

Sun Myung Moon and Neil Salonen visit Unity Village, MO on Day of Hope Tour

Bill Peterson
December 17, 1973



Reverend Moon speaks at Unity Village luncheon

In August of this year, Bill Peterson wrote Sig Paulson, Head Minister of Unity, in hopes of arranging a meeting with Reverend Moon during the Day of Hope campaign in Kansas City. The meeting had been confirmed early in October, and would culminate nine years of foundation work with Unity School of Christianity, which maintains world headquarters in Unity Village near Kansas City. In addition, Sig Paulson had accepted our invitation to give the invocation at our banquet, and the scheduled meeting at Unity Village had now expanded to include a luncheon in honor of Reverend Moon, with the presence of Charles R. Fillmore, Unity's president, and top members of his staff.



Mr. Lowell Fillmore, son of Unity Founder Charles Fillmore, meets Rev. and Mrs. Moon. Portrait in background is that of Charles Fillmore

On the afternoon of Monday, December 17, Reverend Moon was greeted by Sig' and Jane Paulson inside the door of Unity Village Inn, where he and his party were escorted through the cafeteria line to the Gold

Room. Included in Reverend Moon's party was his wife, Mrs. Won Bok Choi, Mr. Bo Hi Pak, Mrs. Shin Uk Kim, President Salonen, Daikan Onuki, Mark Pierron, James Robinson, Mike Leone, and Bill Peterson, plus the camera crew and several staff members. Another important member of the luncheon party was Merta Mary Parkinson, who had helped arrange the date through her personal relationship with Rosemary Fillmore Rhea, President Fillmore's sister. Mrs. Parkinson, who became friends with Pauline Verheyen during 1968, met Reverend Moon in February of 1969, in Washington, D.C. She responded to his Kansas City visit when she saw the Watergate Proclamation on December 7 in the *Kansas City Star*. Dr. Parkinson is an executive in the Order of Amber, an ancient Egyptian spiritual group.

Lunch began as Unity's top executives seated themselves around a gigantic table with Reverend and Mrs. Moon at the head. Following the blessing and a quick, nourishing meal, Rev. Paulson arose to introduce the Unity staff. He began with President Fillmore, who turned to Reverend Moon, bowed, and thanked him for coming, then briefly expressed the significance he felt in this meeting.

Introductions completed by both Unity and our church, Reverend Moon was introduced as the guest of honor, and stood up facing warm applause. He then spoke approximately 40 minutes on the meaning and mission of the Unification Church, especially in light of the responsibility confronting modern Christianity. Concluding with the need to work together for accomplishing God's dispensation, he recognized the valuable and essential role Unity performs, then thanked Rev. Paulson and President Fillmore for their gracious hospitality.

His talk was received very well, with staff members leaving the table amazed and impressed.



Sig Paulson welcomes Unification Church president Neil Salonen to Unity Village, December 17.

For the next 45 minutes, the party was taken on a tour of Unity operations and facilities by Sig Paulson. Along the way, they encountered Mr. Lowell Fillmore (in his middle eighties), son of the founder Charles Fillmore, and uncle of the current president, Charles R. Fillmore, Lowell Fillmore's brother, Rickert (father of the current president), designed the buildings and grounds of Unity Village. Reverend and Mrs. Moon and Reverend Paulson posed for pictures and movies with Mr. Lowell Fillmore, who still reports for work every day before other workers arrive. While touring the library and private archives contained in the Heritage Room, Reverend Moon presented two autographed copies of *The Divine Principle* to Reverend Paulson, with meaningful inscriptions inside each.

The atmosphere of love and truth prevailing over us all left everyone feeling that not only was this occasion a meaningful fruit of previous work, but moreover a beginning step for the future. As the tour concluded and we were about to depart, Jane Paulson took my hand and looking at me with tearful eyes said, "This is truly a significant day for God... we must unite!"