

Path of the Lord Made Straight by 172 Christian Ministers

Tossa Cromwell

September 29, 2011



Three ministers receive registration certificates, including Bishop Dennis Lyon, Pastor of the Gospel Missionary Baptist Church in Kentucky (center) and Rev. Dr. Edgar James Moss, ACLC Co-Chair in Connecticut.

With little more than two-weeks' notice, 172 ministers of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) from many denominations and faiths answered the call of True Parents to set aside everything on their schedule between Sept. 9 and Sept. 24, 2011 in order to join a historic tour of Korea. Most have been members of ACLC and knew that our movement has a penchant for calling events with a short fuse. Yet it was obvious to all that this was a serious and important mission.

They had been called to make history, and they knew it. They were told beforehand that True Father had called on 172 ministers, 43 each from the North, South, East and West quadrants of the United States, to come to Korea representing America, Christendom and the entire world, with the purpose of registering in God's Kingdom and testifying that God had anointed Father Moon. Going to Korea represented an offering of gratitude in return for everything True Parents have done for America and the world. In a strategic sense, the clergy, who understand and support Father Moon's historic mission from as many as 77 different religious denominations were united through a singular cause. By joining into and becoming part of a Korean family and exchanging names gave a powerful testimony to the Korean people of the fruits of Father Moon's work to remove all barriers between race and denomination and bring them all into oneness. Through proclaiming that Korea is God's Homeland and Hometown, they affirmed that God had chosen this nation to be the base for the Kingdom of God and the family culture that honors elders and has fidelity and faithfulness in every aspect of the family – from marriage to the filial piety of children to their parents.

As has been reported in previous articles on familyfed.org, the ministers were part of many incredible activities in Korea. In this article, an overview of the ministers' trip will be provided, with a focus on aspects of the trip that have not yet been reported. Throughout the two weeks that the ministers toured Korea, True Parents spent much time speaking to them and guiding them directly. On Sept. 10, 2011, the very night of the ministers' arrival, True Parents came to welcome the ministers to Korea. Though it was somewhat late at night (after 9 p.m.), True Father read and explained a recent Cosmic-Declaration speech to the ministers. He went through the entire speech and evaluated the ministers who had come to see if they were worthy of the task he had set them to.

Ministers Receive True Father's Teachings



Rev. Marsha Dompreh (left) and Rev. Jesse Dompreh (right), Co-Pastor and Senior Pastor of the Powerhouse Fellowship AME Church, respectively.

The next morning, the ministers got on buses for a ten-hour drive down to Yeosu, a city on the southern coast of the Korean peninsula. From there, they took ferries to Geomun Island, about two hours away from the coast, to attend the dedication ceremony of the Palace of Heavenly Righteousness (Ocean Cheon Jeong Gung). This was another Palace of Heavenly Righteousness to be dedicated, after the first palace in Cheong Pyeong which was dedicated on June 13, 2006. The ministers had to endure long bus rides through heavy traffic, boat rides and a hot sun on the day of the dedication ceremony before they could return to Cheong Pyeong. True Parents also allowed for the ministers to go fishing.

After returning to Cheong Pyeong, the ministers were given another treat of hearing from True Father, who spoke to them from 5 a.m. to around 8:30 a.m. on the morning of the Sept. 14, 2011. True Father started by explaining John 3:16-19 and giving internal guidance about Jesus' course. Later, during the meeting, Father emphasized that all the ministers who haven't yet done so should receive the Blessing from True Parents and walk the path of indemnity. True Father gave direction to Rev. Sun Jo Hwang to guide all the Korean people through the same process as soon as possible.



Ministers of different faiths and educational backgrounds embrace after receiving honorary Korean surnames.

On the same day that True Parents spoke to them, and continued later on the 19th, 20th and 21st, the ministers were given four days' worth of Original Substance of the Divine Principle (OSDP) education. The lecturer of what used to be known as Original Divine Principle (ODP) workshops, Rev. Jeong Ok Eu, told the participants that "Original Substance of the Divine Principle" is a better translation of the Korean

title for the workshops. OSDP represents a summary of True Father's teachings about the Original Being (God), the Principles of Creation and Principles of Restoration.

On Sept. 15, 2011, the ministers travelled to Seoul to attend the unveiling of statues honoring the unity of all the faith traditions (Jesus, Mohammed, Confucius and Buddha) at the Cheon Bok Gung (Palace of Heavenly Blessings), which is also the church where Rev. Hyung Jin Moon, the international president of the Unification Church, serves as pastor.

In the afternoon, the ministers were given an opportunity to shop in Itaewon, a shopping district in Seoul.

True Parents Bestow Korean Surnames upon Clergy



Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Mrs. Moon (left) award a registration certificate to Rev. Jorg Heller, who was made an honorary member of Korea's Moon Clan.

On Sept. 16, 2011, a grand ceremony for bestowal of Korean surnames was held. At 9 a.m., all 172 ministers participated in a dress rehearsal of the ceremony in which they practiced entering the hall together with 172 Korean clan representatives. When the main ceremony started at 10:30 a.m., True Parents entered first and received a bow from all the participants. True Parents sat at the front of the stage while fourteen groups of twelve pairs of American clergy and Korean clan representatives entered to bow to True Parents. The clergy had each already been assigned a Korean surname, so they entered together with a representative of the clan to which the surname belonged. After entering in double file, they changed to single file and faced True Parents to offer a bow.

During this ceremony, International President Hyung Jin Moon spoke to the ministers, clan representatives and more than 2000 people who had filled the Cheongshim Youth Training Center gymnasium. Twelve representative ministers went on stage to receive certificates of Korean-surname bequeathal and registration into Cheon Il Guk from True Parents. Registration in this context refers to having one's name entered in a family register. There was a signing of "sisterhood ceremony" certificates, signifying a joining of each American minister and Korean clan representative, followed by a Registration Pledge by all the ministers to True Parents. Rev. Sun Jo Hwang, the master of ceremonies, explained that this ceremony signified a method for all of humankind to become one family as it became part of the Korean family register.

After receiving Korean surnames and creating bonds with Korean clan representatives, the ministers went to the Heavenly Palace of Righteousness to take a group picture with True Parents and have a short tour of one of the exhibition rooms. In the evening, all clergy were split up into seventeen different groups and sent to seventeen major cities throughout Korea. During the next few days, they met local-government elected officials, spoke to Ambassadors For Peace (religious allies of Unificationism), and attended

Unification Church services. The ministers reported warm receptions and Rev. Hwang later testified that the ministers' visits deeply moved the hearts of Korean church members and Ambassadors For Peace.

Ministers Rally for Korea's Unification at DMZ



Dr. Minha Kim, the chairman of the Ambassadors For Peace prayed for the peaceful unification of Korea.

On Sept. 22, 2011, the clergy and Unificationist leaders attached hand-written messages of peace to the “Bridge of Freedom” over the De-Militarized Zone (DMZ) separating North and South Korea. Amongst the several speakers at the site was Dr. Minha Kim, former president of Joong Ang University and the Korean Federation of Teachers Association and current chairman of the Ambassadors For Peace Association in Korea, who prayed “for the settlement of peace and a peaceful unification of Korea.” He also asked all Ambassadors for Peace to participate in this holy peace movement, reminding Rev. Moon's great achievement when he met the late dictator Kim Il Sung in North Korea in 1991, and congratulated ACLC for the peace- and unification-promoting event. This event was especially meaningful since the ministers had received Korean surnames and had become members of Korean clans.

After having received OSDP education, the ministers went to the palace one last time to receive True Parents' words. True Father said that he was sorry to see the ministers go and expressed that he would like the ministers to stay in Korea longer. A group of twelve ministers stayed in Korea for a few extra days in response to True Father's expressed desires.