

Unification Theological Seminary Alumni Meet in Minnesota

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(from left) Mary Jane and Gordon Anderson with Jim Bard

MINNEAPOLIS - On a trip back to Minnesota to visit my family, I was able to meet alumni of the [Unification Theological Seminary](#) (UTS) on Thursday evening, July 20th, at the home of Gordon and Mary Jane Anderson in White Bear Lake, a St. Paul suburb. We had a home-cooked meal, a tour of the garden where the fresh vegetables we ate were grown, an old-fashioned game of horseshoes, and a walk down memory lane.



Vetoing my idea of "getting together for pizza," Gordon and Mary Jane invited Jim Bard and me for a meal at their home. We had salad with ingredients from their backyard garden, green beans (also from the garden), grilled salmon, warm pita bread, and topped off with coffee and homemade rhubarb pie a-la-mode.

Before and after dinner we took time to talk about the [Madison Square Garden event](#) the previous Saturday - which we all had attended - and a little about how each of us came to join the Unification Movement. Gordon, Jim and I spoke about how the music and (especially) the lyrics of The Moody Blues had influenced us on our journey to a higher spiritual calling. One of us would begin singing one of their songs and the other two would join in, not always remembering the words exactly, but evoking the time and feeling of what those words conveyed to us when we were young.

After UTS, Gordon earned an M.Div. at [Union Theological Seminary](#) and his Ph.D. in Philosophy of Religion at [Claremont Graduate University](#). He is President of [Paragon House: "Home of books that make a difference."](#) He is also Secretary General of the [Professors World Peace Academy](#) which publishes the [International Journal on World Peace](#) and been the editor-in-chief since 1992. Gordon has authored many articles and

books, including [Philosophy of the United States: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness](#) (2004) and [Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness, Version 4.0](#) (2009). Gordon serves on the Board of Trustees of the [University of Bridgeport](#).

Mary Jane, as well as being a mother of four children and a grandmother of two, has made a career in health care. Mary Jane graduated from [Minnesota State University, Mankato](#) with a B.S. in Nursing and is now an R.N. working as a staffing coordinator at a senior care facility.

During our visit, she introduced Jim and me to her "hobby" of ancestor research, and making a family tree. She "tracked down" members of both sides of my own family; many, like hers and Gordon's, coming from Norway and Germany.



Mary Jane showed us her garden where she grew the vegetables we ate for dinner.

Since UTS, Jim has been active in leadership positions for the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), especially in Minnesota and the [Twin Cities](#). Regional work was slowed because of a health condition and he was hospitalized in 2009. Fortunately, the condition has not stopped him and he continues as a pastor and to run his florist business in Saint Paul, maintaining a strong and righteous voice in the community. Jim and Midori, have four girls, with the youngest still in high school.

After dinner, Gordon challenged Jim and me to a game of horseshoes. Relying on "home field" advantage, Gordon defeated Jim and me by a score of 23-11, clinching his victory with a "ringer."