

New Jersey Unificationists host their Sixth Annual Golden Age Banquet

Manoj Jacob
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On Sunday, December 20, 2015, the Unificationist community of New Jersey hosted its Sixth Annual Golden Age Banquet, celebrating those of their number who have newly turned 60 and their accrued wisdom. More than 90 Unificationists from New Jersey gathered in the Clifton Family Church fellowship hall, which was transformed into a veritable banquet hall. The program included a sushi bar, buffet, testimonies, raffles and entertainment.

In Asian culture the sixtieth birthday is said to be a time of rebirth. As such, this event—the brainchild of Mrs. Eriko Endo—was instituted as an annual event. The motto of the Golden Age Club is “Dawning of Your New Age.”



Pastor Manoj Jacob opened the evening with warm words of welcome and appreciation for elder members of the community. They were recognized for their sincere efforts in laying the foundations for Heaven’s work in the United States while following True Parents. As he raised his glass, Rev. Barry Geller toasted all attendees, reminding them that the 60s are the best years of our lives (as are the 70s and 80s!). Mistress of Ceremonies Andria Rogers invited all those turning 60 to join in an official cake-cutting to begin the festive evening.

Sushi chef Sato and his team from Sakura Bana Restaurant created a fantastic fare of Asian delights, including sushi and sashimi. The New Jersey Family Church provided a sumptuous spread of salmon teriyaki, bulgogi, salad and fruit.

Gifts donated by True World Foods, Crystal World, Sakura Bana Restaurant and Il Hwa Company were raffled off intermittently throughout the evening. Golden-agers especially enjoyed the fellowship with other Unification “family” members. Cheerful conversation created a vibrant atmosphere as the guests reveled in memories of the past and hopes for the future. Peter and Kimiko Freund gave a remarkable, representative testimony. They spoke with great sincerity but also evoked peals of laughter with the recollection of their matching.

Tables were served with respect yet radiant cheer by Unificationist-born young adults. The dinner atmosphere was warmed by the gentle sounds of Masaaki Saito on his guitar, followed by piano and singing by Karlsun Allen. Rounding off the evening, former Broadway singer/actor Albert Insinnia performed two songs and led a rousing finale of “Jingle Bell Rock.”

Follow-up activities were introduced at the conclusion of the evening. One such activity included the first Eco-service Tour for seniors in Leda, Paraguay, to be held in summer 2016. New Jersey’s seniors are an active and vibrant group, continuing to grow and serve together to build God’s Kingdom.

