

John Jackson immersed himself in Utah Family Church activities

Wendy Stovall

April 15, 2018



Unificationist youth and Rev. Jackson before the service project

From April 13 to 15, Southwest Subregional Director Rev. John Jackson immersed himself with the Utah Family Church, participating in a service project along with Unificationist youth and leading the graduation for Il Shim, a program for young Unificationists dedicated to the importance of purity.

After arriving to Salt Lake City on April 13, Rev. Jackson joined 13 Unificationists for a service project called Kids Feeding Kids, in which volunteers pack food for starving children around the world. Approximately 150 people participated in the late afternoon activity. As lively music played in the background, the Unificationists were one in heart in preparing the food for those in need. Two hours later, the group was able to pack enough food to feed 123 children for a year.

Over the next few days, Rev. Jackson met with families, gently advising those who sought his guidance, regaling us with stories about his experiences and helping us to understand more deeply the heart of True Mother.

Early on Sunday morning, the Il Shim students and their families, together with Pastors Michael and Wendy Stovall and Rev. Jackson, met at the Holy Ground in Sugarhouse Park to sing and pray and to learn about the Holy Grounds and their history. We then went to the church, where the parents were able to spend time with Rev. Jackson while the students participated in making Holy Candles and Holy Salt. After each student received his or her own Holy Candle and Holy Salt, we then prepared an offering table to celebrate True Parents' Day.

Church at 11:00 a.m. We began our service by reciting the Family Pledge, followed by a musical offering presented by a string quartet composed of our youth. Following a short service for the Holy Day, we began our Il Shim Graduation Ceremony. Rev. John Jackson gave a wonderful talk that engaged everyone. The Il Shim participants' families were then invited to separate by family and move to the sides

of the chapel where they recited personal pledges to one another, with some families being moved to tears.



Rev. Jackson presents gifts to the Il Shim graduates

All the local Unificationist families gathered at the Rev. Jackson then presented the Il Shim ring to each participant's Father, who then passed it to his or her mother who in turn presented it to their child, with each person offering a half bow as they received the ring.

The program concluded with the students reciting the Participant Pledge and the congregation reciting the Community Pledge. We held a cake cutting ceremony for the youth, which was followed by a closing prayer and a joyful "eok mansei" based on words from the Il Shim program.

We continued the event with a delicious lunch, and fruit and cake from the offering table. After the lunch, we returned to the chapel to hear more from Rev. Jackson and to understand what is happening in God's Providence now, especially about what can happen when we unite with True Mother's words about fulfilling our role as tribal messiahs. The group concluded the day by immortalizing this gathering through a group photo.