

Eva Mackin leads Families of the Ascended Support Group in Connecticut

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The Families of the Ascended group met in Connecticut on Sunday, May 17, 2015. It was organized by Eva Mackin, the Connecticut ministry leader; Toshiko Sato, the New Jersey ministry leader; and Annie Gagné, the national ministry leader. In an effort to support the Connecticut widows and widowers, Unificationists from New Jersey and New York came for an afternoon of sharing. There were some who had just lost their spouses a few months ago, another whose spouse ascended over 22 years ago, and all those in between.

Twelve people attended and had a chance to share their testimony. Most shared how lonely it was at the beginning. However, as time went by, there was some healing, and as one Japanese sister testified, she became more “professional” in her new status as a widow.

No one expected that this would happen to them. They all expressed their vision of growing old with their spouse, spending their remaining years in rocking chairs, catching up on books to read and playing puzzles or board games. The rude awakening of losing a spouse was shocking to everyone. To some, death came suddenly with no chance to say goodbye; to others, they had time to give their final farewells and say, “I love you.” Expressions of gratitude were given for all the love and support of their communities in laying their loved ones to rest. All were reminded how life here on this earth is really quite short.

After everyone gave their testimony, Annie shared the guidelines for the comfort blessing by the Blessing & Family Ministry— A comfort blessing is an earthly blessing between a Blessed man and Blessed woman whose spouses have ascended to the spiritual world. The guidelines helped answer many questions that were not clear before. It was clear no one should be judged for wanting the comfort blessing or not wanting it. It is a more complicated situation than being single and going to the Holy Marriage Blessing, as children are often now involved. It was also made clear to all that when we go to

the spiritual world, we will be with our original spouse for eternity.

Another exciting topic mentioned was starting a new tradition here in the United States, similar to the Korean holiday of Chuseok. This holiday, which True Parents observe, is one of the most important holidays in Korea. It is a harvest festival similar to our Thanksgiving. Most of the country shuts down for three days and people go to their hometowns to celebrate and honor their ancestors. The Jewish people have this tradition, the Catholics have a remembrance day on All Souls Day, and many cultures in the world hold memorials to remember their loved ones and ancestors.

We would like to hold our first memorial this year on September 27 in unity with True Parents. We are making a list of all brothers and sisters who have ascended in the United States. If any brothers and sisters have ascended in other countries, but did missionary work in the United States at some time, we would also like to add their names to this list. We want to honor all our brethren who sacrificed for the United States.

The Blessing & Family Ministry is also working on providing more materials, workshops and articles to guide and comfort those whose spouse or child has ascended. As our movement gets older, this type of ministry needs to develop more. Financial, emotional and spiritual guidance is needed. Sooner or later, one person in each couple will have to face this in their life.

Our hearts goes out to True Mother, a fellow widow, who has a difficult task to spearhead our movement. We know that she is working together with our True Father, and we understand the suffering, pain and—yes, even joy—she is going through at the end of the day. We all know that our loved ones on the other side are waiting patiently for us and supporting us.