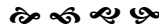


# Guide to the Seung Hwa & Won Jeon Ceremonies

Prepared by the Seung Hwa Committee of Washington, D.C.



*God created man and woman in his own image. (Gen. 1:27)*

*The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Gen. 2:7)*



This guide is offered as an aid to families in planning Seung Hwa ceremonies. The time of ascension is a challenging one for families and friends, and it is hoped that this booklet will lessen the stress and give families reassurance that they are doing all the essential things to support the person who is ascending.

We hope that this guide will also encourage Blessed members to discuss with family and friends their wishes concerning their Seung Hwa in advance, “for we know not the day nor the hour.” If we truly understand the substantial reality of the spiritual world and the meaning of the Seung Hwa, then we can plan for it joyfully and openly.

The following information is a combination of the tradition described in “The Tradition, Book One” and oral tradition explained since that book was published. It provides checklists and advice on planning the service and supporting the family.

This guide does not claim to be the final word on the Seung Hwa tradition. In talking to various people who have extensive experience with Seung Hwas, we found that there were variations in what was believed to be “essential” vs. “recommended” aspects and Unification vs. Oriental tradition, as well as the practical and feasible. Please know that the most important element of a Seung Hwa is attitude: love, honor, and respect for the individual and joyfully releasing the individual to begin his or her new life.



## **INTRODUCTION**

The Principle way of dealing with death, or as Unificationists say, ascension, is one part of a larger philosophy of life in which true reality is recognized as having two dimensions: physical and spiritual. God created men and women as the microcosm of the physical world and the spiritual world. Our members believe that, even after death, the body, which once held a holy human life, retains its sanctity. In Unification tradition, the greatest consideration and respect is accorded the ascended.

Funerary customs are traditionally supervised in Unification communities by a Seung Hwa Committee, composed of volunteers to aid the bereaved and to ensure that appropriate practices are followed. When a member of a community dies, it is the community's responsibility to lovingly assist the deceased's family in this final act of respect. The Seung Hwa Committee is prepared to assist families in making arrangements with a funeral home and to advise them concerning traditional practices and requirements.

## **ORGAN DONATIONS**

Though organ donation is a relatively new development in modern medicine, and may be viewed by some as involving some desecration of the body, we view it as an example of bringing healing to the living. Our Continental Director said it is permissible to donate organs or tissues.

## **THE MEANING OF SEUNG HWA**

The Seung Hwa ceremony is the celebration of the commencement of one's life as an exclusively spiritual being. According to the Principle, the Seung Hwa ceremony is to be regarded as more beautiful, enlightening, and joyful than even the Blessing ceremony.

Father shared some thoughts about its significance on the occasion of Heung Jin Nim's Seung Hwa ceremony at Belvedere on January 7, 1984. His comments were printed in the January-February 1984 issue of Today's World.

"I'd like to make a very clear announcement that will set the tradition of our movement and our church. In the secular world, death signifies the end of life. However, in our world, death is like a rebirth or a new birth into another world, particularly for those

who give their life for the purpose of the Kingdom of Heaven and for the sake of the movement are special heroes.

“For that reason, we must not make those occasions gloomy or sad or feel discouraged. Instead, we shall rejoice in the victory of the spirit in which that life was given for the mission. If we here on earth become very mournful and gloomy, it is like pulling the person who is going up to the heavens down to the ground.

“This is a birth from the second universal mother’s womb into another world, just like when a baby emerges from its first mother’s womb.

“A Seung Hwa ceremony is actually comparable to a wedding, when men and women get married. It’s not a sorrowful occasion at all. It’s like an insect coming out of its cocoon, getting rid of a shackle, and becoming a new body and a new existence, a new entity. That’s exactly the same kind of process.”

In our way of life and tradition, spirit world and physical world are one, and by our living up to that kind of ideal, we bring the two worlds together into one.

### **THREE PHASES**

The Seung Hwa ceremony has three basic phases: Ghi Hwan, Seung Hwa (same name as the ceremony’s overall name), and Won Jeon:

1. Ghi Hwan (“returning to joy”). The farewell greetings that the immediate family, trinity members, and close friends share with the elevated spirit.
2. Seung Hwa (“ascension and harmony” or “joyful ascension”). The service held for the elevated spirit by family and friends. Similar to a memorial service.
3. Won Jeon (“returning home to the palace”). The ceremony at the burial site.

These three phases of the Seung Hwa take place over the course of 3 or 5 or 7 days (an odd number of days). Day 1 is the day of death.

## **Preparation of the body and casket.**

- The casket should be sanctified with Holy Salt before the body is dressed and placed in it.
- Blessed members are buried in their complete Holy Robes (including the Korean robes worn underneath if possible), white gloves, white underclothes, and white socks or stockings. (new if possible, or the best available)

Ideally, these would be the same holy garments worn for other ceremonies (three-day ceremony, pledge with True Parents, etc.) Any garments that need to be purchased should be Holy Salted and given to the mortician for dressing the body. It is important that the Holy Robe belt be tied correctly; the mortician may need assistance from an individual who knows how (see page 158, diagram 18.9, in The Tradition book).

- The member's Blessing ring should be left on.
- Place the following items in the casket:
  - Holy handkerchief
  - Divine Principle book (especially one used by the member)
  - Special items that the person liked (optional; mainly in the case of children); anything placed in the casket should be Holy Salted.

### **1. GHI HWAN CEREMONY**

The Ghi Hwan ceremony ("returning to joy") is the farewell greetings that the immediate family, trinity members, spiritual children, spiritual parents, and friends share with the elevated spirit. This means that at some time during the interim between ascension and the Seung Hwa the family and friends visit wherever the body is and offer their prayers and farewell greetings. Our attitude should be one of sincerity and respect. As well, we should remember the efforts and dedication of his or her past life on earth.

**Location.** Traditionally, the body and casket are brought to the person's home (or another person's home or the church center) after being embalmed and laid out, and the family, trinity members, and/or other members of the community take turns staying in the room in which the casket stands, praying, singing, offering testimonies, and saying their farewells. For this ceremony, one should dress nicely, sing a song, offer a prayer, light incense, present flowers, and give a farewell kiss.

Today it is often not possible to have the body brought to the home or anywhere other than the mortuary. If the individual has specified his or her desires in this matter, those

desires are to be carried out. Otherwise, the spouse of the ascending spirit (or parents if the ascending spirit is a Blessed child) decide where the Ghi Hwan ceremony is to be held. If it is held in a central location, Holy Salt the room where the Ghi Hwan ceremony takes place.

(The casket may be open or closed during the Ghi Hwan ceremony, according to the family's wishes.)

**Prayer vigil.** The other thing that takes place in the interim between ascension and the Seung Hwa is a prayer vigil. Traditionally, an around-the-clock prayer vigil begins as soon after the ascension as possible and continues until the Seung Hwa begins. It is also acceptable for the prayer vigil to cover only the hours from midnight until 4 a.m. on the nights in between the ascension and the Seung Hwa. People can either pray where the body is, in another central location, or in their own homes.

**Altar** (in front of the casket). If the Ghi Hwan is held in a central location, an altar may be set up. Otherwise, the altar is set up at the Seung Hwa. See page 208, diagram 23.2, in The Tradition book.

-- New white or light-colored cloth to cover altar

- Framed picture of individual, in wood frame if possible; 16" X 20" is preferred size; at least use 8" X 10".
- Pink or white ribbon for picture (see page 207, diagram 23.1, in The Tradition book).

- Easel or stand to hold picture (funeral home may have one available).
- 2 Shim Jung candles, newly multiplied.
- OPTIONAL: Incense and incense holder (or deep dish with sand).

The smoke from the candles (and the incense, if used) purifies the individual's way to heaven, carrying all the thoughts, prayers, and content of the ceremonies to the individual and to heaven.

## 2. SEUNG HWA CEREMONY

**Location.** A Seung Hwa may be held at a church center; regional or national headquarters, depending on the realm of the ascending individual's life mission or work; someone's home; or a funeral home. We recommend that you visit the place chosen for the Seung Hwa as much in advance of the ceremony as possible. Find out what support services are available from the mortuary or church: sound system, lighting, easels, parking. Someone should be assigned as greeter to welcome the guests as they enter the building, guide them to sign the registration book, leave a donation, and give them a program. An usher should be assigned to escort them to their seat. Family and relatives should be in the front row.

**Ceremony time.** The time of the ceremony is arranged to accommodate the schedules of the immediate family, the funeral home, and the cemetery.

**Dress code.** For members of the immediate family and those who have an official role (officiator, pallbearers, picture carrier). Women should wear white or light-colored

clothes and red flower corsages. Men should wear dark blue suits with a white shirt and white tie and boutonnieres of white flowers. Pallbearers wear white gloves while carrying the coffin.

### **Preparation for the ceremony.**

- Holy Salt the room where the Seung Hwa ceremony takes place prior to the casket being moved into it. (If the Ghi Hwan was in the same room, you do not have to Holy Salt again.)
- Set up the altar (as described above). Make sure the room is well lit.
- Flower arrangements are placed around the casket and altar.
- For those who have an official role and for the immediate family: white boutonnieres for men, red corsages for women.
- Single flowers for the flower offering during the Seung Hwa. (The same single flowers may be used for the flower offering at the Won Jeon.)

**Banner.** The banner or sign displayed at the front of the room should say something like: “Seung Hwa Ceremony of [name of person] [date].” See page 208, diagram 23.2, in *The Tradition* book. The advantages of using a banner are that it is easy to fold and store as a keepsake. The disadvantage is that it can be hard to hang at the Seung Hwa site. It is important to visit the site ahead of time to see how the banner could be hung and then to bring the right materials to do so on the day of the ceremony. The advantage of using a sign is that it is often cheaper and doesn’t have to be hung, but you will need an easel or other kind of support to display it. When you visit the Seung Hwa site, think of where you want to display the sign (behind the coffin or next to it) and obtain the appropriate size and type of easel. The disadvantage of a sign is it is often fragile and bulky and therefore hard to store. Some copy centers can make a sign on large, good-quality paper that can then be mounted on a stiff background such as foam board. Then, depending on how the sign was mounted, it could be removed, rolled, and easily stored.



- Unification Church flag or Family Federation flag is placed across the casket.
- Guest book. This can be the same guest book as used for the Gwi Hwan ceremony. It is kept as a remembrance by the member's family.
- Bowl of Holy Salt at entrance.
- Programs: The program usually lists the order of service and those participating and may include copies of the songs as an insert. A biography of the individual is often read during the ceremony and a copy could also be included as an insert, if desired.
- You can arrange for someone to play music for the hymns and for someone to do a musical offering.
- Podium. The funeral home will have a podium available for the officiator to use.
- The Seung Hwa ceremony and the Won Jeon ceremony may be videotaped, and the tape given to the immediate family. If no videotaping is done, then a photographer should be arranged. In addition to serving as family mementos, photos of the ceremony might be desired for publication. The individuals operating the cameras should be sensitive to the situation.
- No picture of True Parents or True Family should be used in any part of the ceremony.

**Service leader** (officiator). One elder Blessed member should be selected by the family to lead the service. It is not appropriate for the spouse to do so.

**Songs.** The ceremony should begin with songs. These can be Holy Songs, such as “The Lord Into His Garden Comes,” or other songs loved by the ascending individual. Before the ceremony begins, someone can play music softly in the background.

**Prayer, biography, and testimony.** The officiator should then offer a representative prayer and introduce someone to read a short biography of the ascending member (optional) and those individuals to giving testimonies of the member’s life.

**Sermon.** The ascending individual’s church leader (according to his or her realm of mission) is introduced by the officiator and delivers a sermon. Of course if it is the family’s wish, someone other than a church leader can give the address.

**Flower offering.** Either one by one or in small groups (depending on the number of people involved), those attending the Seung Hwa should:

- Express a gesture of respect or obeisance, such as to face the altar and offer one full (or half) bow in front of altar and casket.
- Place a flower on the closed casket
- Offer another full or half bow and return to their seat.

If there are too many people, representatives may be chosen. These representatives should be announced by the officiator, making sure to have them come forward in a manner consistent with heavenly hierarchy. This is the general order:

- True Family
- center leader
- elder Blessed couples (in order of Blessing group)
- other friends and members
- members of the immediate family (they are last as they are also receiving the offerings of the others)

A closing hymn or musical offering usually follows the flower offering.

**Benediction.** A closing prayer is offered to end the Seung Hwa.

Announce procession guidelines. The officiator or a mortuary representative should explain the mortuary’s guidelines for the procession. Usually this entails the drivers

turning on car headlights, and sometimes flashers as well, and following the hearse without breaking the procession (proceeding through intersections and stoplights without stopping).

### **Items to bring from Seung Hwa ceremony to burial site:**

- Individual's picture
- Easel or stand to hold picture
- Flowers:
  - The mortuary usually arranges for the flowers to be transported in the hearse with the casket. If a large number are expected, a flower car may need to be arranged for as part of the funeral expenses, or you can arrange for a friend with a van to help transport the flowers.
  - The individual flowers offered at the end of the ceremony should be brought to the Won Jeon site for the offerings there.
- Candles [TRADITION BOOK DOESN'T MENTION CANDLES AT WON JEON]
- Incense and incense receptacle [INCENSE OPTIONAL IN TRADITION BOOK]
- Matches or lighter
- Holy Salt

## **3. WON JEON CEREMONY**

### **Personnel needed.**

**Pallbearers.** Eight pallbearers are chosen prior to the Seung Hwa ceremony. They are to wear navy blue suits, white ties, and white gloves while they perform their duties. (White gloves may be provided by the funeral home.) The pallbearers carry the casket from the Seung Hwa to the hearse and from the hearse to the Won Jeon site.

**Portrait carrier.** One individual is chosen to carry the portrait of the individual from the Seung Hwa ceremony to the Won Jeon site. This individual walks ahead of the casket carrying the picture from the Seung Hwa to the hearse and from the hearse to the Won Jeon site. The picture should precede the casket at all times. This means that during the journey to the Won Jeon site that the person rides in the front seat of the hearse (if allowed) holding the picture, or picture is placed in the hearse in front of the coffin inside the hearse, or the picture carrier drives in a car ahead of the hearse with the picture. Men wear the same attire as pallbearers, and women wear white or light-colored clothes and a red flower corsage.

**Holy Salter.** One individual is also chosen to Holy Salt the path of the casket from the Seung Hwa ceremony to the hearse and from the hearse to the Won Jeon site and the Won Jeon site itself. The Holy Salter wears the same attire as the portrait carrier.

**Procession to burial ground.** After the service, the procession to the burial ground should begin. The Holy Salter goes first, followed by the picture carrier, followed by the pallbearers carrying the casket.

The hearse is followed by the vehicles carrying the immediate family. The funeral home can arrange for limos to carry the family to the Won Jeon site. When you choose a funeral home, discuss in detail what services are provided for what price. They often offer “packages” of services, as well as “a la carte” services. Make sure that what you choose includes only the services you want.

After the immediate family, all others form a line of vehicles following the hearse, according to the instructions given at the end of the Seung Hwa ceremony.

**At the site.** At the cemetery, the pallbearers carry the casket from the hearse to the burial site, preceded continually by the person using Holy Salt and the picture carrier. (If the site is on a hill, the head of the body should be placed uphill when the casket is placed next to the grave.) Although not mentioned in the Tradition book, the altar should be set up as at the Seung Hwa ceremony, with incense burning and the candles lit.

A shovel with a ribbon on it should be prepared and standing by near the soil.

**Service.** The Won Jeon ceremony (graveside service; “returning home to the palace”) can be led by the same person who conducted the Seung Hwa ceremony or another person can be chosen.

**The general format is:**

- Holy Song (usually “Song of the Garden”)
- Representative prayer
- Sermon (or Hoon Dok Hae reading)
- Any words to be offered by other significant leaders and/or members of the immediate family
- Lowering of the casket (if allowed by cemetery rules)

- Flower and soil offerings
- Closing prayer
- Three manseis

**Flower offering.** Family and friends (everyone or representatives) may then place a flower on the casket.

**Soil.** Representatives of the immediate family should then throw a shovelful of soil on top the casket. Other significant individuals may also do so. This recognizes that the body returns to the earth.

The service ends with a closing prayer and three manseis. The candles and incense are extinguished, if used.

**Post-ceremony activities.** The immediate family and all individuals participating in organizing and carrying out the ceremonies may want to dine together following the Won Jeon ceremony, or a reception may be organized at a convenient location.

The immediate family takes home with them the individual's picture. There is no special ceremony when re-entering the home after any of the above ceremonies.

#### **AFTER THE SEUNG HWA CEREMONY**

**Altar.** The incense, candles, and picture used during the Seung Hwa are set up on an altar at home. The immediate family offers prayer for the first 40 days.

**Sam Oje.** The immediate family and any friends that wish to do so visit the Won Jeon to pray on the third day after the Won Jeon (day of the Won Jeon is day one). The spouse may lead the ceremony or ask someone else to do so. (A food offering may be prepared in advance and placed on the grave.) Family should also pray at the site on the 40<sup>th</sup> day.

**Annual return to the Won Jeon.** The spirit of the ascended individual returns to the Won Jeon on the anniversary of their death [IS THIS TRUE??] (not the anniversary of the Seung Hwa ceremony) and sometimes on their birthday. If possible, the immediate family and any friends that wish return to the Won Jeon site on those days to offer prayer, song, food, and any stories. If circumstances prevent visitations, then every attempt should be made to perform similar ceremonies at the home altar.

Disposition of the donations received at the ceremonies. These funds should be turned over to the family and used for expenses of the various ceremonies, including reimbursing the church for any expenses incurred.

### **SUPPORT COMMITTEE**

The family needs support during this time and people to help organize all aspects of the various ceremonies. A committee may be formed that can include the pastor, community leader, Blessed Family Department, friends. A funeral director will assist the person taking primary responsibility for organization and provides a great source of information during the process. Other people can take responsibility for organizing the prayer vigil, handling donations, organizing phone calls, brunch, etc. See checklists below.

**Cemetery.** If possible, choose one that will lower the casket in the ground during the ceremony. It is also important to think about what the family plans are after this ascension. On some occasions, it may be better to choose a Won Jeon site nearer the location the spouse will reside, rather than where the death took place.

**Burial plot.** If possible, choose an area with a good view (the higher the better) that gets plenty of sunshine. A choice location would be on the side of a hill.

### **CASKET**

The price of caskets can range anywhere from \$500 to \$10,000. Obviously it is the choice of the family, but it should be understood that no casket can protect human remains from decomposition no matter how much you spend. By spending more, you may delay the inevitable, but you won't avoid it indefinitely. Most caskets sold today are steel, hardwood, fiberglass or particleboard with a cloth covering. Time permitting, it is possible to purchase a relatively inexpensive casket on the internet. You are not required to buy from the funeral home. It is the opinion of the Seung Hwa Committee of Washington, that it is best to purchase a casket not made of steel or fiberglass in order to avoid interference with the natural process of 'returning to the earth.'"

### **PRE-PLANNING**

The time of bereavement is not the time to make many of the decision which survivors must face. An earlier preparation of a will is the first step to relieve such anxiety and anguish. Advance purchase of burial sites is another important step. Contact the

*williamselig@aol.com*  
*Summer 2002*

National Won Jeon Shrine in Washington for information about advance purchase of a burial site. (contact: [williamselig@aol.com](mailto:williamselig@aol.com)).

**Headstone.** The member's family selects the type of headstone, given the guidelines of the cemetery. Some cemeteries do not allow raised headstones. Information to be inscribed on it: name of individual, dates of birth and ascension, blessing group, church logo.

If True Father bestowed a title like "Reverend" or "martyr," that should be included. The family may also request a special message from an elder blessed couple. This can be inscribed on the headstone, usually on a side.

**Sample inscription for marker:**

**Thomas Edward Wojcik**  
2075 Blessing  
July 3, 1946 – September 28, 2001



The True Love Couple

**Model of Seung Hwa & Won Jeon program:**

**Cover:**

In Celebration of the Life of  
**(name)**

“Joyful Ascension & Returning Home”  
(Seung Hwa & Won Jeon Ceremonies)

date



Washington Family Church

Services and Interment at:

Ft. Lincoln Cemetery  
3401 Bladensburg Rd.  
Brentwood, MD 20722



**Inside cover:**

Seung Hwa Ceremony

Officiating:

Hymn:

Invocation:

Biography:

Musical Offering:

Seung Hwa Address:

Testimony:

Hymn:

Flower Offering

Hymn:

Benediction:

Won Jeon Ceremony

Officiating:

Hymn:

Invocation:

Won Jeon Address:

Flower Offering

Invocation

Three Cheers of Mansei:

**Page 2-3** can be biography, or lyrics. Songs may be downloaded from:

[www.familyfed.org](http://www.familyfed.org)

**Back cover:**

Seung Hwa  
(Peaceful Ascension)

A Seung Hwa Ceremony is actually comparable to a wedding, when men and women get married. It's not a sorrowful occasion at all. It's like an insect coming out of its cocoon, getting rid of a shackle and becoming a new body and a new existence, a new entity. That's exactly the same kind of process.

In our way of life and tradition, spirit world and physical world are one, and by our living up to that kind of idea, we bring the two worlds together into one.

In the secular world, death signifies the end of the life. However in our world, death is like a rebirth or a new birth into another world. For this reason, we should not make those occasions gloomy or sad or feel discouraged.

If we here on earth become very mournful or gloomy, it is like pulling the person who is going up to the heavens down to the earth.

Sun Myung Moon  
January 7, 1984

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Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. We live by faith, not by sight. We are confident. I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

II Corinthis 5:6-9

## CHECKLISTS

### SUPPORT NEEDED:

- help family make arrangements for mortuary, casket, burial site, death certificate, etc.
- coordinate prayer vigil
- help provide meals, transportation, etc. for family as needed
- make banner
- prepare programs
- write biography
- serve as officiator for Seung Hwa
- serve as officiator for Won Jeon (may be same person as for Seung Hwa)
- offer invocation at Seung Hwa
- give testimonies at Seung Hwa
- take care of guest book
- offer representative prayer at Won Jeon
- give sermon or read Hoon Dok Hae at Won Jeon
- serve as pallbearers
- serve as picture carrier
- serve as Holy Salter
- serve as greeter<sup>1</sup>
- serve as ushers
- offer songs, music
- coordinate meal or reception after Won Jeon ceremony
- purchase and gather materials
- videotape or take pictures of ceremonies

### MATERIALS TO BE GATHERED OR PURCHASED:

- individual's Holy Robes, white gloves, white socks, and white undergarments (Holy Salt them if they are new)
- individual's holy handkerchief (place in casket)
- individual's Blessing ring (place on correct finger)
- new white or light-colored cloth (for altar)
- framed picture of individual
- tripod or stand to hold picture
- pink or white ribbon for picture
- 2 Shim Jung candles, newly multiplied

- \_\_ Holy Salt and dish to hold it
- \_\_ incense and incense holder (or deep dish)
- \_\_ matches or lighter

FLOWERS:

- red flower corsages for women in the immediate family and women with official role (officiator, picture carrier, Holy Salter)
    - white boutonnieres for men in the immediate family and men with an official role (officiator, pallbearers, picture carrier, Holy Salter)
    - single flowers to place on coffin
    - flower arrangements (ordered by friends and family)
  - \_\_ banner or sign
  - \_\_ Unification Church flag or Family Federation flag (to place on top of casket during ceremony; take home after)
  - \_\_ donation box
  - \_\_ guest book
  - \_\_ white gloves (for pallbearers and picture carrier; funeral home may provide these)
  - \_\_ Divine Principle book (place in casket)
  - \_\_ special items that the person liked (place in casket; optional)
  - \_\_ video camera and videotape / camera and film
-