### FFWPU USA: Deadline for Pilgrimage Tomorrow

Demian Dunkley March 26, 2025



### The Newsletter

March 26, 2025

Hello family. True Parents' message. Pilgrimage deadline. Blessing webinar. WCLC webinar. Job opportunities. Japan update. Petition continues.

### News

## True Parents' Message



This message was given by True Mother on the occasion of a gift bestowal ceremony to long-time members on March 18, 2025.

# "Today, although you have all walked a laborious providential course, you are very blessed people."

You who have welcomed the 13th year of Cheon II Guk are living in a golden time. How did I explain this golden time? True Parents have created the environment in which people can attend the Creator, Heavenly Parent, on earth.

After 6,000 years of history since the Fall of our first ancestors, after 6,000 years of God's providence, I have spoken of Heavenly Parent, who is not just Heavenly Father. Therefore, I have said that while all religions and all people attend Heavenly Parent within Heavenly Parent's Holy Community, they must absolutely receive the Blessing through True Parents.

read more

# Pilgrimage Registration Deadline TOMORROW, Thursday at 12pm Eastern!

Limited space is still available. Make sure to add the 2-day extension for a chance to tour the brand new Cheon Won Gung Cheonil Sanctum!



register today

Do you have children serious about committing to the Blessing?



Families with children aged 11-17 can register their children to participate in the Holy Commitment Ceremony during the HJ Cosmic Blessing on April 12. They will be committing to maintaining their sexual integrity in preparation for receiving the Blessing one day. Simply choose the option on the registration form, "My child will participate in the Holy Commitment Ceremony on April 12 (for children over 11 years old)". There is no prior preparation required.

register here

### **Events**

Blessing Webinar Tomorrow: How a Matching Supporter Can Help Your Matching Journey



register here

WCLC Webinar: The Essence of Jesus



register here

## **Opportunities**

National Ocean Challenge is Hiring a Head Cook



apply now

## New Hope School is Seeking a Principal



New Hope School, a UC-based school located in Clifton, NJ, is seeking a Principal. We are an MSA-accredited school that maintains a challenging academic curriculum as well as a strong character education program. Many of our graduates have been accepted at Passaic Valley Technical Vocational School, an elite charter high school in the area.

apply now

### Japan

# Japan's First Degree Decision Against the Unification Church: No Winners, All Losers

by Massimo Introvigne

The dissolution of the Unification Church damages all religions, Japan, and its international image. All friends of religious liberty should protest a scandalous verdict.



Tokyo District Court. From X

In Japan, Tokyo District Court granted on March 25 the request of the government to dissolve the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (formerly known as the Unification Church) as a religious corporation. The Church has announced its intention to appeal.

There are no winners in this case, only losers.

Undoubtedly, the Unification Church lost the case. But what is the Unification Church? Media

slander created for many Japanese an abstract and false image of an evil, anti-social entity, a stereotypical "cult." Organizations, however, are made of real women and men, with their life stories, their joys, and their sorrows.

read more

# FFWPU USA Statement on the Japanese Court Ruling to Dissolve FFWPU Japan

# Religious freedom in Japan is under threat and it's spreading.

Sign the Petition to Defend Religious Freedom

### We Are Deeply Grieved—But Not Surprrised

The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification in the United States stands in solemn solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Japan following the court's decision to allow the Japanese government to dissolve FFWPU Japan.

"The church and the concept of religious freedom are now battling for survival in Japan's legal system."

(All quotes sourced from The Washington Times unless otherwise noted)

### Let Us Be Clear: No Crime Was Committed

For the first time in Japan's postwar history, a peaceful religious organization is being dismantled by the state without a single criminal conviction. The court's decision does not mark justice—it marks a turning point in Japan's democratic identity.

read more

# Help Us Get 100K USA Signatures by March 31!

The fight for Japan is not over. Let's work together to get 100,000 signatures from the USA by March 31. The petition and flyers are available in seven languages: English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Korean, Japanese, and Chinese. Spread the word and keep the fight alive!



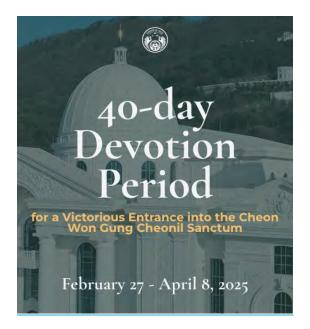
spread the word

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READ TI	HE PETITION
First Name	
First Name	-
Last Name	
Last Name	
Email	
Email address	
State	
State	
Country	
United States	
Organization (optional)	
Organization	
We process your information in acc	
I agree to privacy policy (require	d)
	Sign





Photo: NPR

# Why should I care? It could happen to you.

SIGN PETITION



Photo: Washington Times

TAKE ACTION

# Religious freedom for one is freedom for all.

Add your voice of support by signing the petition.

SIGN PETITION

# ...and spread the word!

DOWNLOAD FLYER

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM FOR ONE IS FREEDOM FOR ALL

# RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN JAPAN IS UNDER THREAT AND IT'S SPREADING

SIGN THE PETITION TO DEFEND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

bit.ly/pswm-petition





# Petition to Defend Religious Freedom in Japan

This petition will be sent to President Donald J. Trump.

We, the undersigned representatives of many faith communities, affirm that religious freedom is the foundation of all freedoms. We urge you to help Japan uphold this fundamental right and reverse its disturbing shift away from religious liberty.

The U.S. State Department's 2023 Report on International Religious Freedom stated that Japan's request to order the dissolution of the Family Federation, "marked a deviation from the norm, as previously, revocations had only been ordered following violations of criminal law." The churches and religious movements that are being attacked have not violated any criminal law.

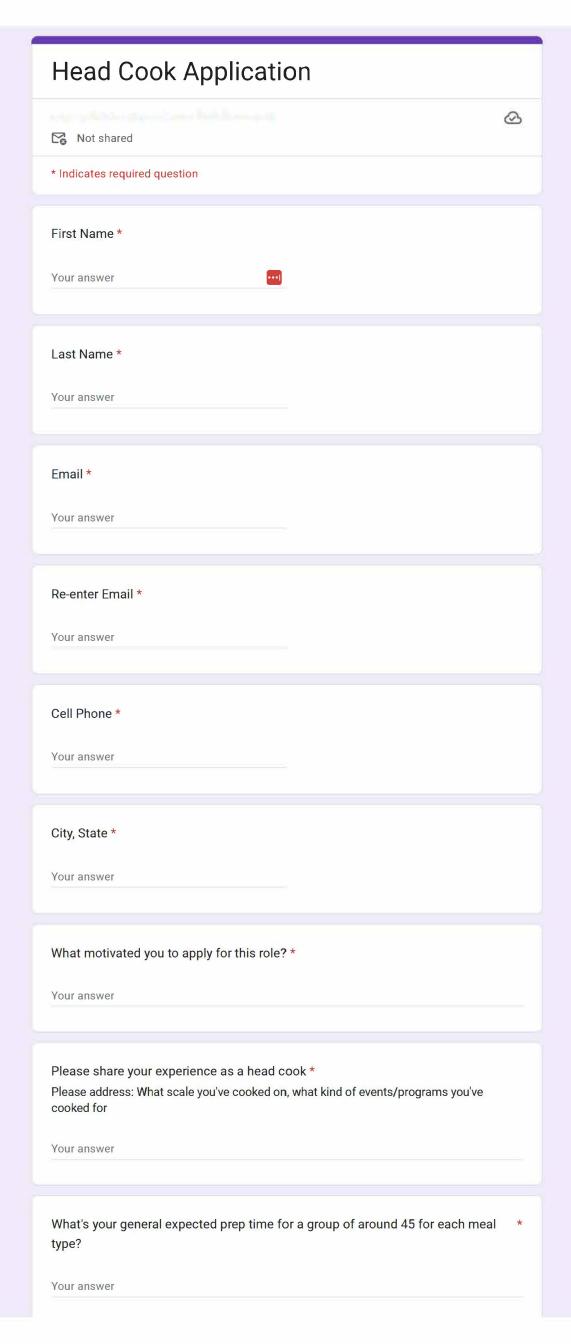
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Date & Time	Mar 26, 2025 02:00 PM in Mountain 1	Mar 26, 2025 02:00 PM in Mountain Time (US and Canada)		
Description	After the webinar, please share your reflections in this form (Copy and paste): https://tinyurl.com/reflection-wclc			
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Your answer	
What kind of food do you enjoy cooking the most? *	
Your answer	
How many assistant cooks would you prefer to have supporting you for BREAKFAST (when there's also lunch to prep)?	¥
Support cooks would have average to extensive cooking experience.	
Your answer	
How many assistant cooks would you prefer to have supporting you for LUNC (on land days)?	Н +
Support cooks would have average to extensive cooking experience.	
Your answer	
How many assistant cooks would you prefer to have supporting you for DINN Support cooks would have average to extensive cooking experience.	ER? *
Your answer	
Participants arrive on July 1. We'd prefer to have the head cook arrive 2-3 day before to orient, shop and prepare. Participants fly out on July 23 (last meal would be dinner for anyone left). What's your thought on time frame for arrival/departure?	s *
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Do you have a driver's license?*	
O Yes	
O No	
Please list TWO references. Include name, phone, email and their relationship you.	to *
Your answer	
Any other comments/questions?	

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### New Hope School is seeking a School Principal

December 11, 2024

New Hope School, a UC-based school located in Clifton, NJ, is seeking a Principal. We are an MSA-accredited school that maintains a challenging academic curriculum as well as a strong character education program. Many of our graduates have been accepted at Passaic Valley Technical Vocational School, an elite charter high school in the area.





Position: School Principal

Credentials: MA in Education preferred although not required

Summary: New Hope School is looking to fill the position of School Principal for the 2025-26 school year. Ideally, we would like to find someone who could train under our current principal, Dr. Robert Beebe, during the upcoming 2024-25 school year and be ready to take over as principal the following year. Candidates should have administrative skills and be able to lead and inspire teachers. Personal classroom experience is preferred but not required. We are looking for someone who believes in New Hope's mission to raise up children to be Principled and Godcentered individuals. New Hope School seeks to be a model school in exemplifying HJ (Hyojeong) Education for both blessed and non-blessed children. Salary is negotiable.

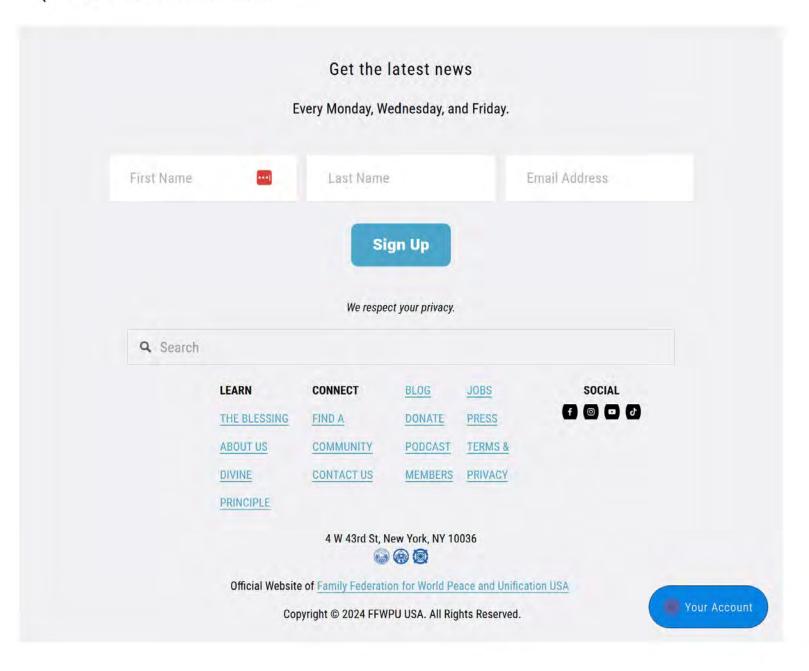
You can find out more on our website.

#### TO APPLY

If you are interested in applying for the position above, please contact Dr. Robert Beebe at 973-

768-7594 or by email at rbeebe@newhopeschoolnj.com.

⟨ HJIFEP is seeking a Business Director





### Japan's First Degree Decision Against the Unification Church: No Winners, All Losers

03/25/2025 MASSIMO INTROVIGNE



The dissolution of the Unification Church damages all religions, Japan, and its international image. All friends of religious liberty should protest a scandalous verdict.

by Massimo Introvigne



Tokyo District Court. From X.

In Japan, Tokyo District Court granted on March 25 the request of the government to dissolve the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (formerly known as the Unification Church) as a religious corporation. The Church has announced its intention to appeal.

There are no winners in this case, only losers.

Undoubtedly, the Unification Church lost the case. But what is the Unification Church? Media slander created for many Japanese an abstract and false image of an evil, antisocial entity, a stereotypical "cult." Organizations, however, are made of real women and men, with their life stories, their joys, and their sorrows. The government and the Church's opponents have found a few dozen apostate ex-members willing to complain about their donations to the Unification Church. But what about the tens of thousands who have donated to build places of worship and other buildings and are happy about their donations? They donated their hard-earned money and, if the decision is confirmed on appeal and at the Supreme Court, the properties their love and generosity built will be confiscated and given to a liquidator.

One of the lies spread about the case is that the Church will only lose its tax-exempt status. This is false. With the dissolution the Church will lose all its assets, including its buildings. Yes, believers will still be able to worship in private homes, but those who were glad to donate will see their money go to the government and even be used to support the militant opponents of the Church. If this is not legalized theft, I don't know what it is.





Unification Church believers and supporters march to protest the dissolution action.

There are other losers, however. As a leading Japanese Buddhist monk explained in an interview, all religions are among the losers as they are now at risk in Japan, including Buddhist temples. For decades, Japanese legislation on religious corporation has been interpreted by regarding only criminal decisions as grounds for dissolution of a religious corporation. Even then Prime Minister Kishida at first answered those claiming that the Unification Church should be dissolved that this was not possible, as the Church had not been found guilty in a single criminal case. Under media pressure, in turn fueled by militant anti-cult opponents of the Church, he quickly reversed his position and stated that having lost civil, as opposed to criminal, cases is enough to be dissolved.

Unfortunately, Japan's Supreme Court confirmed this interpretation, which reverses decades of case law, confirming the sad truth that in Japan more often than not the judiciary follows the government and even the media.

But what are the civil cases the Unification Church lost? The government relied on thirty-two cases, referring to alleged psychological pressure used to persuade members either to donate money or to buy artifacts such as miniature pagodas and seals supposed to bring good luck at excessive prices (what opponents call "spiritual sales"). But there are three key points the court did not consider.

First, many of these cases referred to ex-members who had been kidnapped, confined, and deprogrammed, then persuaded to file suits with the threat of being confined again if they didn't. Although Japan's Supreme Court declared deprogramming illegal in 2015, it seems that by relying on these cases the government is condoning the obnoxious and criminal practice.

Second, when the campaign against the Unification Church was revamped by the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2022, the practice of "spiritual sales," by individual believers or companies belonging to believers (never by the Unification Church as such) was largely a thing of the past. In 2009, the Church issued a "declaration of compliance" with Japanese laws that had been passed to protect consumers, which in fact ended the so-called "spiritual sales," 99.7% of the actions against the Unification Church refer to incidents that happened before the "declaration of compliance." Out of the thirty-two civil cases mentioned in the dissolution action, only one refers to donations made after that declaration.

Third, there is the serious suspicion, raised even in the Japanese Parliament, that some testimonies of ex-believers allegedly regretting their donations were fabricated or manipulated by the government. Also, no mention was made of the civil cases that the Unification Church won. No wonder the Buddhist monk noted that, with these criteria and tactics, donations made to any religious organization may lead to its dissolution.

In addition to the Unification Church and all Japanese religious organizations, the main loser in the case is Japan. Scholars have noted that Japan has no tradition of religious liberty. The Constitutional reference and the laws protecting it were imposed on Japan by American occupiers after World War II. Yet, Japan managed to include in its laws and in the Constitution itself a poisonous provision that would allow the authorities to eradicate unpopular religions in the future. Article 12 of the Constitution states that rights are protected only insofar as they are used for "public welfare." Article 81 of the Religious Corporation Act includes "harming public welfare" among the grounds for dissolving religious corporations.



Attorney Patricia Duval speaking on the dissolution case in Washington DC. Photo by Peter Zoehrer.

In 1978, Japan signed the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). It includes a list of possible grounds for limiting freedom of religion or belief. Public welfare is not included. As noted by attorney Patricia Duval, the United Nations Human Rights Committee repeatedly asked Japan to eliminate the "public welfare" restrictions. Japan never complied, which means that religious organizations can be eradicated based on the vague notion of "public welfare," which the government interpreted in the Unification Church case as including "social norms," i.e., the opinions of the majority.

No, the United Nations will not send its blue helmet peacekeepers to Japan to enforce international law. It is not in its powers. However, this does not mean that blatantly violating the ICCPR and denying freedom of religion or belief to its citizens will come at no cost for Japan. What the international community can do is what is called by diplomats "naming and shaming." In addition to the United Nations, the United States and their institutions watching international religious liberty may play a key role in this case. There are always political and economic costs associated with being identified as a country not friendly to human rights and religious liberty.

It seems that among many losers there is a winner in this case, the anti-cult lobby of the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales, which has requested the dissolution of the Unification Church for twenty years. This lobby is not only motivated by greed and the bonanza lawyers expect from receiving an important chunk of the Unification Church assets to finance their anti-cult campaigns and as honoraries for representing alleged victims. As demonstrated by investigative journalist Masumi Fukuda, the anti-cult Network was founded in 1987, during the Cold War. "Almost all of the lawyers in the Network were affiliated with the former Socialist Party and the Communist Party," and they hated the Unification Church for its successful anti-Communist and pro-American campaigns.



Attorney Hiroshi Yamaguchi, one of the politically motivated founders of the National Network of Lawvers Against Spiritual Sales. From X.

The politically motivated Network is the main organization responsible for the slander and fake news spread against the Unification Church. While they now regard themselves as winners, they should reflect on history and the fate of those who persecuted religion. In the second century CE, while Christians were persecuted, Christian apologist Tertullian famously wrote "Semen est sanguis christianorum," "the blood of the Christian is the seed" that will produce more and more determined Christians. I have met in Japan many dedicated and even heroic Unification Church members, who literally built a successful church with their blood, sweat, and tears, and who now stand firm in the face of persecution. History shows many examples of persecuted believers who win in the end. Religions tend to last longer than governments, regimes, or their opponents. History is fair, and often gives persecuted believers the last laugh.

There are no winners in this case. Or perhaps there is only one, Abe's assassin Tetsuya Yamagami. As it has been noted, he may well be the most successful terrorist in history. Most terrorism acts backfire. If Yamagami really killed Abe to destroy the Unification Church, this one succeeded. But what kind of country is one where the aims of an assassin are honored and realized by the government and the courts?

Three minutes to save independent information and perhaps to save human lives

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TAGGED WITH: JAPAN, RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, UNIFICATION CHURCH



#### Massimo Introvigne

Massimo Introvigne (born June 14, 1955 in Rome) is an Italian sociologist of religions. He is the founder and managing director of the Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR), an international network of scholars who study new religious movements. Introvigne is the author of some 70 books and more than 100 articles in the field of sociology of religion. He was the

main author of the Enciclopedia delle religioni in Italia (Encyclopedia of Religions in Italy). He is a member of the editorial board for the Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion and of the executive board of University of California Press' Nova Religio. From January 5 to December 31, 2011, he has served as the "Representative on combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination, with a special focus on discrimination against Christians and members of other religions" of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). From 2012 to 2015 he served as chairperson of the Observatory of Religious Liberty, instituted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to monitor problems of religious liberty on a worldwide scale.



### Related articles



日本の最高裁と統一教 The Supreme Court 会「宗教虐殺」の許可 and the Unification 証? その1



Church in Japan: Warrant for a...



日本と宗教、「公共の 福祉」というスキャン ダル:1.日本の国際 的義務への背反



日本:次はPL教団 (パーフェクト・リバ ティー教団) が標的に

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#### Russia Bans Local Church Publication as "Extremist"

Banning the founder Witness Lee's edition of the Bible may open the way to liquidating the movement itself.







# Pakistan, Ahmadis Detained for Praying Remain in Jail—Including Minors

Meanwhile, the extremist Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan calls for "slitting the throats" of the members of the persecuted religion.

# Why the UN Are Concerned About Freedom of Religion in Kyrgyzstan

New laws, under the pretext of combating radicalism and terrorism, put most religious activities under the control of the state.

# The Supreme Court and the Unification Church in Japan: Warrant for a "Religiocide"? Part 1

A Supreme Court decision may open the way to the dissolution of the religious organization by overturning decades of case law.

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### FFWPU USA Statement on the Japanese Court Ruling to Dissolve FFWPU Japan



March 25, 2025

### We Are Deeply Grieved-But Not Surprised

The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification in the United States stands in solemn solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Japan following the court's decision to allow the Japanese government to dissolve FFWPU Japan.

"The church and the concept of religious freedom are now battling for survival in Japan's legal system."

(All quotes sourced from The Washington Times unless otherwise noted)

#### Let Us Be Clear: No Crime Was Committed

For the first time in Japan's postwar history, a peaceful religious organization is being dismantled by the state without a single criminal conviction. The court's decision does not mark justice—it marks a turning point in Japan's democratic identity.

Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (MEXT) conducted a thorough investigation and concluded that the Family Federation violated no criminal law. On October 17, 2022, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida stated in Parliament that the church could not be dissolved on that basis. Yet the very next day, Kishida reversed course, claiming the government could pursue dissolution based solely on civil complaints. This reversal opened the door for a legal reinterpretation that undermines religious freedom not just in Japan—but globally.

As the U.S. State Department observed, this move "marked a deviation from the norm" in Japan's treatment of religious organizations.

This Is Not Justice-It Is Lawfare

On March 13, 2025, Senator Satoshi Hamada publicly questioned the Ministry of Education

about falsified evidence used in the court proceedings. Referring to a post by lawyer Shinichi

Tokunaga:

"The crime of the century: MEXT filed a request for a dissolution order based on falsified

statements. A designated agent of MEXT, who is a government official, falsified evidence to

be used in court proceedings. If Japan grants the dissolution order based on fabricated

evidence, it will become a disgrace to the world." - Attorney Shinichi Tokunaga (on X)

Hamada asked if the Ministry had any response to the charge that the government had purposely

fabricated witness testimonies in order to smear the church. As if in admission of guilt, the

Ministry's representative did not deny the charge.

Hamada concluded that the government's failure to respond was "significant," calling the

legitimacy of the entire process into question.

"The government seeks to dissolve the church and liquidate and absorb all assets. The church

will cease to exist."

Who Are the Architects of the Dissolution Campaign?

The driving force behind this case is a political-legal alliance. MEXT has relied heavily on the

National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales (NNLASS)-a group of leftist lawyers

formed in the 1980s to oppose the Unification Church and its anti-communist stance.

In 1987, NNLASS founder Hiroshi Yamaguchi stated plainly:

"The aim of the lawyers' association is to convince the Ministry of Education to revoke the

religious corporation status of the Unification Church."

That campaign, dormant for decades, is now being carried out—under the pretense of protecting

"public welfare."

The Real Reason: Ideological Hostility

For over 60 years, the Family Federation has stood for God, family, and freedom. Rev. and Dr.

Moon founded the International Federation for Victory Over Communism (IFVOC) to counter

Marxist ideology with spiritual truth. In Japan, IFVOC worked closely with leaders in the Liberal

Democratic Party, including Prime Minister Abe and his predecessors. This made the movement

a prime target for ideological opponents.

"This is the final war against the Unification Church." - Kazuo Shii, Chairman, Japanese

Communist Party.

Based on the evidence and statements presented in the Akahata and Sunday Mainichi interviews

with Kazuo Shii, it is clear that this war was never about FFWPU's religious practices or political controversy—but the endpoint of an organized, 45-year ideological war.

However, it gets worse.

#### Religious Freedom in Japan Is Under Threat—And It's Spreading

Governments in Rwanda, Kenya, and the Czech Republic have already followed Japan's lead in restricting or shutting down religious organizations based on a reinterpretation of the law to revoke religious freedoms. If Japan—a respected liberal democracy—can do this, others will follow.

At the 2025 International Religious Freedom Summit, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich issued a warning that could not be clearer:

"A government which can block you from approaching God can block you from anything.

This is a key test of the future of Japan—a key test of the future of religious liberty."

#### **Our Response**

Silence is not an option. Sign the petition. Share it with your friends and family. Let Japan know we are watching.

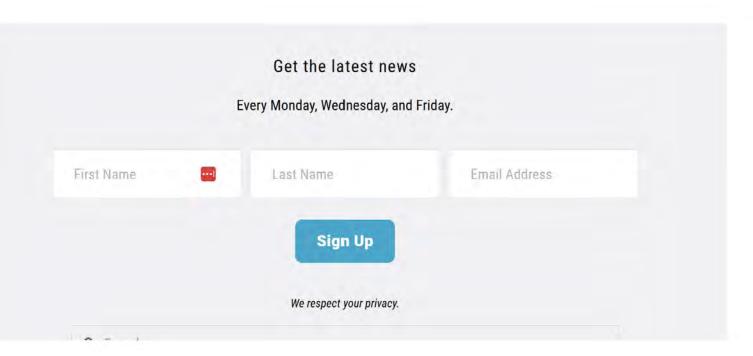
#### PETITION TO PROTECT RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN JAPAN

https://peacestartswithme.lpages.co/religious-freedom-petition

To our members: remain steadfast in faith. We are preparing our appeal and we will not stop until this injustice is overturned. The Family Federation was born to stand for truth and freedom —and we are not afraid.

**Rev. Demian Dunkley** 

President, FFWPU USA





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