

## Theodore Shimmyo recalls the "God Bless America" rally at Yankee Stadium

Robin Graham

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*Three UTS alumni share the stage with Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. On the left, Dr. Theodore Shimmyo, on the right Patsy Casino and Dr. Ki Hoon Kim. Mr. Tom McDevitt is standing next to Dr. Shimmyo*

In 1975 UTS was founded in Barrytown, NY by Reverend and Mrs. Moon, who are often warmly called “True Parents, or True Father and True Mother” by UTS alumni and friends of UTS. The following year of 1976 was another pivotal year in the Founders’ work in America.

On June 1, 1976 there was the “God Bless America” rally at Yankee Stadium where Reverend Moon gave the bold and historic declaration that “America is God’s Hope” in front of 45,000 people. Reverend Moon declared that America would only be able to keep God’s blessing as an advanced country if she remained united with God, and further, that America is a microcosm of the world, a model of an ideal transcending nationality and national boundaries.

UTS continues to embrace that vision and the Founders’ call for awakening and renewal presented in those crucial years. UTS’ current mission statement is:

The Unification Theological Seminary offers educational programs in an interfaith context, which cultivate the heart, mind and spirit; bridge religious and cultural divides; promote leadership, service and engagement with the world; and provide tools for success in ministry and professional life. UTS is committed to the Unification vision of one global family under God.

On June 5, 2016 a God Bless America Family Festival was held in Tarrytown, NY to celebrate the 40th anniversary of that 1976 Yankee Stadium event. Rev Moon passed in 2012 but True Mother, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, was there to celebrate with the large and enthusiastic crowd.

Testimonies were shared to remind everyone of that momentous day in June 1976. One was given by Dr. Theodore Shimmyo; and though his talk was given extemporaneously, he has recaptured his thoughts and comments:

*Glory to God! Glory to True Parents!*

*I was there at Yankee Stadium at that time as a witness and as a volunteer worker, and saw the victory of the event.*

*But today, let me be honest about myself a little bit. When a storm suddenly came just before True Father's speech, blowing away all the decoration, as you saw on the video just now, the magnitude of the shock I received from it was such that I almost lost my faith. I now was a man of little faith. And I felt like escaping from the scene.*

*Two thousand years ago, when Jesus was going to be crucified, the twelve disciples were so shocked that they lost their faith and left him behind. I felt almost the same way at Yankee Stadium, although we were all bracing ourselves, by singing, "You Are My Sunshine," and were feeling better gradually. After that, we saw True Father speaking eloquently.*

*A day after the event, Father shared with us about what state of mind he was in when the storm came. He told us that he could have complained and blamed God because such a miserable condition was brought forth after his thirty years of total commitment to God's will since his public ministry started, but that he instead said to God in his prayer, "God, please don't worry about me. I will handle this miserable situation by myself to give you comfort and happiness, because you have been suffering so much throughout history."*

*When I heard that explanation from True Father, I deeply repented about myself. And since then I decided to make his example of faith my motto by which to go forward.*

*Thank God and True Parents!*