

History of the New Hope Family Church Council and Appeal for Council Members

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Dear New Hope Family Church members,

For almost eight years I have been serving as a council member on the New Hope Family Church (NHFCH) Board, now referred to as the Council. Overall, I am optimistic that the council will be an integral part of the development of the NHFCH community. But the council system will only flourish if enough volunteers will come forward to become council members. Therefore, I urgently ask everyone whose heart is with our community to consider becoming a council member. The nomination period for three open council seats is open until April 15. (So, please send an email to New Hope Family Church Elections)

Below, I would like to offer a short synopsis of the council's purpose, history and activities. I cannot claim that it is comprehensive, I just want to point out the significance of the council in the development of the Maryland Unificationist community. It has taken many years to reach the current level of activities and community participation, even though, from God's point of view, it is by no means sufficient yet. Nevertheless, a momentum is in place that comes from the ground up.

I am deeply grateful to all former council members, including Kyoko Betancourt who advised the council with her financial clear-mindedness (and she is now NHFCH's bookkeeper). Jim Boothby served only less than a year, but his initiative helped reactivate the council in November of 2012. Keiko Burton is a tireless worker for the community with the outreach team as well as the hospitality team. Brian Chase helped the community with his audio-tech and Web skills until he and his wife Christine were blessed with their first son. Dinshaw Dadachanji counseled us with his tremendous professional wisdom. Dan Fefferman led the council with patience and wisdom for two years. Libby Henkin passionately cares for our community. Daniel Hess is an energetic crusader for a principled lifestyle. Arthur Herstein untiringly tackled complicated financial matters. Ron Musiol counseled us with his common-sense. Michael Roschuni was the first second-gen council chairman. Eric Roschuni is a high-spirited activist who helps everybody without hesitation. Gary Rowe helped the council through a rough transition. Bob Selle counseled us with his intricate community knowledge and common sense.

All current council members deserve special mention: Beverly Berndt is an untiring activist, was many years responsible for the Sunday school, her home being also youth central. Doug Burton counsels us with wit and intellectual insight. Debra Gertz supports the community with a motherly heart. Miken Jenkins is an energetic, thoroughly committed, and quick-thinking second-gen. Joanne Parrish leads us as the first chairwoman. Shio Roschuni counsels us as the first second-gen councilwoman, especially in financial matters. Christoph Wilkening is the longest-serving active councilman.

History of the New Hope Family Church Council

In 1988, the first Sunday service meetings of blessed families in the mid-eastern Maryland section of the Washington Metro area were member-organized and took place in the apartments of blessed families like Robert and Debby Preece, and David and Cathy Hill in Laurel, Maryland. Mel and Holly Haft organized the next services in a multipurpose pavilion of an apartment complex near Greenbelt. Services continued at New Hope Academy under the pastorship of Geoffrey Hinkle and his wife Claire. Following that, Rev. Woo centralized all three church services of Northern Virginia, Metro Maryland and Washington, D.C., at the Columbia Rd. church, also known as the National Cathedral.

The origin of New Hope Family Church (NHFCH), the Charter, and the Board (Council)

Under the new leadership of Rev. In He Lee, the three local congregations held their own local services again. Towards the end of 2006, a group of elders in the Maryland church under the guidance of Rev. In He Lee wrote NHFCH's charter and set up a board of elected community members. The board's purpose was to provide stability, balance, continuity and good governance, as well as to shift responsibility to the local community and to enable new inspiration and new initiatives. On December 16, 2006, the board approved the current charter,

and NHFCH's members subsequently ratified it during a community meeting.

Pastor Susan Fefferman volunteered to take on the NHFCH pastorship, holding services again at New Hope Academy. Afterwards, Pastor Angelika Selle continued practicing the Cheon Il Guk spirit of healing and reconciliation. After Angelika became president of WFWP in the spring of 2010, the council selected and appointed Pastor Matthew Goldberg, first part-time, and then full-time beginning of 2011.

The board proved to be crucial when leaders and directions changed repeatedly. The board's purpose is to feel the community's pulse, care for it, as well as to elicit participation in the community, encourage new activities and ministries, and provide organizational and spiritual stability. Every year in September and October, the community elects half of the board members for a two-year term, and the board members elect a chairman. The board meets every two weeks, and the pastor, chosen by the board and approved by the district pastor, reports to the board about the state of the community. The board reported to the district director, who for many years was Randall Francis who attended many board meetings.

In recent years, community participation and ministry activities have steadily increased, especially by the second generation (2nd gen). Many activities have taken place at the New Hope Academy location. In 2011, the council searched for and appointed new ministry leaders for the young adults (Teresa Ferrete), outreach (Doug Burton), education (Annemarie Weinmann), and hospitality (Keiko Burton).

The Council's Financial Oversight

A key responsibility of the council is to develop and oversee NHFCH's budget. At the beginning of every year, the finance committee, the council chairman and the pastor plan the annual budget. They present it to the council, which votes on and approves it. The council can initiate new ministries and also approve new ministries developed by members. It approves each ministry's budget. In 2011, the leader of the finance committee was Dan Bankus and the accountant was (and still is today) Kyoko Betancourt. The financial committee and the accountant monitor and report monthly on the budget. The council's goal is to keep expenses within the monthly income through tithing.

The council election 2011 took place on two Sundays, Oct. 23 and 30, 2011. The nomination process was easy: According to the NHFCH Charter, any Unificationist adult in good standing, who "has been an adult member for one year and resides in the state of Maryland," is eligible to be nominated. Candidates are required to write an introduction of themselves, about 300 words, and send them to the election committee.

Forced deactivation of the council and its reactivation in 2012

Unfortunately, in Jan. 2012, the previous national Loving Life Ministry leaders decided that the council should cease its operation. Nevertheless, after the end of LLM in autumn of that year, with the change to the new elected District Council and the District Pastors Henry and Loretta Schaffler, the council resumed its activities again nine months later. Pastors Henry and Loretta Schaffler, after their installation in November 2012, in their first meeting with the council, apologized for the nine-month forced interruption of the council's function and encouraged the council's activities.

A new pastoral system in 2013

In the beginning of 2013, the council turned its attention to a change of the pastor system for the New Hope Family Church. In 2011, it had selected and, with the approval of the District Leader at that time, Randall Francis, appointed Matthew Goldberg as new pastor. Already by the end of 2011, though, the council had come to the conclusion that just one pastor, even full-time, was not enough to meet the manifold needs of the large NHFCH community, counting about 300 families with more than 900 members in the metro-Maryland area.

Therefore, in the spring of 2013, with the approval of the new district pastors at that time, the council designed a multi-pastor system, consisting of a main pastor, and two assistant pastors, one for outreach and the other for community development and care. It announced to the community a time for nominations for these positions, interviewed seven candidates and selected three pastors: Miilhan Stephens, a second-generation Unificationist,

as main pastor, Jim Boothby as outreach pastor, and Greg and Kyoho Jones as community pastors.

Another major effort of the council in the beginning months of 2013 was the financial oversight of the church budget. Arthur Herstein spent a lot of effort to unravel the budget at that time. Using his analysis, the council weighed in on the community-wide discussion about acquiring or renting a new location for worship and church activities. At the end of this process, the council with the pastor team came to the conclusion that it was best at the moment to continue using New Hope Academy and build up a fund for a change of venue in the future. Throughout 2013, and until now the budget is balanced, and the council has compiled a full report for the community.

New Council election 2013

After the pastor team was in place and the annual budget was stabilized, the council called for the election of four new council members whose term either had ended (Dinshaw Dadachanji, Jim Boothby, who resigned because he became outreach pastor) or who had resigned for personal reasons from the council (Arthur Herstein, and Gary Rowe). The election took place in April 2013, and four new council members started their term in May: Miken Jenkins, Shio Roschuni, and Joanne Parrish, who the council elected as the new chairwoman. Debra Gertz joined as well, instead of James Stewart who was determined to be ineligible for a NHFCH council seat, because he resides in Baltimore, and also has taken on the role of pastor for the community there.

Preservation of the community's stability

New Pastor Miilhan Stephens gives a special focus to outreach and witnessing. The council meets every two weeks with him and occasional guests. The national and local church organization is undergoing restructuring toward local church governance. Because the council is experienced in local governance, it has played and will play a significant role in in this process. Therefore, the council is crucial to guide and complement this process.

Community Building and Outreach 2011 - 2013

During the last four years, there have been many community events that fostered unity and volunteerism and reached out to the public. The council was instrumental in the planning, budgeting and execution of all these events. For example, the annual Thanksgiving Extravaganza features a sumptuous community potluck lunch with live entertainment, with each council members donating a cooked turkey, as well as helping with cooking and serving. The annual Christmas Celebration features a delicious Christmas desert party.

From Nov. 20, 2010 to Jan 31, 2011, members participated in a 3 x 21-day condition to read and distribute of True Father's autobiography. The Easter Sunday Celebration 2011 featured a community potluck lunch and music entertainment. Many enthusiastic volunteers helped all these events. The Boy Scouts and their family members deserve special thanks because of their consistent and never-tiring help.

The Japan Aid Festival and Concert on May 1, 2011, raised funds for the victims of Japan's earthquake and tsunami and received wide-spread support (see the video on <http://vimeo.com/23645282>). To illustrate the level of volunteerism that such an event requires, the following groups together made this festival a great success: New Hope Academy (NHA) not only provided its building, rooms and grounds to hold the festival, but also publicized and invited parents and students to come. The young adult group with Teresa Ferrete helped. The outreach team with Keiko and Doug Burton supported. The youth group with Kaleigh Moffitt set up and staffed the ticket booth, the face painting and more. The Boy Scouts helped set up and sold grilled chicken; the Girl Scouts helped set up. The Japanese women prepared sushi. The local True World Group donated the sushi material. The WFWP with Kim Dadachanji hosted well-known floral designer Mme Yuki Sakata, who travelled from Japan to teach floral design for this event. The WAIT team performed during the concert. The band The Rumble with George Burton, Matt Holden and other musicians, as well as the Mizanis, Ahmad and Emiko Nadimi, Laurence Baer, and Shin Taylor entertained during the concert.

NHFCH youth were members of District 1's soccer, Frisbee, and volley ball teams at the Blessed Culture and Sports Festivals (BCFS), in 2011, 2012, and 2013, held at the UTS in Barrytown, NY. In 2011, the soccer team won 3rd place. In 2012, the men's Frisbee team won first place. In 2013, both men and women Frisbee teams

won first place. The council actively supported their participation.

Examples of increasing community participation and outreach efforts were the booths and book table at the Greenbelt Labor Day Festival in Greenbelt, MD, in 2011, 2012, and 2013, and the 9/11 Memorial Festival at the Unification Church in Washington, D.C., in 2011.

In 2011, on Sept. 2, volunteers set up two booths at the Greenbelt Labor Day Festival. Under the banner of Lovin' Life Ministries, one booth, staffed by women of the Japanese community, offered its visitors to write their names or any phrase of their choosing with beautiful Chinese calligraphy, lovingly designed by the Japanese women, as well as to teach how to fold origami creatures. The other booth, under the leadership of Beverly Berndt, sold so-called "Virgin Mocktails," alcohol-free smoothies that were a favorite for many youth and children. Both booths combined received an award, including a \$100 check, by the Greenbelt organizers for the best booth of the Greenbelt Labor Day Festival with special recognition for the use of environmentally-friendly, corn-based plastic cups. The public's response was overwhelmingly positive. About two dozen members, including several council members, witnessed around the booths as well as on Sunday at the LLM book table, featuring True Father's autobiography and other literature.

A week later, warm sunshine engulfed the 9/11 Memorial Festival 2011, held at the Columbia Rd. National Cathedral after Sunday service. The sounds of Jamii African drummers, the Washington Peace Choir, Ottmar Weinmann on the keyboard, as well as the hourly prayer for peace and reconciliation by Pastor Matt Goldberg staged on the patio behind the church building drew many visitors. Over 30 new friends visited throughout the day. A free memorial luncheon and a promotional video entertained the guests. Again, several council members supported this event.

On Sept. 9, 2011, Lan Tsubata sponsored a seminar held at NHA and on Sept. 10 at Kazuo and Kate Tsubata's home, called "Empowering Families." The presenters were John Lowen, a certified Forensic and Family Social Worker, Life Plan Counselor, and Sandra Lowen, PhD, a certified Marriage and Families Counselor, Trauma Therapist. They have helped many people of all ages and backgrounds. They "dealt with the 'red flags' in our relationships with our spouses, parents or children, what to do and what not to do in turning our issues around and where we can proceed from this point to pick ourselves up and build the world God—and we—want to live in through healing ourselves and our families." The seminar did not deliver "quick fixes," but provided thought-provoking new insights and for many a new start into their couple and family relationship. Council members participated in this event as well.



The youth group in 2012 under the leadership of Kaleigh Moffitt (bottom row, 2nd from left)

2012 proved to be a year of many changes and challenges. True Father's ascension brought a time of deep

reflection and new determination for the NHFCH community in 2012. It coincided with the demise of the LLM structure and gave rise to a reborn NHFCH council in December 2012, and a new pastoral team in April 2013. In spite of the rigid, centralized organizational model of the Loving Life Ministries and its nation-wide broadcasted Sunday services, the local ministries had continued to develop, especially the youth ministry under the dedicated leadership of Kaleigh Moffitt.

The NHFCH Council and community in 2013 and 2014

Since 2013, the next phase of community life and growth is in full swing. We are aware that we are facing many challenges. Young adults need our special focus. Pastoral care for blessed families of all ages is another priority. On the council's initiative, Pastor Miilhan has now an assistant, Rusan Weinmann, whose responsibility is to help him with, especially with communication and administration.

2014 brings new challenges and changes. Gregg and Kyoho Jones, former inreach pastors during 2013, are now pioneering a new local, home-based outreach ministry called New Earth Family Ministry. Pastor Miilhan has assembled a circle of volunteers, including two council members, to care for each family in our community. Each volunteer has chosen a number of families to care for.

Each council member is focusing to help with a specific area of need in the community: Joanne Parrish focuses on oversight of the community's financial matters. Beverly Berndt and Christoph Wilkening help form the circle of volunteers involved in family care. Doug Burton helps his wife Keiko organize events. Debra Gertz cares for us with her motherly heart. Miken Jenkins helps Pastor Miilhan with finding an appropriate Learning Center location and related issues. Shio Roschuni keeps track of the budget and financial matters, supporting Kyoko Betancourt.

In all activities, an increased Web presence will be crucial to reach an increasing audience. To be an open and growing community means that our purpose is outside of our Unificationist community—understanding and meeting the needs of the communities surrounding us.

Upcoming Council Elections

Again, overall, I am optimistic that the council will be an integral part of the development of the Unification community in the Maryland-Metro area. But the council system will only flourish if enough volunteers will come forward to become council members. Therefore, again, I urgently ask everyone whose heart is with our community to consider becoming a council member.