

## Detroit Church Gives Back with Independence Day Family Fair

David Kasbow

July 5, 2013



One year ago, a local business gave the Detroit Area Unification Church located in Warren, Michigan a donation as a part of their community-service efforts. We knew immediately what we wanted to do with the money. Put on a community fair. Our church has more than two acres of land and is located next to a public park. We had heard that a fair was held in the park years ago and we had been thinking that it is something we would like to do for the neighborhood. This was our chance to give it a try. The business that gave the donation also liked the idea. We got inspired to see if other businesses would like to help out as well. They did. The result was our first “Groesbeck Park Neighborhood Independence Day Family Fair.” The businesses were the sponsors. We were a sponsor and the host as well.



*Young, second-generation Unificationists distributed True Father's autobiography and other Unification Church literature to guests.*

We had carnival games with prizes for the kids, a bounce house, entertainment on a stage and a bike-decorating contest. We held raffles every half hour and gave a free hot dog, chips and pop combo to everyone. We also had a “sponsors’ table” with coupons from the businesses who gave and, as a sponsor, we gave out True Father’s autobiography, and our church literature as well. When more than 350 people came, we knew it would become an annual event, and we planned to host another event in 2013.



*Behind the magician, a banner proudly displayed the Unification Church as a sponsor of the Family Fair.*

For the second annual fair this summer, in order to invite people we went door to door to the 1,000 houses in the square-mile area of homes around our church. As we went around again this year, we met people who came last year who told us they were planning to attend again. This year we upgraded to include a magician, a local band we met going door to door and a talent show for the children. At this year’s fair more than 600 people attended the event was held on Saturday June 29th, the Saturday before the Fourth of July.



*An international choir composed of Unificationists and local community members performed at the Family Fair.*

As a church we had gone door to door in the past inviting people to Sunday service and to evening programs without much success. Since we are in an area hit hard by the recession and by home foreclosures, this time we decided to just give something back to the community. We went out just to meet our neighbors, to get to know them and for them to get to know us, no strings attached. The result was that one of the first people who arrived at the fair gave a \$10 donation and thanked us for what we

were doing for the neighborhood. Several others thanked us as well. During the event we invited people to use the church restrooms. When one of our brothers went in to get supplies he saw one neighbor praying in our sanctuary. Another neighbor said to us afterwards, “There was no cussing, no swearing, no drinking, no drugs, no fights, just a nice gathering of neighbors.” The city councilman who represents the area came and said he would report our event to the city council and the mayor. The local weekly newspaper also came on its own. It all was a confirmation that we had made a positive contribution in the neighborhood.



*A bike decoration contest was held during the fair.*

The next morning, June 30th, three of our neighbors came to our Sunday Service and three more came by to visit. One of the ladies who attended our service told our congregation, “I was just praying to find a church to attend in the area and God brought your pastor right to my door!” (I came to her house with a flyer the week before.) In the past we had been hesitant about taking on our neighborhood as a “home church” area, but it is becoming clear to us that God gave us this church building in this location with these neighbors for a reason, so we are now planning a long range effort in the neighborhood along with our other witnessing activities.



*This family from the neighborhood happily received a copy of True Father's autobiography.*



*Through the efforts of the Detroit Unification Church members going door-to-door and inviting neighbors to the family, a local band offered to perform at the fair on June 29th.*



*Many fun activities were provided at the Unification Church-hosted fair, such as this bounce house.*