

## Actively and creatively build your Tribal Messiah ministry

Bruce Sutchar  
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### About Bruce & Ilse

Bruce and Ilse each joined the Unification movement in 1976; Ilse in Austria just before the Yankee Stadium Rally, and Bruce in San Francisco, just after the Washington Monument Rally. They were matched in December, 1980 (the first time that Ilse had ever seen True Parents) and then attended the Marriage Blessing Ceremony at Madison Square Garden. They both attended the Unification Theological Seminar (UTS) and graduated in 1985. In 1987, they were assigned the role of Illinois State Leaders (Chicago is Bruce's home town) for the American Freedom Coalition.

During their journey with the Unification movement, the Sutchars made it a point to reach out to people and share about True Parents in their daily lives. When asked about a typical outreach experience, Bruce said, "There is no typical. Giving directions to a traveler is a good way to start a conversation, because travelers may yearn for connection. Bruce says, "I ride the train twice a day for 45 minutes to and from work, and I never sit alone. I always find something to say based on the situation, and I always have a business card with me. I give it to the people I meet and invite them to our educational seminars."

### How It All Started

Bruce Sutchar grew up in a nominally religious Jewish home. In Jewish culture, witnessing is not common practice; however, at age 29, learning the Divine Principle put a strong sense of purpose in Bruce's life that he couldn't help but share. "I felt like I had a huge diamond and it would be a shame to keep it in my pocket," he said.

After both attending 40-day workshops in Chung Pyung, Korea in 1999, Bruce and Ilse returned to Chicago refreshed and inspired and began to invite couples in their own neighborhood to receive the Holy Wine, a significant step in the Marriage Blessing Ceremony. They successfully reached out to 180 couples, and also Blessed Bruce and Ilse's parents, Bruce's brother, his 94-year-old paternal grandmother and her sister, and a number of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) ministers and Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Ambassadors for Peace, with the Holy Wine.

### Favorite Outreach Memories

"We believe that witnessing should be a natural occurrence. Since we feel that the Divine Principle is precious and life changing, we witness to people in a natural way in whatever situation we find ourselves."

"Recently, our spiritual son called me from Arkansas to ask me, 'What the purpose of prayer?'" said Bruce. "Their dog had met our dog several years ago down the block near their house. Ilse, our dog and I went down to visit him over July 4th weekend after he moved to Arkansas."

The first couple the Sutchars Blessed were good friends of Ilse's. She used to bring them loaves of bread, which she would bring to the congregation after Sunday Service. Eventually Bruce and Ilse performed the Blessing Ceremony for them, right in the couples' front yard.

Bruce has met spiritual children just about everywhere: at a beach volleyball tournament, a Jewish delicatessen, a YMCA hot tub, while walking his dog in the neighborhood and while talking to a homeless man in downtown Chicago. Ilse followed suit by meeting spiritual children in Yoga class, and even by singing in the shower at a local park district swimming pool.



"I once ran back on the bus and screamed out my phone number to a sister that I had been talking to," recounted Bruce. "True Father always told us that if we have a conversation with someone, but have no way to get in touch with them, then we have wasted God's time."

Ilse is also a classical pianist and has used this gift to teach hundreds of students both in and out of the Chicago Family Church community. Twice a year, she holds a recital, often at a local church or senior center, at which time the parents and grandparents of her students usually attend. "It is a beautiful forum for witnessing," said Ilse.

"When I worked at our Jewish delicatessen in Oakland," said Bruce, "I took a breath of fresh air from work and went outside where I witnessed to a young man reading our menu. He then came to a Divine Principle workshop, joined the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP), and went on to be the Unificationist State Leader of Iowa and a UTS graduate. He now has a beautiful Brazilian wife and two beautiful teenage daughters and is living in Pittsburgh."

Ilse met Elaine in Yoga class. She is a devout member of Chicago's megachurch called Willow Creek Church. Ilse and Elaine have done many activities together and attended several of the Chicago Family Church functions. "We even got her in touch with one of our spiritual children, and together they went to an event at her church, filling bags to feed people in Africa," said Ilse.

"I also have three young homeless folks that I witness to regularly," said Bruce. "I have given them True Father's autobiography and my own autobiography ("From Rogers Park to Hanover Park"). True Father encouraged us all to write our autobiography for our descendants."

### **A Word Of Advice From The Sutchars**

Realize that we live in a stressful world where everyone is constantly reading how-to books in order to find success and happiness. Nothing will lead people more directly in these directions than studying, learning and living a principled lifestyle.