

FFWPU Elizabeth, NJ conducts its first Holy Marriage Blessing Celebration

Emiljun Rapada
November 19, 2016



Elizabeth, NJ – In just 12 weeks after the first “We Can Do It” workshop at the FFWPU Elizabeth, the community conducted the first Holy Marriage Blessing Celebration with two couples participating on November 19 at the [Haitian Bethany Baptist Church](#).

Around 70 people attended the event including a couple from Newark, NJ. Several members of the host church were also in attendance in support of the marriage celebration. FFWPU District 3 Pastor Manoj and Rany Jacob were the Officiating Couple representing True Parents while UPF-USA National President Rev. Richard De Sena gave the congratulatory message. FFWPU Elizabeth Asst. Pastor Emiljun Rapada served as the Master of Ceremonies. After the Blessing Ceremony, an international dinner buffet was served.



Going back three months ago, the Elizabeth community, through the leadership of Pastor Darryl Franklin, underwent a two-day workshop on August 27-28 to deeply understand the importance of Heavenly Tribal Messiahship and how to shift the culture of Blessed Central Families centering on a comprehensive approach to Marriage Blessing education and natural witnessing. A total of 21 families joined the workshop and identified two primary goals in support of True Parents’ Vision 2020. Firstly, to conduct a Marriage Blessing Ceremonies, and secondly to educate families on True Family Values.



As a result, three clans were formed and several trinities made up each clan. Each of the clans committed a certain number of couples to educate and bring to the Marriage Blessing. A one-hour introductory lecture was crafted through the support of Mr. Demian Dunkley, the FFWPU-USA National Director on Evangelism to help families educate their immediate relatives and guests.



In many ways, God has been guiding the tribe in its formation stage towards a more proactive and sustainable system to fulfill the ultimate goal of Blessing 430 couples by 2020. For one, finances have been a challenge because commercial facilities require thousands of dollars to book and conduct an event such as a Blessing Ceremony. Eventually, an opportunity opened up when one of the clan parents, Rev. Mabau and Nancy Ilemabila, approached the senior pastor of the church that they were attending bible fellowship and requested to use their facility. Fortunately, their church doctrines resonate with our Unificationist belief of traditional marriage and one-man-and-one-woman relationships, hence after confirmation from their church council, we were allowed to conduct the Marriage Blessing Ceremony in their church with any amount of donation. Not only that, circumstances led us to use their church

sanctuary for the ceremony and their multi-purpose hall for the dinner reception. The assistant pastor Rev. Pierre Dalzon even graciously gave a moving invocation at the beginning of the ceremony. “The ceremony was very beautiful and I now understand the purpose and goal of the Marriage Blessing Movement,” he said.

What is becoming more evident during the course of the Marriage Blessing Movement is that the unity and enthusiasm of Blessed Central Families is vital. A 120-day prayer and reading condition has been offered to spiritually strengthen and guide families. Meanwhile, several clan-level events were hosted, such as the International Cultural Festival on October 23 and Fall Festival on October 30. On the trinity level, families hosted birthday parties and small group meetings to introduce the Marriage Blessing Movement. Trinity leaders shared at Sunday celebrations that on these family gatherings, they were able to invite their neighbors, friends, and even their children’s teachers and somehow started to build relationships in a very natural fashion.



What is more interesting and very encouraging is the request to conduct a second Tribal Messiahship workshop, which was successfully concluded on November 12-13 with seven new families in attendance. With more families becoming more involved and with a clearer understanding of our mission, the tribe is expanding. In the long run, the Elizabeth tribe plans to establish 12 clans with 12 trinities in each clan to fulfill the 430 families.

With these new developments, the next Marriage Blessing Ceremony has been scheduled for Saturday, December 17, 2016 at the Elizabeth Family Church and Saturday, January 21, 2017 at the [St. Elizabeth’s Episcopal Church](#). For more information on the Marriage Blessing Movement, kindly contact the Asst. Pastor Rev. Emiljun Rapada at (862) 208-2651 or send an email to elizabeth.family.church@gmail.com.

We invite all to come and attend our Sunday celebrations from 11am at 1139 Elizabeth Ave., Elizabeth, NJ where we share our personal experiences, either our victories or challenges, and as we continuously determine ourselves to focus on the mission and the goal of guiding families to establish God-centered relationships through the teachings and Marriage Blessing of our Heavenly Parent and victorious True Parents.

We thank all the volunteers, sponsors, and donors to the event, especially the newly blessed couples. We offer all the glory and honor to our Heavenly Parents and True Parents.