

History of the Unification Movement in the United Kingdom - 1965-2014 - February 23, 2021 - Timeline



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIFICATION MOVEMENT IN THE UK

Our Milestones

1954 David (Sang-Chul) Kim was sent as the first missionary to the United Kingdom.

1974 After a fourth visit by Rev. and Mrs. Moon, a Holy Ground was established outside Swindon that had recently been donated to the church.

1975 Number 43 & 44 Lancaster Gate were purchased and subsequently became the new headquarters; Rev. and Mrs. Moon again visited the UK.

1983 Led by Masatoshi Abe, the spiritual stature of the movement greatly increased as the movement became better organised, and the members more active.

2005 After considerable political pressure was applied, the then Home Secretary revoked Rev. Moon's exclusion from entering the UK.

2011 Rev. Moon visits the UK for the ninth and final time, accompanied by his close family.

For more info visit:
<https://familyfedcommunity.co.uk/education/history/>

The Early Church in the United Kingdom

1954 – David (Sang-Chul) Kim was sent as the first missionary to the United Kingdom. He studied in Swansea (University of Wales) and taught spiritual groups.

1965 – Rev. Moon visited the UK for the first time, where he was met by the first six church members and Sir Anthony Brooke, a well-known spiritualist. During this visit, Rev. Moon established a Holy Ground in Kensington Gardens.

1969 – Rev. and Mrs. Moon visited Britain again, this time to have meetings with small groups of people and interview several candidates for the forthcoming European Marriage Blessing of eight couples in Germany.

1970 – A farmhouse was rented just north of Reading which became the church headquarters. Missionaries from Britain were sent to the Middle East, namely, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and also to Malta and Cyprus.

1972 – Rev. Moon returned to Britain and spoke at the Friends' (Quakers) Meeting House on Euston Road, London. He also asked for a mobile outreach team to be established. This gave the inspiration for "Samson Team". An aged furniture lorry was brought for £300, equipped with two decks, and painted on both sides with a bold design, and the British Movement began to grow apace.

1973 – Rev. Moon asked for 120 European members to come to help in USA, among them, 30

from Britain answered the call. Several of these British members became state-leaders in USA, and a few, subsequently, became world missionaries in Zambia, Tanzania, Trinidad and Australia.

1974 – After a fourth visit by Rev. and Mrs. Moon, a Holy Ground was established in a farm outside Swindon that had recently been donated to the Church. The Holy Ground consisted of oak saplings planted in the shape of a cross, symbolising the Christian foundation in England.

1970s – Rev. Moon gave a series of public speeches in the United States including one in Madison Square Garden in New York City in 1974, and two in 1976. The first was in the Yankee Stadium in New York City, and the second on the grounds of the Washington Monument in Washington D.C., where Rev. Moon spoke on "God's Hope for America" to around 300,000 people.

1974 – Rev. and Mrs. Moon returned to London for the fifth time, to attend the third International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS) in the Royal Lancaster Hotel, just a few hundred yards from the Holy Ground in Kensington Gardens.

1975 – Lancaster Gate (numbers 43 and 44) in London was purchased from the Norwegian Government and subsequently became the new headquarters. Later in the same year, Rev. and Mrs. Moon came to London to visit the new headquarters. Throughout this year, the movement established a wide international foundation as missionaries were sent by Rev. Moon from the United States, Japan and Germany to 120 countries around the world.

1978 – Rev. Moon returned to London (for the seventh time) with his eldest daughter Ye Jin Nim, in order to conduct the 118 Couples Marriage Blessing in Lancaster Gate.

Court proceedings were begun by the then national church director against the Daily Mail, claiming personal libel by reason of a string of articles that the newspaper had published during Rev. Moon's visit, which had repeated mainly exaggerated stories from the US media. The case concluded in crushing defeat three years later which badly affected the public's perception of the church. For several years, the church's charitable status was suspended, and notice was given to Rev. Moon that he would not be permitted to enter Britain in the future. However, in 1988, the Attorney General dropped his opposition to the reinstatement of charitable status, with the costs of the action being awarded against the government.

1982 – Rev. Moon was convicted of tax fraud and conspiracy in United States federal court and was sentenced 18 months in federal prison. Carlton Sherwood, an American journalist, said on the matter: "The Unification Church, its leaders and followers were and continue to be the victims of the worst kind of religious prejudice and racial bigotry this country has witnessed in over a century."

1983 – The British movement was led by Masatoshi Abe, a leading member from the Japanese movement, who in his ten years as National Director raised the spiritual stature of the movement after it slumped somewhat due to so much media and government opposition. During his tenure, the Movement's projects were more organised, and members became more active.

1991 – Following a long struggle, the Immigration Tribunal ordered the government to allow Rev. Moon entry to the UK. By the end of the year, the British Embassy in New York wrote to Rev. Moon informing him that he was free to come to Britain at any time.

1992 – More than fourteen years after leaving the United Kingdom, Mrs. Moon arrived at Heathrow Airport from Berlin on the second leg of her eight city European speaking tour as President of the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP). That night she stayed in Livingstone House in Kent, a mansion built for the famous Scottish missionary David Livingstone that had been purchased by the Movement in 1978, and which is now used as an education and conference centre.

1993 – Mrs. Moon returned to Britain in the course of her 40-nation world speaking tour. This time the Royal Lancaster Hotel – site of the ICUS conference nineteen years earlier – was the venue for her speech, entitled "True Parents and the Completed Testament Age." In this speech, the messianic mission of the Rev. and Mrs. Moon was clearly proclaimed to the British public for the first time. Mrs. Moon was introduced to the audience of over 1,200 guests, including many notable diplomats, ministers and academics, by Dr Ursula King, the well-known Anglican theologian and professor.

1995 – When an application was made for Rev. Moon to enter the country, the then Home Secretary, Michael Howard, decided that the presence of Rev. Moon in this country would "not be conducive to the public good", despite the Immigration Tribunal's ruling in 1991. After considerable legal proceedings lasting from 2001, during which the Government refined its reason for exclusion as being that his presence in this country would not be conducive to the public good "on grounds of public order" – only to abandon it when the police refuted any such suggestion in their evidence.

2005 – Finally, after considerable political pressure was applied from some of the UK's most distinguished faith leaders, the then Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, revoked the exclusion against Rev. Moon.

Family Federation for World Peace and Unification

1996 – The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) was inaugurated in the USA. From the end of 1996, British activities focussed initially on FFWPU projects with an emphasis on interfaith and intercultural reconciliation work, service projects and work with family values and youth.

1999 – Mrs. Moon visited Britain again as part of her 82 city, six continent World Tour, where she spoke at the New Connaught Rooms, London.

2000 – Mrs Moon spoke again in London, Birmingham and Edinburgh, again as part of a wider world tour.

2003 – Rev. Moon began his "Tear Down", or "Take Down the Cross" campaign. The campaign was begun in the belief that the cross is a reminder of Jesus' pain and has been a source of division between people of different faiths. The campaign included a burial ceremony for the cross and a crown to be put in its place. The American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC), an interfaith group founded by Rev. Moon, spearheaded the effort, calling the cross a symbol of oppression and superiority.

2005 – Rev. Moon came to the UK for the eighth time after a long period of absence as part of a world tour on November 5th, 2005, when he inaugurated the UK Universal Peace Federation.

2008 – Rev. Sun Myung Moon, then 88 years old, appointed his youngest son, Hyung Jin Moon, to be the new leader of the Unification Church and the world-wide Unification Movement. However due to schisms in the church after Rev Moon's death, he formed his own church, and Mrs. Moon continued to lead the church.

2010 – Hyung Jin Moon visited the United Kingdom with his wife, Yeon Ah, as part of a world tour to re-emphasise the church roots of the movement and encourage members to outreach and develop stronger church communities.

2011 – Rev. Moon visited the United Kingdom for the ninth time, accompanied by some of his close family. They stayed from 9th – 12th May 2011, as part of the European portion of a world tour covering eight countries.

2015 – Matthew and Natasha Huish become National Directors for the United Kingdom.

2016 – International President of FFWPU, Sun Jin Nim, inaugurates the IAPP in the House of Commons.

2020 – Dr. Michael and Fumiko Balcomb become National Directors for the United Kingdom.

Sun Myung Moon passed to the spirit world on September 3rd, 2012 and continues his work for God's Providence from Heaven.