

Teens Francis Marchitelli, Robert Abendroth, and Luke Scazzero Hung their Pride Banner over Interstate 50 in Bowie, Maryland

Douglas Burton
September 4, 2012



Three Unificationist youth were as stunned as most church members by the news of the passing of Unification Church Founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon on Sunday, but they acted quickly to show their pride in his life's work.

Francis Marchitelli (17), Robert Abendroth (17), and Luke Scazzero (15) decided to make a banner with the words, "THANK YOU, REV. MOON, 1920-2012, HIS TRUTH IS MARCHING ON," which they could hang over a highway bridge near their home town of Bowie, Maryland.

After seeing the grim announcement after church on his face book page, Marchitelli asked his buddies to help with the banner.

"For a while I wanted to put something on that pedestrian walkway over Interstate 50 about True Parents. When True Father died, I thought: 'I've got to do something now,'" he said, adding: "I felt strongly that we shouldn't keep quiet about who we are, what we believe and who True Father is to us. I wanted to inspire other Second Gen to speak out, make some noise."

Robert Abendroth asked his mother, Diane, for a sheet. Mrs. Abendroth helped the boys create the banner on the patio of their home in Bowie. "I thought it was so important that people would have a memory of the day, and I thought it was perfect to hang it over Route 50 because it is an interstate highway that goes from Ocean City on the East Coast all the way to the West Coast – to San Francisco, in fact, which is my husband's home town." Mrs. Abendroth said. The following day, Sept. 3, 2012 the boys and some other friends hung the flag facing to the East so that the line of cars returning from beach trips would see it on Labor Day.

Within a few hours of posting the banner, Abendroth and Marchitelli got more than 300 "likes," and scores of approving messages on their face book pages.

The three boys grew up in the church and have been active members of Boy Scout Troop 1212, which is composed chiefly of boys from Unificationist families in Prince Georges County, Maryland. Both Abendroth and Marchitelli are completing the requirements for their rank of Eagle Scout.