

Appreciating Ki Yeal Lee of New Jersey's Korean Evangelical Association (KEA)

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Ministry is an art and only those who have the spirit and the heart to sacrifice and live for the sake of the congregation can understand the meaning and importance of this divine calling.

Our pastor is Rev. Ki Yeal Lee, anointed by God with an uplifted spirit of fairness and justice for all, appointed by True Parents to teach heaven's culture and tradition to our community and commissioned by heavens with clear vision, a lot of faith and little money.

As a missionary in Argentina and in Bolivia, Rev. Lee rebuilt the church, uplifted the spirit of our tired first generation and invested all of his heart to educate our second generation to cultivate character, personality and all the attributes and characteristics that bring them closer to God.

As simple as it is to understand that we were all created in the image and likeness of our creator, our pastor's teachings are not complex, but engaging, up-to-date and practical. His lessons encourage us to develop our individual attributes and characteristics and apply them to our daily life with our spouse, children and others so that we can become a visible manifestation of goodness in the fourth year after the coming of heaven.

In addition to all Rev. Lee's fine work, his wife Seiko Lee is similarly accomplished as a beautiful, professional opera singer. She is recognized and praised nationally and internationally by millions and with her jovial singing, she touches the hearts of all and uplifts their spirits creating an environment of reconciliation and peace.

Rev. Lee as a pastor of a multicultural congregation, is open to innovation such as developing and cultivating the abilities and talents of our 2nd and 3rd generation such as in choir, Korean youth group (Sunghwa), sports, orchestra, Korean language and many other activities. He visits blessed families' homes, prays for those in need and announces in the church all the small or big achievements that our youth or elders have accomplished.

Twelve years ago, KEA headquarters was purchased by a small group of faithful Korean elders and blessed by True Parents to become the heart of America. Now, we are extending our facilities with three big classrooms, an office for the pastor and rooms for other youth activities and workshops. Our pastor works tirelessly every day make crucial decisions and solve problems to ensure that this extension will become a new, shiny, and holy dwelling place for God.

Among our 120 blessed families, we have Koreans, Japanese, Filipinos, African Americans, Latinos, Europeans and countless second and third generation youth for our pastor care for. We are all proud of Rev. Lee's humility, piety and integrity. Our pastor is a champion of faith and a unifier. He always reminds us that knowledge of the Divine Principle makes us divine human beings and heaven's grace will remain among us.

-Dairo Ferrabolli

As the daughter of a pastor, I've had a front-row view of the duties and demands of being a pastor my whole life. Firstly, pastors are constantly sought. There is a never-ending stream of congregation members calling day and night, trying to set up meetings to receive guidance on what turns to take in life, or desiring prayers to alleviate any personal or spiritual struggles one has. On top of all these commitments, the best pastor practices above and beyond what he or she preaches every Sunday. A pastor sets multiple conditions and works unceasingly behind the scenes, always putting others before themselves and their families.

Pastor Lee of the NY KEA church in New Jersey is such a person as I have described. With love and patience, Pastor Lee cares for every member of his congregation, even those who complain, or are unable to make it to church each Sunday. Pastor Lee's devotion and love for God, the Heavenly Parent, and his congregation permeates into the hearts of all of us at KEA so much so that it motivates us to better ourselves and reach a higher emotional and spiritual standard in life.

When I first came to KEA, I was a new face and pretty shy when it came to getting involved in church activities. Yet, Pastor Lee recommended me to become a teacher at the younger-grade-level Sunday school. In the beginning of my teaching experience, I thought perhaps Pastor Lee was getting revenge for the times I had been sleepy during his sermons. The children were loud, demanding, cheeky and seemed to increase in number every Sunday. No matter how hard I prepared for a lesson, how passionately I taught it or how much energy I devoted to a particularly difficult student, I felt nothing I did made an impact.

Around my third year as a Sunday school teacher, I was tired and wanted to quit. Expecting comfort and exclamations of all the hard work I'd accomplished over the years from my mother, she simply stated, "Imagine how many times Pastor Lee has wanted to say that." While it had taken me three years to figure it out, Pastor Lee taught me one of the core values of our church and the principle our True Father spoke of and lived his entire life according to: "Live for the sake of others."

Starting my twelfth year as a Sunday school teacher, I can't say things are perfect. However, as many of our dedicated 1st generation members age, and the influences of the Last Days strengthens, as a 2nd generation, I want to spread my roots deeper, gripping all the precious lessons I gained from True Parents and Pastor Lee. As a Sunday school teacher, and now a certified English teacher in the public school system, I hope to continue to teach our younger generations and be a 2nd generation member with the same patience, indomitable spirit and love for our congregation as Pastor Lee has shown me.

-Ye Ji Elise Ferrabolli