

UPF Illinois Celebrates Co-Founders' Birthday

Bruce Sutchar
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Chicago, IL – The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Chicago Chapter celebrated what would have been Rev. Sun Myung Moon's 96th birthday and his wife's coincidental 73rd birthday in Chicago on Tuesday, February 9th, the second day of the Lunar New Year. The event was hosted by the chairman of a local Think Tank at their February monthly meeting. Although, it was a small intimate breakfast gathering, two of Illinois' most active Ambassadors for Peace commuted in to downtown Chicago for this special occasion. Olfat El Mallakh, a Professor of World Religions and Arabic and Mr. Lee Walker, Founder and President of the New Coalition were in attendance.

UPF Illinois Executive Director Rev. Bruce Sutchar had little else to do other than inviting the guests and bringing in the catered breakfast. Our host was a former Undersecretary of State and he immediately began sharing some deeply personal stories about his experiences with Rev. Moon. He attended Rev. Moon's very first speech in Chicago at the Arie Crown Theatre at McCormick Place. He described in detail his experience hearing Rev. Moon's robust voice in Korean while Col. Pak translated as an exact replica of Rev. Moon's body language, intonation and volume.

Ambassador for Peace Lee Walker then shared about his experiences with the Unification Movement in Harlem NY. As an African-American, he had never quite seen anything like the scene of Caucasian young men and women, dressed in white jump suits cleaning the streets of his neighborhood. Later he would follow all of their activities leading up to Yankee Stadium and eventually was able to connect with the movement after he moved to Chicago. He then began to team with Chicago ACLC President Dr. Willie Weston and travel to several of Rev. Moon's speeches in the Midwest. Eventually he would attend an International Leadership Conference in Korea and were roommates with Archbishop Stallings which was one of the highlights of his life.

Ambassador for Peace Olfat El Mallakh is an Egyptian Coptic Christian. She met the Unification Movement when she invited Bruce Sutchar to teach in her World Religions Class. In between speeches at Oxford University and the University of Paris, she was the first female participant on the 1st Middle East Peace Initiative (MEPI) trip to Israel. She shared that her experience of praying at Jesus' tomb (especially being female and being asked to pray) was one of the deepest experiences of her life. Since that time Professor El Mallakh has attended two of UPF's international conferences in Korea, where she served as one of the panelists. After the conference, Professor El Mallakh and her engineer husband were given a tour of our power plants in Pusan.

Another attendee at the breakfast was one of the most active leaders of the Catholic Community in Chicago. A grandmother of 18 and great grandmother of 2 children, she is a staunch anti-abortionist and a leader in the Catholic right to life movement.

Our host later shared about his relationship with *The Washington Times*. He told us what it was like being in Washington when the *Times* first began publishing. He admired Rev. Moon's commitment to take on *The Washington Post*, both philosophically and physically and he shared how much President Ronald Reagan loved the *Times*. He also talked about how much he respects Rev. Moon's commitment to financing his movement through various businesses across America.

The participants enjoyed a delicious catered breakfast of assorted hot breakfast sandwiches, muffins, pastries and fresh orange juice at the compliments of the Universal Peace Federation.