The Nature Club is an offshoot of President Tyler Hendrick's efforts to build strong community relations by serving our neighbors and the town of Red Hook. It developed from our involvement in the New York state's Hudson River Greenway Trail project, in which UTS is working with local, county and state officials to allow Father's Trail, along the Tivoli Bay and Hudson River, to become an important segment of a continuous trail from Albany to New York





UTS CORNERSTONE – A NEWSLETTER FOR UTS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

FOLLOWING THE CALL, STEP BY STEP

by Gillian Corcoran (UTS'85)

It was 3 years ago, during a retreat at the Dominican Sisters retreat center in Saugerties, (if you throw a stone across the Hudson River from UTS it would pretty much land there), that I heard God's calling to build a labyrinth at UTS. I had been walking labyrinths (ancient designs on the ground which serve as spiritual tools for transformation) in prayer and meditation for about a year, and was learning how to be still inside and really listen to the voice of God. Well, I heard the voice loud and clear asking me to multiply the work of labyrinths, beginning with the building of one at UTS.

Supportive from the start, Dr. Hendricks agreed to the use of a site in a field near the old greenhouse I found by dowsing. My husband, Chris (UTS '86), applied the sacred design on the ground with 400 lbs of lime, etching the 11 concentric circles in the grass, which span 80 feet in diameter. Over the course of the year we collected 2,500 bricks and laid them over the lines, creating a permanent design.

We are fortunate to live in my husband's hometown. He was christened in Barrytown and his grandparents are buried there. Growing up in Rhinebeck, the Hudson Valley is his kingdom, with UTS as a jewel in the crown. We realized that by offering labyrinth walks to the public, we would open up the glorious grounds of UTS to the local community, providing a way for many to come and experience God in an embracing and non-threatening way. And come they have, allowing us to connect in a deeply heartistic way with new friends, many from our area, and some from as far as New York city and New Jersey who come to walk this labyrinth as they feel it is so special.

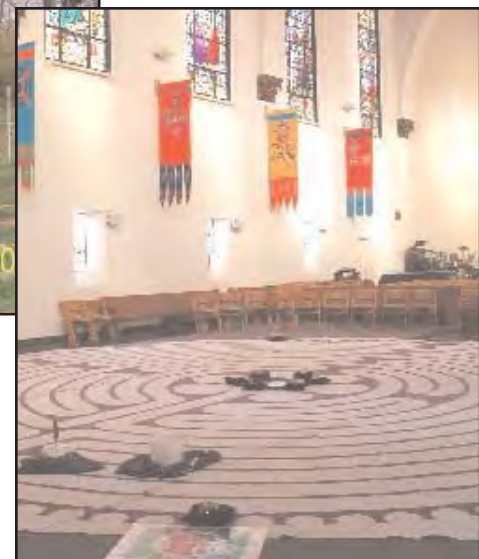
Our first consistent scheduled events were monthly candlelight labyrinth walks held the evening of the full moon. The soft glow of candles outlining the path combined with the mysterious moonlight and the flickering flame of tiki torches, creates a deeply reflective atmosphere conducive to communion with the spiritual world and God. Following the walk participants can sit around a camp fire and share experiences, an occasional song and toasted marshmallows.

As well as the monthly full moon walks, we have gradually added other communal walks on significant days of the year, such as September 11th, the solstices and equinoxes, and Earth Day. However, the labyrinth is open every day to the public from sunrise to sunset, and rarely a day goes by when someone isn't walking its meandering paths.

So, what's so special about labyrinths? Why do people walk them instead of walking around the block? Labyrinths are universal spiritual tools which bring focus and clarity to our thoughts. People are drawn by the incredible sense of inner peace and well-being walking one brings. They are often described as a spiritual pilgrimage, a centering prayer or a walking meditation. Labyrinths are not mazes. The one path of a labyrinth leads to the center and back out again. Walkers can relax, trusting the path, journeying inward to their own centers as they move to the center of the design. The labyrinth acts as a mirror. All that happens within its sacred space can be seen as a metaphor for our life's journey, reflecting where we are at this moment in time, allowing us to see ourselves and our life's patterns with clearer eyes and often with new perspectives.

People walk labyrinths to find peace, express gratitude, solve a problem, de-stress, work on a problematic relationship, unblock creative energies, and to find their purpose, calling or heartsong.

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Labyrinths help in the forgiving, releasing and letting go process, providing comfort to the grieving and balm to the soul. Some of their effect can be explained by the threefold process of walking a labyrinth.

The first phase, journeying inward (purgation), is a time for letting go, releasing/purging, breathing deeply and being present in the moment. Everyone sets their own pace. Some coordinate each step with their breath as in a Buddhist meditative tradition. Children usually race along the path to the center, eager to be the first to arrive. Yet I've also seen a child, arms laden with lilacs- a gift she brought for the center - walking slowly in thoughtful procession, in preparation for her love offering. I have been known to charge straight to the center, beckoned by the loving embrace of God waiting to bathe me in love and light. I've shared such intimate moments of time beyond time with God in this sacred circle.

This first stage of the walk allows hearts and minds to clear and open in preparation for being in the center, the second stage, which is one of "illumination." Here there is time to listen, to receive whatever is there to be received, to be in touch with the intuitive self, to bask in the comfort and warmth of the labyrinth's embrace. This is often a time to linger until one feels ready to begin the third stage, that of the outward journey, the stage of union.

The integrating effects of the labyrinth are felt as the walker wends their way back out of the labyrinth, following the same path as the journey in. The insights received in the center are absorbed so that we often leave the labyrinth empowered to take action, able to offer more to our world. This three-fold process occurs even when people, unaware of it, step into the labyrinth for the first time. However, the effectiveness of the labyrinth is increased cumulatively the more it is walked.

Dr. Lauren Artress, author of "Walking A Sacred Path" and one of the main forces behind the development of the labyrinth movement in the past ten years, states that "the labyrinth is an archetype, a divine imprint, found in all religious traditions in various forms around the world. ...we are rediscovering a long-forgotten mystical tradition that is insisting to be reborn."

A divine imprint - herein lies another aspect of the workings of labyrinths. The spiral is the path of consciousness - the Phi Ratio - the Fibonacci Spiral of consciousness that forms the architectural constructs and blueprints of our reality through the patterns of Sacred Geometry found throughout nature. Examples include the proportions of the human body and the DNA within it, the pattern and rate of growth of sunflower seeds, pinecones, nautilus shells, and the galaxies, to name a few. Each new number in this numerical sequence, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89 etc is calculated by adding the sum of the two preceding numbers, and

the ratios of any two adjacent numbers is the golden mean or 1.618.

Thus, due to its design, as a labyrinth is walked our bodies are aligning with this mathematical principle, the building block of creation, and a balancing effect takes place between our minds and bodies and also between the right and left side of our brains. The more we walk, the more in tune or "in harmony" we become with ourselves, with nature and the universe. We find the still, small voice within and are able to integrate what we hear into our lives.

I was sitting around a dining room table with Father in 2000 when I heard him state that he wanted UTS to become the Chung Pyung of the West. Although that is another (fascinating) discussion, I believe that God wants a labyrinth at UTS as part of the development of these beautiful grounds into a spiritual retreat center, as well as a way for us to reach and serve, and touch the hearts of our neighboring community. Participants of the Chun Hwa Dang retreats offered by Hyun Jin Nim and retreats offered by the Westrock community have utilized the labyrinth with great benefit. I invite you to UTS to see how it impacts you. If you are far distant from UTS, I encourage you to find a labyrinth near you (worldwide labyrinth locator at: <http://wwll.veriditas.labyrinthociety.org/>) and experience one for yourself.

Gillian Corcoran, a Veriditas certified labyrinth facilitator and member of The Labyrinth Society, designs and builds labyrinths as well as conducting workshops and retreats utilizing labyrinths. She can be reached at: walk4peace@earthlink.net

There is a wealth of information on numerous labyrinth websites. Some of my favorites are:

<http://www.labyrinthociety.org>
<http://www.veriditas.net>
<http://www.labyrinth-enterprises.com>
<http://www.lakesidelabyrinths.org>
<http://www.labyrinthos.net>
<http://www.paxworks.com>
<http://www.pathsofpeace.com>
<http://wwll.veriditas.labyrinthociety.org>

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