

## Sun Myung Moon and Hak Ja Han open the Unification Theological Seminary

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On September 20, 1975, the Unification Theological Seminary opened in a dignified inaugural ceremony presided over by Rev. and Dr. Moon.

The main chapel at Barrytown was filled with friends and relatives of the 57 entering students, Barrytown trainees, Church members, neighbors, and the seminary's first class. The ceremony opened with the majestic "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" sung by the congregation with the Barrytown choir under the direction of John Spradling adding considerable strength to the already powerful song, especially from their position in the loft at the rear of the chapel. The processional entering the chapel during the hymn included members of the seminary's board of trustees, participants in the ceremony, faculty members, Rev. Moon and his wife. Professor of biblical studies Thomas Boslooper confidently led "The Star Spangled Banner," singing a solo on the fourth verse.

Rev. Jack E. Wahlberg of the Reformed Church in Rhinebeck gave the invocation, asking God that His "truth be real to us. We pray Your blessing upon those who are being installed... we pray Your blessing upon those students who enter this seminary; may Your truth be made real to them."

Unification Church of America President Neil Salonen then greeted the guests, suggesting that the seminary could begin a new era in the relationship between the Unification Church and society: "It is our deepest hope that the beginning of this seminary will create a dialogue of openhearted communication."

The mayor of Red Hook, Miller D. Magley, also spoke, exhorting the students and faculty to apply themselves to their task well. Academic Dean Therese Stewart recounted the history of the seminary, stressing it as the fruition of Reverend Moon's longstanding desire to build a university. She explained that theology itself is in a state of crisis today, with fewer and fewer adherents: "A frequent question while we were interviewing applicants was: 'Are you really opening a seminary?' They were amazed because today so many seminaries are closing or consolidating." She expressed hope that the Unification Theological Seminary could help pick up the lag in the serious study of God.

Then began the official opening procedures. Seminary President David S.C. Kim performed the opening action of the seminary after he was installed. Holding a large red Bible wrapped with a wide blue ribbon, he said: "President of the Seminary David S.C. Kim hereby officially announces the inauguration of the Unification Theological Seminary in the presence of Rev. and Mrs. Moon and distinguished guests who have gathered in Barrytown International Training Center Chapel..."

"The Bible, the word of God, is opened." With these words he cut the ribbon surrounding the Bible, thereby opening the seminary. After David Kim gave a short message, chief administrator of the seminary Michael Warder initiated the installation. Each official installed was announced to the congregation, shook Rev. and Dr. Moon's hands, and bowed to the congregation.

Academic Dean Therese Stewart was first installed, followed by Mr. Warder. First of the professors installed was Sebastian Matczak (ThD., Gregorian University, PhD., Catholic Institute, and PhD.,

Sorbonne}, professor of philosophy. He was followed by the professor of biblical studies, Thomas Boslooper (PhD., Columbia University); Dr. Young Oon Kim, professor of Unification Theology and missionary to the United States (EdD., Southeastern); Warren Lewis (PhD., Tübingen), professor of church history; and Dr. Francis Elmo (PhD., Fordham University), professor of religious education.

Richard Murphy and John Maniatis were installed as librarians.

The choir sang "God's Glory and Honour" by Marcel Frank at the conclusion of the installation.

Rev. Moon then spoke in English. He closed the ceremony with a benediction, and the congregation sang "Christ is Here."

Luncheon began in the main lecture hall after pictures were taken of the participants and the students. Sunburst provided quiet background music. Eileen Welch sang two solos, accompanied by John Sonneborn.

Students began classes on Monday, September 22, taking courses in biblical studies, church history, Unification Theology, group process, and philosophy. The seminary offers a two-year Master of Religious Education program.

A joyous atmosphere pervaded everywhere the Convocation day. Not only were Church members aware of the significant step of opening a seminary; other respected people shared in that exciting anticipation. The four non-Church member professors clearly enjoyed the ceremony, feeling, it seemed, the historical significance of the occasion.

Each of the four is an active member or official of an established denomination: Dr. Matczak and Dr. Elmo are each Roman Catholic priests, Dr. Boslooper is an active pastor in the Reformed Church, Dr. Lewis is a member of the Disciples of Christ and professor at New York Theological Seminary. "While they may not accept the Divine Principle in its entirety," says Chief Administrator Michael Warder, "they have a great respect for it."

"Graduates of the M. R.E. program," he adds, "will have a broader understanding of the history and tradition of Christianity; be able to interpret traditional and contemporary theology in relation to the Divine Principle (the Unification doctrine); have a working knowledge of the basic tenets of major world religions; achieve new insights and skills in educational theory, method, administrative process and group function; and be able to communicate more effectively the messages of the Bible and the Divine Principle.

"By the opening of the fall semester in 1976," says Mr. Warder, "we expect to have more than 200 students enrolled in the seminary. We also plan to offer a Master of Divinity (M. Div.) program in the near future, adding substantially to our graduate curriculum."