

The 2014 Multicultural Peace Festival

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The Multicultural Peace Festival at Sun Moon University

The Korean Multicultural Peace Federation came into being on April 25 in the plaza in front of Seoul City Hall. It fills a need to keep up with the demands of modern Korean society, which is rapidly changing into a multicultural one. Fifty-two multicultural groups came for the launching. The Korean Multicultural Peace Federation is working toward enhancing friendships between countries and realizing peaceful, mutually prosperous values that Koreans at large can sympathize with, surpassing the level of just understanding and caring about multiculturalism.

The 2014 Multicultural Peace Festival took place on Sun Moon University's Asan campus on November 1. It drew around eight thousand people, including invited prominent figures, organizations connected in various ways with multiculturalism, families with binational parents, foreigners residing in Korea, students from overseas and Korean citizens. The festival comprised three parts, a ceremonial commemoration, entertainment and physical activities. The Korean Multicultural Peace Federation, Sun Moon University, the *Segye Times*, and the Multicultural General Welfare Center were the event's patrons. The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, the Women's Federation for World Peace, the Universal Peace Federation, the Tongil Group, Ilhwa Co. Ltd. and YongPyong Resort sponsored the event, which the Korea Multicultural Peace Festival Organizing Committee hosted.

Toward a multicultural society

Rev. Gi Seong Lee, then vice-president of FFWPU-Korea (now director of the Chung Pyung Heaven and Earth Training Center) was master of ceremonies for the first part of the festival. Dr. Sun Jo Hwang, president of Sun Moon University welcomed the guests. Dr. Hwang told the audience, "You are the ones taking the lead in realizing peace as you have formed families on the basis of true love, transcending national and cultural barriers." He went on to say, "We have now entered a global era and I am confident that your children will be able to become global, talented people that the future society will demand."

Kyeong Seuk Lu, chairman of the Multicultural Peace Festival Organizing Committee, the festival's host, gave the main address. "The theme of today's event is A Multicultural Community United through Love and Service, the Hope of World Peace," he informed the audience. "Just as the theme points out," he continued, "our international blessed families are all fulfilling the role of true parents, true teachers and true owners everywhere and are leading the multicultural families of the world.... I hope we can all deeply reflect once more on the precious significance of multicultural families and truly play a part in the ideal of Cheon Il Guk where two people become one through this event today. I sincerely hope we can all contribute to making this event a great festival."

Yeon Ah Choi Moon, international president of WFWP, gave words of encouragement to all saying, "International blessed couples have formed a multicultural environment, forming true families transcending nationality, race, culture and ideology. Furthermore, you are bringing a multicultural, peaceful world into reality. Let us use this festival as an opportunity to move beyond mere sharing and volunteering and instead take the lead in realizing a peaceful culture centered on true love. Let us become bridges of harmony and pillars that connect our different countries through Koreans abroad in the world

and global citizen within Korea."



Venerable Dosan, the executive chief of Korea's Taego Buddhist Order, emphasized that multicultural families are a necessary foundation for global harmony by saying, "Your families are testing grounds for world peace. If your families can achieve peace, hope exists that world peace can come true. If you cannot achieve peace among you, world peace is just a dream."

Mr. Myeong Su Lee, the National Assembly member that represents Asan, had come to the event but had to leave because of duties elsewhere. Nevertheless, he did leave a message for the participants. It reads, "Today, the multicultural society is a course and a demand of this age that no one can defy. I sincerely hope that you all become healthy, bright, cultured people that can enhance friendship between countries through communication and become bridges of peace." National Assemblyman Lee is a member of the New Frontier Party, the same party as Korea's President Park.

Following the various speeches, the True Love Peace Federation, an umbrella organization of more than a hundred multicultural volunteer groups that our members in Korea have created (like the Korean Multicultural Peace Federation) was launched. Mr. Hyo Jun Ryu and Ms. Ah Yeong Choi, members of the True Love Peace Federation, came onstage with another Korean, a Japanese person, a Filipino person, a Thai person and a Mongolian person, who together pledged:

- 1) To contribute to the realization of the vision of one great family by transcending national, racial, religious and cultural barriers through volunteer work
- 2) As proud Koreans or members of multicultural families, to work toward becoming global citizens that can enhance friendship between their different countries
- 3) To contribute to the expansion of an environment where Koreans and multicultural families can mutually prosper, live together and build a model community

After reciting this pledge, they presented the True Love Peace Federation flag and the written pledge to Yeon Ah Choi Moon and Kyeong Seuk Lu, co-presidents of the True Love Peace Federation. Moments later, the distinguished guests and representatives of some volunteer groups each pressed a button, releasing long streams of fog, which rose high in the air, symbolically announcing the launching of the True Love Peace Federation.

Part two: fun and excitement

The second part of the event was a time for entertainment, with Ms. Wabatabe Mika as the emcee. Performances included a congratulatory song by Ms. Yoshida Miho. The Unification Martial Arts Group demonstrated their abilities in the fighting arts. Their members demonstrated a new yet traditional type of martial arts that combined all martial arts through the attitude, "Bow down to everyone you meet and learn from them."

Another performance was reminiscent of the famous Korean performing arts group, Nanta, which uses traditional Korean drums struck by their hands as they act out a story without words. The drum team that performed that day called themselves the Bright Village Slapping Team. The members were all teenagers living in North Chungcheon Province. Their unity could be felt through the magnificent rhythmic melody they made.

Sun Moon University CARP members performed dances that were passionate, expressive of vigor and youthfulness. Choirs comprising choristers from a mixture of national backgrounds sang. The dulcet tones emanating from the songs sung by the Multicultural Kids Choir, in harmony with singer Myujika Eternaga, whose father and mother hail from different countries, greatly touched the hearts of audience members.

Part three: vigorous activity

The third part of the festival was the multicultural athletic meet, which consisted of diverse programs. The One Family on Earth Parade was the first item on the program and began around 2:00 pm. Around a thousand people including those from fifty-two multicultural groups, foreigners living in Korea, foreign students, invited prominent figures and Koreans marched in the parade. The first group held the Multicultural Peace Festival emblem at the front and included a three-hundred-and-twenty person drum

and fife band, groups involved in the Multicultural Peace Festival and seonghwa student teams.



The pledge, before releasing streams of fog

Nearly three hundred and seventy people marched in the second group, which included the Korean traditional percussion band, people on a Blessing Ceremony float and others. Perhaps four hundred people were in the third group, including non-Koreans wearing their nation's traditional clothing and local residents.

The parade began at the Asan Citizens Cultural Welfare Center and went on for

1.8 km, ending in front of Asan City Hall. The parade finale occurred in the park in front of city hall.

Participants and the locals observing the parade took part in *Ganggangsulae*, a traditional Korean dance performed in circles, where dancers hold on to one another as they dance and try to connect to other circles of dancers.

Ganggangsulae has some similarities to the Conga. A fitness dance and other activities also involved some of the many people on hand that day. Athletic competitions included the One Heart Group Jump Rope Contest, in which twenty-one teams from across Korea, consisting of twelve women each -- ten to jump rope and two to spin the rope -- took part. Thus, 252 women competed. Eight teams passed the preliminaries and the northern Seoul women's team made it to the top.

A women's arm wrestling contest was certainly out of the ordinary. Teams of two from twenty-one districts around Korea locked in battle to prove that their district possessed the greatest power. The winners were from a district in southern Gyeonggi Province. A soccer tournament for adolescents and a friendly soccer match between teams of members from two different religions also added to the physical exertions on display.

After all had concluded, all present gave three cheers for peace as an expression of their hopes that Korea becomes the center of communication in an interracial, inter-religious and international manner.