

## FFWPU UK: The Annual Memorial Service - A Day For Remembering

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On Sunday, our brothers and sisters took time to remember those from our community that have ascended and remember Father's visit to the Holy Oak farm to plant the Holy Oak Tree.

On Sunday 28th July, brothers and sisters from around the country gathered at the Holy Oak Memorial Woodland in Stanton Fitzwarren. They came for the annual Memorial service to remember and honour our ascended brothers and sisters. This year was special as beside our Memorial service we also commemorated the 50th anniversary of our True Father's visit to the farm.



The morning started with worship and joy, as the sun was brightly shining, with Franklin F. leading everyone through the service gracefully. After songs accompanied by Russell G. on his guitar, Dr Mike B, our National Director, gave a lovely sermon entitled 'Steadfast and Merciful', two great qualities of our



Heavenly Parent that we should all thrive to attain in our life. He invited us to remember not only those that have ascended but also those that could be but were not present, for many reasons. Encouraging us to reach out to those that have become distant while also honouring those that have departed. He reminded us how it is ok to manifest emotion, alongside intellect and will, that it is ok for tears to well up in our eyes in the absence of our loved ones, that if any day or moment would be ok for this, the memorial service is definitely appropriate.



After a beautiful solo from Viola D., Françoise M. was introduced as the Chair of the Seonghwa Caring Ministry. She praised and thanked our ascended brothers and sisters for their love and dedication to our Heavenly Parent's providence, our communities and our personal lives. She then mentioned those who ascended since last year and asked our support in caring for those recently bereaved families. The sound of David R. playing the flute accompanied us in our thoughts and prayers. We all felt moved and uplifted by the atmosphere and by our fellowship together. Flowers were given to all who attended, and Mrs Fumiko B. closed with a final prayer. We were then invited to spend time visiting the Won Jeon remembering our dear brothers and sisters.





The 50th anniversary commemoration was a beautiful event bringing different stories and testimonies from True Father's time in the UK as well as the great investment and sacrifice of our early members, particularly with fond gratitude to the Masters family who gave so much to our community.



Martin F. read a speech True Father had given just before he came to the UK reminding us that our Heavenly Parent is counting on us to carry out the mission of saving the whole world. Our elder sister June D. was then invited to share her memories about the time when True Father came to the Farm. She also thanked all the members who had maintained this beautiful place. She recognised especially Keiko de G. who had initiated the Holy Oak Memorial Woodland. Philip W. was present on that special day of the consecration of the Holy Ground. He recalled some amusing experiences with True Father planting the Holy Oak Tree.



In commemoration of the 50th anniversary two new signs were made for both trees planted by True Father and Henry M. We gathered around the trees and installed the 2 signs. A plaque of appreciation was then presented to the Masters family and received by Priscilla. She said a few words on how this land was given to her ancestors and how 400 years later the Masters gave it to our church, a precious gift from



God. Priscilla concluded by saying that the Masters's sacrifice of giving everything was followed by many blessings. Henry and Avril spent many years in the US close to the True Family.



We concluded the day with a potluck lunch sharing and reconnecting with each other.

Here is a testimony from our pastor Elliot Y.:

'This year marked 50 years since Henry and Avril Masters made an incredible donation of the estate they had inherited in Stanton Fitzwarren. Henry Masters, in his autobiography titled 'The Eye of a Needle. My life of Faith', describes and reflects upon giving this large and generous donation. Henry Master's writes:



"Jesus had told the rich young ruler that it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. He recommended that the young man should sell all he owned and give it to the poor but the young man was unable to do this. We felt an overwhelming impulse from the spirit world to offer to God everything we had in absolute



submission. We felt compelled to give not only our property, our home and our livelihood, but also our children and one another. A total offering of all that we loved most dearly was the least that we could give...."



Acts of generosity and faith to this scale are incredible. How lucky and blessed are we to stand on this foundation here in WWW Holy Community?

This celebration was a stark reminder of the role we have to play in God's providence, we all have a part to play, no matter how meek or unworthy we may feel. If we agree that God is real, if we agree that God is a personal God (a parent), and if we agree that God is a living God, then we must conclude that God's providence is real! God has a wish, a plan, and a path for each of us within his providence.



Further, it is awesome to hear to memories and stories over the last half of century. Stanton Fitzwarren certainly has been the spiritual home and place of rebirth for many (including members of my own family). This has been made possible not only by Father's investment alone, not only by the Master's investment alone, but the countless sacrifices of our members collectively. This was a wonderful



opportunity to celebrate the giving heart of our holy community and an opportunity to inherit a spirit of giving.'



Here is also a sincere testimony from our sister Françoise M.:

'We had a wonderful and uplifting Memorial service this year combined with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of True Father's visit to the Farm. As you know preparing such an event is quite stressful. On Sunday morning before leaving, I was reciting Pledge number 6 when I felt True Father's presence telling me that he would be there. After this profound experience my anxiety was turned into peace and reassurance that everything would be all right. True Father was surely there. Our Heavenly Parent was there. It was such beautiful event both the Memorial service and the Anniversary. It was so good to have Priscilla with us and we were able to thank the Masters for their amazing gifts. Thank you everyone. We came together each bringing our own contributions and creating a beautiful event remembering and honouring our ascended brothers and sisters. Thank you.'

