

My Unique Experiences with True Parents Chapter 2

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January 8, 2026

I joined on Christmas Eve, 1976. In San Francisco we used to pray all night in half hour shifts. The very first time I prayed I had a dream about True Father. In the dream he touched me and my whole body went limp. That assured me that, although I had never met him, that I could trust him.

About a year later Father was traveling with President Salonen and he was coming to San Francisco. The dilemma for me was that I was driving the witnessing bus every day and the deal was, if you had a guest you went to the evening program in San Francisco, but if you didn't, then you went across the bay to Berkeley to see True Father. Quite a dilemma for me to say the least. As it turned out, I did not have a guest, so I drove the empty witnessing bus with an by myself, across the Bay to our Hearst Street Center in Berkeley.

It was a strange trip. I had always thought the most important moment of my life would come suddenly and be a shock, yet here I was driving a bus across the Bay to what I was sure would be the most important moment of my life. At Hearst Street we were lined up awaiting Father and I was on the end of the line right next to the hallway where Father would eventually enter. At the very moment that Father walked past me, my whole body began to cry. We all know that real men don't cry, but now my entire being was sobbing. I felt so strongly that my Jewish ancestors were celebrating that finally, their descendent had met the Messiah.

We all know how that sometimes after a Sunday Service, we forget what the sermon was all about, but today, 48 years after first hearing Father speak, it's like I remember every word. He always began by asking, "how many of you are seeing me for the first time?" Then he explained that he had to walk up and down stairs, eat meals and go to the bathroom, just like everyone else. In his sermon, he said that the three most difficult things to overcome in your life were: going without food; going without sleep; and going without sex. Of these he said that going without sleep was the hardest to overcome. On another occasion Father would say that men have to be so connected to God that if a naked woman entered the room, we would not even become sexually excited!

I spent my second and third years in the church doing MFT by working in our Jewish deli in Oakland; usually from 7am until 10pm or from 10am to midnight or 2 am. Once when Father came to San Francisco, Dr. Durst really wanted him to come and visit the hard working brothers and sisters I the restaurant. Then one night, we got a call at about 10pm to get all the customers out of the restaurant because Father was coming in one hour. And of course that was my job. I had to refuse any new customers admission and then I had to get the current customers out, as quickly as possible. That was quite a challenge. I had to explain to the new customers that our stove was broken and that they could not even get dessert because the electricity to the refrigerator was out and I had to hurry up the existing customers to finish up and get out as quickly as possible. Finally, the restaurant was empty and we were ready to receive True Parents. The first thing that Father did was to walk directly to the back of the restaurant where we had a giant wicker basket full of bagels. He then grabbed a plastic bag full of bagels and began swinging it around.

Eventually after touring the restaurant, he, True Mother and Col. Han took their seats at a table. We had recently designed a new bathroom with a rug and copper fittings that was not open to the public, but which we used as our prayer room. We were so proud of it and desperately hoped that by filling him with coffee, Father would have to visit the bathroom. But alas, this never happened.

Several years later, about 1990, Father decided to do a tour of America where he would speak to the outside Korean communities. By that time I had moved to Chicago with AFC. To prepare for Father's speech we went with Dr. Pak and Rev Kwak inviting people in the Korean Community. The Korean community is located in what had been the old Jewish community of Albany Park along Lawrence Avenue on the north side of Chicago. The other Jewish/coincidence is that I had attended an almost all Jewish High School that now twenty five years later, was highly attended by Koreans. Now my high school was the venue that the church had chosen as the venue for Father to speak. This was the age when Father was sending everyone to their hometowns and I was literally already there.

We had one final meeting before the event. It was between Father, Dr. Pak, Rev. Jenkins and myself. Of course I was very nervous, having never been in an intimate meeting with Father before. But before the meeting was over, I had to interrupt to tell Father that not only was I in my hometown, but that we were currently sitting in my own high school auditorium.

In regard to True Mother, two events stand out for me. The first was after one of Mother's very first speaking tours across America. After she finished, somehow I found myself with several others in her

private suite. She was already preparing to leave the next morning to fly to Minneapolis. Someone asked her why she had to leave so soon. She replied that someone might be in Minneapolis who would die the next few days and if she took any more time, that person would never have the chance to hear God's words from her.

Another time, Mother spoke for the very first time in the Christian Church of Pastor T.L. Barrett, Jr. After her speech she left and returned to her hotel. But since Rev. Michael Jenkins was the Emcee, he had to stay in the church with the program. But I was able to travel with True Mother to her hotel. At that time the celebration room was set up with an audio connection to True Father who was at East Garden and members were being asked to offer Father a song. When I walked in, True Mother called on me immediately to sing. David Kim explained to Mother that I was not Rev. Jenkins, but she brushed him off and said, "I know that, its AFC Illinois brother."

Now I am a writer, not a musician. In fact in fourth grade, the music teacher told me to just mouth the words at the school assembly, because I couldn't follow the tune. (Interestingly, Father matched me to an Austrian Classical pianist). So when I got up to "sing" I was quite nervous and I just started to report to Father about our AFC activities in Chicago. But Mother would not let me slip out of the spot. She said, "please sing a song for True Father, he is not asking for a report." So inspired by a song that Matthew Goldberg had sung for Father at Jefferson House in Virginia at midnight after one of our AFC Conferences, I sang a Hebrew Song Havaynew Shalom Alechem I had learned in Hebrew School years before. Simply put, it means that God is happy when people come together.

Writing this reminds me of two other experiences I had to entertain Father. I had always dreamed of performing for Father, but could never even imagine how I could do this. At our seminary graduation dinner in 1985, David Claypatch was going to do a juggling act for Father. He then asked me to be like an emcee or commentator and explain to Father what David was doing. That was wonderfully unexpected.

Then again, over one July 4th weekend in Kodiak, several years later I was attending True Parents along with only a small group of about 50 brothers and sisters. Since it was such a small group, Father wanted everyone to perform over the three or four days that we were together. Now one of my favorite songs is, "Fly Me to the Moon," and I thought that Father would get quite a kick out of this song. But to be honest, I think that I was so nervous that it didn't come across musically so much and I don't think that Father was really moved by the musical and tonal quality of the words or the song.

Finally, for now I would like to convey one experience of being in a small group with Father at Belvidere, Most members were fundraising but I still had a broken foot, so I was able to drive down from UTS to East Garden one Sunday morning, just before Christmas. Just before 6 am Father still hadn't shown up and Dr. Durst was preparing to give the Sunday homily. I think that most of us were hoping that Father would spend the Day with True Mother and his family. But sure enough precisely at 6:00 am Father entered the old stable at Belvidere.

He challenged us and said, "how many of you wish that you were home with your families for Christmas? Of course no one raised their hands. But Father, said that he wished he was home in North Korea where he had grown up. He was remembering how he used to swing from the tree in the front yard. He said you are all thinking about where you grew up with your families, because that was the greatest source of love in your life. Then he told us that he had promised Mother that he would take the family shopping, but as he thought about all of us and how we must be missing being home with our families for Christmas, he felt that he had to come in order to comfort us.