

Ki Hoon Kim visits the ACLC and local church in Atlanta

Tom Cutts and Gary Chidester
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Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, the Continental Director of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) of North America and newly appointed [International Vice President of FFWPU](#), visited Atlanta on the weekend of March 18-19.

Dr. Kim also serves as the National Co-Chairman of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC). During a recent New York meeting of the ACLC National Executive Committee (NEC), he learned that for the past four years, Pastor Mark Abernathy, ACLC National Co-President, and his wife, First Lady Edna Abernathy, have been conducting Marriage Blessings in their church in Snellville, Georgia. Prior to the New York NEC meeting, the Abernathys had Blessed 431 couples. In the three weeks following the New York meeting, they Blessed another six couples.

“The Marriage Blessing and the Divine Principle have transformed the lives of our church members. It has transformed my own family,” confessed Pastor Abernathy. The Marriage Blessing is an annual feature of the church calendar at Connect Point Christian Center. During the Holy Wine ceremony, couples pledge to be faithful to one another in marriage, and unmarried individuals pledge to remain pure until they are married. Throughout the year, the Abernathys continue to teach their congregation about the importance of, not only individual salvation, but the salvation of the family.



Pastor Abernathy, along with Rev. Tom Cutts, who recently returned to Atlanta, and the entire ACLC foundation of clergy are creating an interfaith Marriage Blessing movement in Georgia. Their goal is to Bless 100 couples in each of the fourteen U.S. Congressional Districts of Georgia. At the end of 2017, Dr. Kim reassigned Rev. Cutts to his home in Atlanta. Rev. Cutts had spent one year in Washington, D.C. and

three years in New York, serving as the National Executive Director of the ACLC. “After hearing what Pastor Abernathy had accomplished in his church, I now understand why God directed me to send Rev. Cutts back to Atlanta,” commented Dr. Kim.



On Saturday, March 18, Dr. Kim flew to Atlanta to meet with ACLC clergy and members of the FFWPU. When Pastor Abernathy heard that Dr. Kim was coming to Atlanta, he cleared his entire calendar for the weekend. The Abernathy couple and Rev. Cutts and his wife, Angelika, greeted Dr. Kim at the airport. Dr. Kim commented, “Atlanta is the first city where I was greeted at the airport by an ACLC minister.”

At noon, Dr. Kim had lunch with the Family Federation community leaders of Atlanta. Rev Gary Chidester, the District Pastor, reflected, “It was a wonderful opportunity for the members and local leaders to share directly with Dr. Kim, offering their reports of their activities as well as their hopes and dreams.”

Later that evening he held an early dinner meeting with 22 ACLC clergy. They met at the Atlanta Airport Marriott on Best Road. The Voya Restaurant set aside a private room where the ACLC participants sat around an open square, and ordered from the menu. The food was delicious, and the fellowship even more delectable.



Participants included the Georgia president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (the organization created by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), the presiding bishop of a worldwide denomination, a sitting state senator, a former state representative, the past president of the Concerned Black Clergy, a senior chaplain, pastors of several churches, and two ministers from the Nation of Islam. Most had known the Unification Movement for decades. One influential pastor welcomed the grandson of Father and Mother Moon to speak in his pulpit several years ago. Another pastor noted that he invited Rev. Cutts to give a sermon in his church many years ago.

Several participants knew each other from other associations, but had not realized that the other had also been involved with the Unification Movement. The meeting was a welcome reunion for others, who had travelled together with Dr. Kim and Rev. Cutts to Korea, Japan and Israel. Many fond memories were recalled about meetings with True Parents and experiences abroad. Several dinner guests were among the 172-clergy who were trained directly by Father Moon in Korea.

The highlight of the dinner meeting was Dr. Kim's speech. Bishop Aaron B. Lackey, Sr., and his wife, First Lady Lakita Lackey, commented that they were amazed by Dr. Kim's command of English and how effective he was at conveying his message. Bishop Lackey, the Presiding Bishop of the United Churches of God in Christ, remarked, "His vision to unify and strengthen families globally is greatly needed and much appreciated."

Dr. Kim testified that God is truly working in a miraculous way. He gave an overview of Father and Mother Moon's work in America and abroad. And he challenged the clergy to bring Atlanta and Georgia back to God's side. He said this is the most important mission of clergy.

He reported on Father and Mother Moon's initiative to change the culture of Las Vegas from being the "sin city" to the "shining city." ACLC is also very active in Chicago, and Dr. Kim reported on how the clergy are working together to stop the killing on the Southside. He discussed the importance of the interfaith Marriage Blessing. He also shared how Mother Moon is raising up the next generation of leaders. Five million dollars in funds have been set aside each year to give educational scholarships to young people. These funds are also available for the qualified children and grandchildren of clergy. He concluded by saying, "Let's make America great centering on God."



The remarks of Dr. Kim were very warmly received. Rev. Samuel F. Mosteller, the Georgia President of the SCLC stated how pleased he was that Atlanta has the attention of Dr. Kim, and appreciated the emphasis upon civic and cultural education. He said, "I was especially encouraged by the focus on the family and having everything be God centered."

Reflecting on the ACLC initiative to restore the Chicago Southside, Rev. Cliff Gaines said Dr. Kim's "roll-up-your-sleeves" efforts showed his and Father and Mother Moon's sincere love for America. Rev. Gaines observed, "After Dr. Kim spoke every person around the table pledged to do the work needed now to bring our communities back to God."

Minister Steven Muhammad, the District Coordinator for the Million Family March, offered an attractive proposal. "ACLC can have two service projects that can impact two impoverished neighborhoods, one in the black inner city, and the other in white Appalachia. The Nation of Islam can provide the security in the inner city." Rev. Samuel Mosteller, from the North Georgia Mountains, said he could provide the security in Appalachia.

"The fellowship was great," commented Senator Donzella James, "and after Dr. Kim spoke it seemed that everyone was interested in coming back together again to plan some positive events! We all want to make a difference and Dr. Kim's message encouraged us to continue and once again come together and live for the sake of others."

Senior Chaplain Jonathan Grigsby remarked, "I love Dr. Kim and his heart for people." Chaplain Grigsby resonated with three points from Dr. Kim's speech: the need to engage and train the next generation, to have faith in ourselves, and to know that God is in the miracle business.

Dr. Gloria Wright, who attended with her husband, Deacon Dan Wright, appreciated the warm fellowship. She commented, "We listened to wisdom at a dinner meeting planned by ACLC Executive Rev. Tom Cutts and his amazing wife, Mrs. Angelika Cutts." Dr. Wright concluded, "After our joyful reunion, and Dr. Kim's message we left inspired, invigorated, and ready to get back on the mission fields. We all look forward to future ACLC meetings in Atlanta, and involving others in our efforts. Dr. Kim, please call on us. Otherwise we'll rust or rot."



The next day, Dr. Kim concluded his visit to Atlanta by delivering the Sunday message at the Atlanta Family Church on the topic, “America is God’s Hope.” He added, “Atlanta is God’s Hope” and said many ACLC clergy wish they had one member like the members of the Unification Church. “We have to honor that value. We have to understand our value. We have God’s value. We are God’s children.”



Dr. Kim also spoke about True Parents’ urgent desire to bless the entire world for the sake of God. He mentioned the Tribal Messiah work of the Willett couple in Kentucky. They had 61 couples join in a Marriage Blessing celebration at a Chinese buffet. Even after giving the Holy Wine we have to continue to educate couples and families.

The next morning before Sunday Service, Dr. Kim had breakfast with Rev. Chidester, Pastor Kimura, Rev. and Mrs. Cutts, and Mrs. Eunsook Moon. She is one of the daughters of President Young Hwi Kim, and the eldest Second Generation in the District. Mrs. Moon shared about the new Youth Adult Committee, which organizes the participation of the youth leadership. Dr. Kim was very encouraged by her leadership, and offered to match any funds the youth program generated.

Mrs. Moon has known Rev. Kim for many years, since he joined the church with his aunt when he was only 11 years old. She commented how young he looked. He attributed his youthful spirit to reading Hoon Dok Hwe (scripture reading) every day, and walking 10,000 steps daily.

The Atlanta Family Church Council Chairwoman, Lynda McKenzie, is an 1800 couple and former State Leader of Georgia. She said, “It was inspiring for Dr. Kim to be here in Atlanta. He was down to earth.

He knows how to touch the hearts of members. His quote, 'I am a miracle maker' was most memorable. He is willing to match our efforts and expects great things from Atlanta. The people of Georgia need True Parents. I hope he comes back to Atlanta before another eight years pass by!" Dr. Kim's message inspired her to drive to UTS this weekend for the We Can Do It seminar with three other elder sisters.



Alice Boutte reflected that it was heartening to hear Dr. Kim speak of how he lives his own faith. Deborah Goni said, "He was talking about the importance of Hoon Dok Hwe for himself and he does it in the morning before he eats and at night before he goes to sleep. I can relate to that! I liked the way he tied it up at the end asking why we do Hoon Dok Hse. 'We do it because the Messiah instructed us to do it.' He also asked what is the most important thing for people. Members of the congregation gave various answers. 'God,' 'True Parents,' 'True Love,' etc. But he said 'The Blessing!' That was the key point for me."



Rev. Haruki Kimura, the Pastor of the Atlanta Family Church, commented, "We, Atlanta Family Church members, are very grateful for Dr. Ki Hoon Kim's visit. We were inspired by his spiritual guidance at the community leaders' meeting on Saturday. Many members were moved by his deeply insightful message at the Sunday Service conveying national-level content, and at the same time, touching personal and local points." Pastor Kimura continued, "This is the first time I had a chance to get closer to Dr. Kim. I felt his keen spiritual sense and wisdom, and his carrying True Parents love and spirit in him. I myself learned some important lessons of life of faith through him. I sincerely thank Heavenly Parent and True Parents for sending Dr. Kim to visit Atlanta."