

FFWPU USA appointments: Jack Harford District 6 Pastor for Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio; Gloria Laurant State Leader of Ohio; Kisile Hebangja pastor of Indianapolis Family Church and Ngandu Amisi pastor of Grand Rapids Family Church

Naokimi Ushiroda
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Hebangja Josue Kisile

"It's an exciting moment," says Unificationist Pastor Hebangja Josue Kisile, "but I am also feeling a bit nostalgic as it means I am moving away from my family for the first time in order to pursue a dream for which my parents dedicated their lives."

Pastor Hebangja, whose first name means "liberator" in Korean, is the newest member of the Indiana community, where he's now the state leader and pastor of Indianapolis Family Church since early August. He says he feels immense gratitude and excitement for this new chapter after pastoring the Grand Rapids Family Church in Michigan for six years near his family and friends.

"Other than True Parents, my parents have been a big influence in my life," says the 28-year-old. True Parents is an affectionate term for the late Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, who co-founded the Unification movement in South Korea in 1954. Pastor Hebangja's parents joined the movement as a married couple in their native Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1990 and received the [Marriage Blessing](#) in 1992.

"Like many elder Unificationists, my parents sacrificed their lives for the sake of God's Will," says Pastor Hebangja. "But for them the family was always their primary ministry. Having grown up without his

father, my father made it a point to always be present in his children's lives."

With seven siblings, Pastor Hebangja comes from a big, close-knit family where public service is a way of life. His parents were national leaders of the DRC for 19 years and ministered to countless young people there.

"During this time, my family lived in a church center," says Pastor Hebangja. "Sometimes this meant we were living with more than 20 brothers and sisters, so we had to learn to adjust and make it work." He says this precious time made him more family and community-oriented.

"I love each one of [my siblings] dearly," he says. "We are very simple people; we laugh a lot and we enjoy singing together. Every hardship that we have had to endure - from the civil war in the Congo to enduring the unexpected passing of our father - has brought us closer together and I am grateful that we all remain connected to our faith."

In 2014, the Kisile family emigrated to the US. While in college, Pastor Hebangja's civic-minded upbringing [inspired him to initiate](#) the first Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles ([CARP](#)) chapter at Grand Rapids Community College, and later serve as the regional coordinator of Youth and Students for Peace ([YSP](#)) and the Young Clergy Leadership Conference ([YCLC](#)).

"Growing up in such a public setting... adjusting to different people as they came and went was challenging," says Pastor Hebangja. "But it helped me to develop my heart to accept all different kinds of people and personality types."

Pastor Hebangja also recalls the fastidious care of his mother, a nurse who prioritized the health and safety of everyone around her. "She always made sure that we were healthy," he says. "Due to the lack of potable water in the DRC, there was a recurring epidemic of Cholera, which usually killed thousands of people. But because of my mother's care, we were never affected by it."

Pastor Hebangja says his parents' relationship left an indelible mark which inspires him the most. With his new role in Indiana, he aims to share the great love and faith instilled in him with more people.

"For me, one of the most precious teachings of our True Parents is that regardless of our race, religious affiliation, language, nationality, or political affiliation, we are first and foremost one family under God, our Heavenly Parent," he says. "In fact, True Parents teach that only when we can treat all parents, brothers and sisters, and children in the world as our own family, will we have the key to the Kingdom of Heaven."

Pastor Hebangja says that while he still has many things to learn about his new community, he hopes to create a supportive environment where all people find and experience true love and where each person is celebrated and valued as a unique child of God.

"I believe that bettering ourselves and the world is a journey - a lifelong journey - that requires a lot of patience and grace," he says. "I find gratitude in that even unbeknownst to us, God is patiently and graciously working in each of our lives and that in the end everything comes together in perfect goodness."

Pastor Hebangja succeeds former state leader and Indianapolis Family Church Pastor Jack Harford, who is now the District Pastor for District 6 (Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio). Pastor Ngandu Amisi is the new minister of Grand Rapids Family Church. Gloria Laurant was also appointed state leader of Ohio.