

## FFWPU USA: They Changed My Life: Celebrating True Parents' Birthday

Naokimi Ushiroda

January 30, 2023



*As we usher in the new year, from now on, the Cheon Il Guk heavenly calendar new year will begin with the celebration of the holy birth of True Parents. It's the eleventh year of Cheon Il Guk, and the first day of the Year of the Black Rabbit - I send you my love and blessings. - True Mother*

The celebration of True Father's 103rd birthday and True Mother's 80th birthday on Jan. 27 was live-streamed globally from Korea, and many Unificationists later celebrated on Jan. 29 in communities around the U.S. "This is such an important and commemorative day, and we want to continue to celebrate and honor our True Parents through all of our activities this year," said one young Unificationist in Maryland.

*"In their own life, True Parents had to go through a course to lay a foundation of true faith and fulfillment so that [we] could inherit from them," added another Unificationist in California. "We have the responsibility to develop the necessary qualifications and develop our own character as God's sons and daughters."*

The celebrations in numerous communities featured special offering tables filled with beautiful flower bouquets and fruit displays, various musical entertainment, a cake cutting, as well as a meal and video montages highlighting many historical moments in the lives of True Parents. It was also an opportunity

for Unificationists to openly share heartfelt testimonies with their community.

One woman recalled that, in 2010 while working at a kiosk, she observed an elder Unificationist who regularly came to her local mall for public outreach. "This is what his heart told him to do," she said. "He witnessed to me a couple of times, and kept inviting me to his church." By 2012, the woman said she had decided to become a member of the movement and officially joined. "The day True Father passed away was the very day I became a member," she said. "I've met all kinds of people, and I'm very impressed with this movement. [True Parents] changed my life."

For another Unificationist, it was a personal moment with True Parents that provided a glimpse of their kind heart and family-oriented nature. "My story goes back 38 years," he recalled, sharing that he was an assistant of Col. Bo Hi Pak at the time. "I still remember the adrenaline rush of going to the airport to pick up True Father," he said. "True Parents came to the car, and their kids piled in ... [They] were really attentive and laughing with their children the whole trip."

Other Unificationists shared how True Parents have not only inspired them in their faith and understanding of God, but also their personal lives and endeavors. One member recalled the deep connection she felt while writing her memoir of all the stories and experiences she had with True Mother. "True Father said Mother has her own mission to do," she noted. "And as a woman, [True Mother] represents all females ... so through her suffering and sacrifice - through all the things she is doing - she is allowing all women to become free from shame, sorrow, bitterness, and oppression."

"It's different from the mission of a man," she continued. "And in our families, the wife has a different mission than the husband, but we need both parents, and we need all of us working together," she said while also encouraging people to chronicle their experiences, including memories, dreams, epiphanies, and spiritual moments. "Write every story that is valuable," she said. "We are significant people [in this era]."