

This week in history, June 18-24:

Michael Mickler

June 19, 2017

June 19, 1984

European Missionary Peter Koch Ascends

On June 19, 1984, Rev. Peter Koch passed unexpectedly at the age of 57. He was the leader of the Austrian Unification Church and the first Western missionary to Europe for the Unification Church. In 1969 he was blessed in marriage with Gertrud Güse in the first European Marriage Blessing Ceremony, which was part of the Blessing of 43 International Couples. At the time of his passing Peter Koch left behind his wife, Gertrud, and their children, Goon Amen and Spring Anne. Peter Koch was a moving force behind Mission Butterfly, which sent Unificationists behind the Iron Curtain in the 1980s to work as underground missionaries.

June 19, 2013

Tongil Group Employees Support North Korean Escapees, Multicultural Families



On June 19, 2013, Tongil Group staff visited Hope Apparel, a company that helps North Korean escapees adjust to life in the South. Previously Tongil Group employees were donating part of their salaries toward a 2 million won contribution to the company. Hope Apparel, which began in 2009, originally was supported by the Women's Federation for World Peace, which donated funds for the purchase of sewing machines. Thanks to donations from the Tongil Group employees, the initial costs could be covered for a high-cost commercial sewing machine that works holes into buttons for men's clothes. Tongil employees

also funded support for the less fortunate. In April 2013, the Cheonghae Multicultural Children's Soccer Club was invited to watch a Seongnam Ilhwa Soccer Match. Tongil subsequently donated 20 million won to the Multicultural Comprehensive Welfare Center to cover the medical costs of multicultural families.

June 21, 1977

National Council of Churches Issues Study Document on Divine Principle

On June 21, 1977, the Commission on Faith and Order of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. released to the press and other interested persons "A Critique of the Theology of the Unification Church as Set Forth in Divine Principle." The eleven-page "official study document," drafted by Sister Agnes Cunningham of Mundelein (Roman Catholic) Seminary, was issued "to clarify the claim to Christian identity made by the Unification Church." The Commission acknowledged receiving Unification Church "statements of self-clarification" but disregarded them. It also admitted to "diversity in Christian belief and theology and, thus, internal disagreement." Nonetheless, the Commission determined that the Unification Church "is not a Christian Church" and that its "claim...to Christian identity cannot be recognized." In an important response, published in the Journal of Unification Studies, Dr. Jonathan Wells concluded that "the NCC Critique, though cloaked in theological language," looked "suspiciously like a witch-hunt."

June 21, 2001

UTS Awards Honorary Doctorates to True Parents



Unification Theological Seminary awarded its first honorary doctorates in its history to True Parents who were present for Seminary's 25th commencement exercises. Their citation read in part, "They have introduced the vision of a world based on true love. They have created a theology of heart that resolves the chaos of theology and philosophy. They are leading humankind centered on the living God and the love of family." Drs. Lee Kyung-june, President of Sun Moon University and Neil Albert Salonen, President of the University of Bridgeport, placed True Parents doctoral hood upon them, representing the bonds of kinship between the three primary institutions of higher education built by True Parents.

True Father delivered the traditional ["Founder's Address,"](#) speaking for nearly four hours, likely a record for graduation ceremonies anywhere. He issued a call for the Seminary to maintain its founding vision as an interreligious school. He also explained the importance of lineage, challenging the school to provide its students a grasp of the innermost core of God's heart and truth which culminates in true love and life being incarnated and carried forth. Ten days prior to the awards ceremony, on June 11, a bolt of lightning destroyed the five-foot cross that had stood on the chapel for 70 years. Upon hearing of its demise, True Father said it is now time for all crosses to be removed.

June 22, 2014

God's Hope for America Holy Ground Pilgrimage Begins



The God's Hope for America bus tour began in San Francisco at the Twin Peaks Holy Ground, the first of the 55 Holy Grounds in the United States consecrated by True Father in 1965. The pilgrimage was organized to spark a revival among Unificationists who joined the 43-day tour at various stops across the country. Some 300 Unificationists gathered on Twin Peaks for the send-off. The tour covered 48 states and concluded in Eugene, Oregon, on August 3.

June 23, 1989

True Father Installed as Chairman of the Korean Root-Finding Association



True Father delivers his Chairman's address to the general audience at the Little Angels Performing Arts Center's main concert hall.

True Father was installed as the chairman of the Korean Root-Finding Association (KRFA), a national organization made up of the leaders of the 275 Korean traditional families, or clans. Also referred to as the Korean Family-Clan Chairmen's Association, the KRFA was organized to promote traditional Korean values, culture and the unity of the Korean people. At the installation ceremony True Parents each were presented with an ornate Korean traditional crown. In his inaugural [address](#) True Father acknowledged Korea's "matchless respect for Heaven, loyalty, filial piety and etiquette," but stated, "Clan-level root consciousness should be sublimated for a higher root consciousness ... of all humanity." He called upon the association to "extend our love relationships to overcome the conflicts of this age, demolish barriers of age-long disharmony and realize a harmonious world." He emphasized that "the unification of South and North Korea should be accomplished on the foundation of homogeneity as one people through activating the root-finding movement of true love."

June 23, 2000

True Mother is Awarded with the Grand Prix Peace Prize of UN IAERP



On June 23, 2000, True Mother was presented with the Grand Prix Peace Prize of UN IAERP (International Association of Educators for World Peace) at the Folk Museum of Lotte World in Seoul. The Grand Prix Peace Prize is called the Nobel Prize of educational circles and is an award of the highest authority that is presented to those who have contributed to the development of education and human rights. Acknowledged for her contributions to improving the rights of women, True Mother is the first Korean woman to receive this prize. (Materials provided by the FFWPU History Compilation Committee)