



Marriage Blessing Movement & Upcoming Blessing Ceremony on June 27

Michael Balcomb and Crescentia DeGoede
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Dear Blessed Family Members,

BFM Memo: Marriage Blessing Movement & Upcoming Blessing Ceremony on June 27

This past Foundation Day in her address True Mother spoke the following words:

"The Marriage Blessing will hold no meaning if you allow your blessing to extend only to your family, while living in this age of True Parents. Do you understand? Blessed families must fulfill their responsibility. The Marriage Blessing should not remain within or end up as a blessing that extends only to your family. You must reveal to your neighbors, your tribe, and your nation that True Parents are the true owners." ~ True Mother

In response to our True Mother's guidance, we are pleased to announce that the Blessing and Family Ministry is initiating a nationwide Marriage Blessing Movement.

The purpose of the Marriage Blessing Movement is to extend the grace of the Blessing to more couples and families throughout America, and multiple the numbers of Blessed Central Families nationwide. It aims to support each Blessed Central Family in reaching the goal of Blessing 430 couples in their tribe. Through the Blessing, couples can be engrafted unto God's lineage, and their marriages can be strengthened and infused with God's love and energy.

"The Blessing means we can inherit a relationship with True Parents." ~True Father

Vision and Plan for the Marriage Blessing Movement

True Mother has given permission for Blessing Ceremonies to be held in communities across the U.S. once every 3-4 months on a predetermined date. The ceremonies will be presided over by approved Blessing officiators representing True Parents. An international Blessing Ceremony will still be held at Foundation Day each year, which the U.S. will take part in. In addition to this, we will hold Blessing Ceremonies in the U.S. on Saturday, June 27, 2015 and Saturday, October 3, 2015. Communities will be provided with a ceremony program and guidelines, as well as, a video from a previous Blessing. Each community / district is encouraged to consider organizing a Blessing Ceremony for one or more of the following dates:

June 27, 2015 = Communities across the U.S. only

October 3, 2015 = Communities across the U.S. only

February 2016 = In Korea and communities across the U.S. on Foundation Day

All couples that have not yet received the Blessing are welcome to participate in these Blessing Ceremonies. The Blessing Ceremonies held only in the U.S. will be primarily focused on already married couples. It is important that couples participating in these Blessing Ceremonies understand and appreciate the meaning and value of the Blessing and the messianic role of True Parents. They do not necessarily have to be ready to change their blood lineage or become FFWPU members. However, they should have a sense that it is beneficial for their couple to receive the Blessing, and be willing to offer conditions of gratitude for what they are receiving through the Blessing.

Hosting a Marriage Blessing Ceremony

Any community that wishes to (no matter the size or number of couples that will participate) can host a Blessing Ceremony, so long as they a) register their community with the Blessing and Family Ministry and b) secure an approved Blessing Ceremony officiating couple. Each community that registers as a Blessing Ceremony host community will receive a Blessing Ceremony Support packet. Register your community as a Blessing Ceremony host here: <https://bfm.familyfed.org/local-blessing-ceremony-report-form/>

To support local communities and districts in organizing and hosting a Blessing Ceremony, we are offering a series of Blessing Preparation Support Webinars for Pastors and Ministry Leaders. All pastors, ministry leaders and ministry volunteers who will be involved in the organization of a local/district Blessing Ceremony are encouraged to attend these webinars. The first Blessing Preparation Support

Webinar for Pastors and Ministry Leaders will be held on Thursday, May 7 from 9:00 - 10:30 pm EDT. Another will be held closer to the Blessing Ceremony. The webinar will include more information about suggestions for mobilizing participation in the ceremony, tips on how to organize a local Blessing Ceremony, how-to support candidates in completing the online Blessing Registration, and plenty of time for Q&A. To participate in the webinar, pre-register here:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/209408952595770114#>

In addition to the webinar, resources for organizing a local Blessing Ceremony can be found on the Ministry Leaders Resources Section of the BFM website. Resources include: How-to Guide for Conducting a Local Blessing Ceremony, Blessing Ceremony Checklist, local ceremony announcement sample, Blessing Celebration Reimbursement Form, 40 Days Holy Separation Guidance, How-to Conduct the Chastening Ceremony, 3-Day Ceremony Guidelines, and more.

Blessing Officiators

True Mother has given her approval for District Leaders to officiate Blessing Ceremonies. District leaders can also recommend additional couples throughout their district to be Blessing officiators.

Recommendations for officiators should be submitted by email to: bfmadmin@unification.org by May 18, 2015. All recommendations will be reviewed by Dr. Kim and Dr. Balcomb and offered to True Mother for her approval. Only those couples who are approved by True Mother are sanctioned to officiate Blessing Ceremonies.

Participation in the Blessing Ceremony

To participate in the June 27 Marriage Blessing Ceremony, couples need to register online by June 5. Registered couples will be reported to True Mother, and she will pray over them prior to the Blessing. Couples can register by visiting blessingamerica.org.

The registration page will be continuously updated with information about and resources for the Marriage Blessing.

For more information about the process for a married couple to receive the Blessing and become a Blessed Couple, please see the attached document. The document also clarifies the process for a married couple that is not yet ready to take all the necessary steps to become a Blessed Couple, but would like to receive the Blessing as an initial step towards eventually becoming a Blessed Couple.

At this time, True Parents encourage all matched couples to participate in the Foundation Day Blessing Ceremony. However, for matched couples who would like to take part in one of the U.S. only Blessings, please contact the national BFM team.

Let's join together to share the blessings we've been given and support many couples in receiving the Marriage Blessing. Please do not hesitate to contact our national BFM team at: bfmadmin@unification.org with any questions or concerns.



Dr. Michael Balcomb
President



Crescentia DeGoede
Director, Blessing and Family Ministry

The Process for Married Couples to become Blessed Couples

By: Blessing and Family Ministry, FFWPU-USA

The Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony is for all couples receiving the Marriage Blessing for the first time. In addition to engaged couples, all married couples are welcomed who wish to rededicate their marriage to God and each other, and experience the transformation and renewal of their relationship and lineage. This memo briefly describes the process for married couples to participate in the Blessing Ceremony.

The Path to the Blessing for Non-Unificationist Married Couples

Due to the foundation that True Parents and earlier Blessed Families have established, the gate of the Blessing has been opened to all couples that embrace the ideals and values of the Marriage Blessing. Married Couples who are Ambassadors for Peace, clergy of other faiths, associates, friends or family of Unificationists are welcome to join the Blessing with more simple conditions and commitments. We recommend the following, with the support of Unificationist mentors or pastors:

Step One: Becoming a Blessing Couple

Goals:

1. 40-day Preparation of DP and Blessing Education
2. Participate in the Holy Wine Celebration
3. Participate in the Holy Blessing Celebration

Explanation:

Through this step in the process the couple prepares for and receives **God's Divine Grace** through education, the Holy Wine Ceremony and the Blessing Ceremony. **The couple then becomes a Blessing Couple.** This simply means they have begun the process to become a Blessed Couple but are not there yet. This is a position to be recognized and celebrated. It also means we are responsible to support them in completing the process to become a Blessed Couple that they have started.

Special 40 Day preparation to receive the Blessing

- A. 40-day Blessing preparation beginning 40 days before the Blessing Ceremony, which should include education and spiritual conditions. Case by case each couple should be guided to make conditions that they understand and which are meaningful to them.
- B. Education; the more education a couple has about the Divine Principle and True Parents the more benefit their couple will receive. At least a basic education on the meaning & value of the Blessing - See the 17-minute video and 5-minute testimony prepared for Non-Unificationist couples at:

<http://bfm.familyfed.org/blessing/>

- C. Commitment to the essence of the 4 Vows:
1. Creating a family of which God can be proud
 2. Absolute fidelity to one's spouse - no adultery, no divorce
 3. Raising children to inherit these values, passing them on to future generations, practicing purity before marriage and fidelity in marriage
 4. Loving all people and families of the world beyond race & religion, as God does.

The couple participates in the Holy Wine Celebration and Holy Blessing Celebration

Step Two: Completing the Process and Becoming a Blessed Couple

Goals:

1. Registration to be a Blessed Couple
2. Blessing Offering
3. Chastening Ceremony
4. 40 Day offering through abstinence
5. 3-Day Ceremony

Explanation:

Through this step in the process the couple fulfills their **human responsibility** by completing their Change of Blood Lineage and completing their registration as a Blessed Couple. **The couple is now a Blessed Couple and any children they have will be Blessed Children.** This is the position to be recognized and celebrated. It also means we are responsible to support them as a Blessed Couple.

- A. Through completion of online Registration for the Blessing the couple registers to be a Blessed Couple.
- B. The Blessing Offering is an offering of gratitude for receiving the Blessing of True Parents. The Blessing is of such great value we could not offer enough to pay for what it is worth. However, True Parents asked \$2000 from couples coming from Western countries. The first \$210 goes into a special Offering of Gratitude Fund for True Parents use. The remainder helps cover the costs of the Blessing Ceremony and work of the Blessing and Family Ministry USA to support our families. Non-Unificationist married couples who want to become Blessed Couples need to at least make the \$210 Offering of Gratitude to True Parents and should have the sincere heart to complete the remainder of the \$2000 Blessing Offering.
- C. Completion of the 5 Ceremonial Steps of Changing the Blood Lineage. We should clearly educate all married couples about the meaning and process of renewing their position as God's sons and daughters. The video linked above explains each of the 5 ceremonial steps of the Blessing process. Couples will complete the first 2 at the Blessing Ceremony, and we want to educate, encourage and guide them to complete the final 3 immediately following the Blessing, or as soon as they are ready after the Blessing.

- D. When the couple has completed their portion of responsibility they will be registered and reported as a Blessed Couple.

Step 1 Receive God's Divine Grace	Step 2 Fulfill Your Human Responsibility
1. 40 days of education 2. Holy Wine Ceremony 3. Blessing Ceremony	4. Register & Offering 5. Chastening Ceremony 6. 40-Day Holy Separation 7. 3-Day Holy Ceremony
Blessing Couple	Blessed Couple

All districts and churches should take care that Blessing participants have been registered and supported before and after taking part in the Blessing. Please create a welcome atmosphere to care for and encourage all guests, Blessing couples and Blessed couples to grow in their relationship with God and each other. This is a time to celebrate and a time through our continued relationship to educate all couples in the traditions and joy of Blessed life.

The Path to the Blessing for Married Unificationist Couples

For members of the Unification Faith who appreciate the historical mission of True Parents and want to fully inherit their foundation as a Blessed Central Family, True Father prescribed the path for married couples to be engrafted into Heaven's lineage, and the best conditions upon which to accomplish it. Unificationist couples should complete the following, with education and support from spiritual mentors and pastors:

1. One year of church membership – education in the Divine Principle and in the meaning and value of the Blessing, regular attendance to worship or church programs and tithing (basic membership requirements)
2. Completion of online Application for the Blessing
3. Payment of Blessing Offering - an offering of gratitude to receive True Parents' Blessing (\$2000 per couple)
4. 40-day Blessing preparation beginning 40 days before the Blessing Ceremony, which should include education and spiritual conditions (example: 7-day fast) Case by case each couple should be guided to make conditions that they understand and which are meaningful to them. Attend the Start Smart Blessing education workshop in person or online.

5. Completion of the essential ceremonies that constitute the “Change of Blood Lineage” process that True Parents have taught us:
- a. Holy Wine Ceremony (prior to the Blessing, guided by local pastor or officiating couple)
 - b. The Blessing Ceremony
 - c. Chastening Ceremony (immediately following the Blessing Ceremony)
 - d. Separation Period (40 days of abstinence, renewing their relationship and spiritual intimacy from the inside, beginning from the Blessing Ceremony)
 - e. 3-day Ceremony of Renewal (the first 3 nights after the separation period)