

## The Il Shim Ceremony - an Unificationists Teen's Right of Passage:

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*Dr. Kathy Winings developed the Il Shim curriculum together with Rev. Brian Sabourin.*

The start of spring marks the time of the year where Unificationist teens, 13 or 14-years-old, are ready to take part in the Il Shim Ceremony. What originally started as a program to endorse a purity-based lifestyle while preparing for the marriage Blessing, has developed into a ceremony of transition to encourage adolescent second- and third generation born to embrace and inherit the tradition of their faith.

Il Shim literally means “one heart” in Korean and was inspired by a ceremony Rev. Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), conducted in 1985 to declare the beginning period of responsibility for second-generation Unificationists. The Il Shim Ceremony helps teenagers recognize their unique potential and supports their efforts to grow in both the knowledge and practice of their faith and begin to build their own relationship with God and True Parents.



*The Il Shim Ceremony serves as a coming of age, a rite of passage, an inheritance of tradition and new beginning, according to Rev. Brian Sabourin.*

The ceremony serves as a coming of age, a rite of passage, an inheritance of tradition and new beginning, according to Rev. Brian Sabourin, of New Jersey, who started the Il Shim Ceremony in 1998 and developed the program and its curriculum with Dr. Kathy Winings, of New York. The curriculum includes PowerPoint presentations for large group meetings and a handbook for weekly small group meeting. “I taught the program in New Jersey and traveled around to introduce the program to other churches in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Pennsylvania and other areas,” wrote Rev. Sabourin in e-mail to Unification News. “I still advise the program in New Jersey and to whoever asks me for help.”



*Colorado State Pastor Rev. D Michael Hentrich facilitates the Il Shim program in Denver.*

“I became inspired by the Il Shim Ceremony and have been volunteering as an instructor for the past three

years at the West Rock [New York] community,” Susan Bouachri told Unification News.

“In West Rock the Il Shim is a twelve-week program and has a large group aspect where the participants meet after Sunday School with a youth minister or the volunteering parent and it has a small group component with weekly meetings in a home with a group of four to six kids,” explained Bouachri. “The curriculum is easy to follow as it includes major lessons to use, guidance and directions for parents how to run a small group, students handbook and PowerPoint Presentation for each of the main topics. At West Rock, we added to the curriculum by inviting Blessed second-generation couples to share their matching and Blessing testimony and also use materials available in UC Magazine, such as reading the feature “Honoring our Traditions.” [“Honoring Our Traditions” can be found in UC Magazine Vol. 1, Issue 1 Spring 2012.]

In Denver, Rev. D. Michael Hentrich, Colorado state pastor, facilitates the Il Shim program and wrote in an e-mail to Unification News, “The Il Shim program hopes to inspire young Unificationists to begin the process of inheriting their faith, with a special focus on making a commitment to sexual purity before marriage and a determination to receive the marriage Blessing.”



*Susan Bouachri volunteers at the West Rock New York community's Il Shim program.*

He continued: “In Denver, we hold the Il Shim program every one to two years in springtime. Middle school students participate in a weekly Divine Principle study after Sunday service each week. Every other week we have a special presentation on topics such as Integrity, Temptation, and God from an older second-generation Unificationist from the community who has been successful in establishing a life of faith.”

During the course of the program participants have to complete a one-week prayer condition and a one-day fast, ten hours of public service and a two-day workshop. Once the participants complete all the requirements they get to graduate at a ceremony held at the local church where they receive a ring to signify the completion of the program and intention to maintain their purity before marriage.

“When I began this year’s Il Shim program I spoke with Dr. Winings and she said she was inspired by calls she would get from people who are being creative and making their own additions to the original material to fit their needs,” said Bouachri.

Parents interested in obtaining the curriculum and PowerPoint slides for the Il Shim program can contact Dr. Kathy Winings and Rev. Brian Sabourin.