

Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, 1920-2012

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Rev. Sun Myung Moon was born in 1920 in what is now North Korea. In 1935, after praying near Mount Myodu, Jesus Christ appeared to him on Easter Morning and asked him to "take on a special mission on Earth having to do with Heaven's work." After having escaped to Pusan at the beginning of the Korean War, he began writing and teaching the Divine Principle. In 1954, he founded the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, now known as the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, in Seoul, Korea. Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon was blessed in marriage to Rev. Moon in 1960. They founded an array of religious, academic, educational, arts and peace organizations working in more than 190 nations. Dedicated to the belief that world peace must begin with harmonious families, they advocate the coming together of diverse political, religious, academic, media, and civic leaders to work cooperatively in addressing and solving the critical problems of the world. The Universal Peace Federation was launched in New York City in 2005, after which Rev. and Mrs. Moon and their family traveled throughout the world delivering peace messages. His autobiography, *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*, was published in 2009 in Korea and translated into nearly 40 languages.

The house where Rev. Moon was born (North Korea) Sun Myung Moon was born on January 6, 1920, into a family of farmers that had tilled the land for centuries. As a boy he studied at a Confucian school and was a keen observer of the natural world. Around 1930, his parents became fervent Christians -- Presbyterians -- and the young Sun Myung Moon became a Sunday school teacher.

At that time, Japan ruled Korea and was trying to force the practice of the Shinto religion onto all Koreans. The religious intolerance of the Japanese regime was one facet of the contempt they held for the Koreans, a people they believed to be inferior. The Korean people were subjected to forty years of humiliation and cruelty as part of Japan's Greater Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. Growing up oppressed in his own land, Sun Myung Moon learned early the pain of injustice, whether among his own people or at the hands of the Japanese rulers.

The young Moon became intensely aware of human suffering and the failure of humanity to create a loving and just world. He sought to understand why people suffer and how suffering can be ended. From going to church, he knew that religion addressed the fundamental human condition and promised an ideal world to those who obey God; but he saw that established religions, although centuries old and based on scriptures offering revelatory insights, were, in practice, unable to answer many of life's questions or solve the deepest problems facing humankind. Troubled by the immense gap between religious ideals and the actual state of the world, he began his own ardent pursuit of solutions through a life of prayer and study.

Early Easter morning 1935, Jesus appeared to the young Sun Myung Moon as he was praying in the Korean mountains. In that vision, Jesus asked him to continue the work which he had begun on earth nearly 2,000 years before. Jesus asked him to complete the task of establishing God's kingdom on earth and bringing peace to humankind.

The young Korean was stunned by this encounter, and especially by the request that had been made of him, and at first he refused. However, after deep reflection, meditation and prayer, he pledged to take on

the overwhelming mission.

After personally accepting Jesus' call, the young Moon set out to discover the meaning of this unusual call. If Jesus called him to complete his mission, it meant that Jesus' mission was incomplete. Was not salvation through the cross all that humankind needs? What was it that Jesus had left undone on earth? If sin is not completely solved, then what is the actual root of sin?

Sun Myung Moon ceaselessly studied the Bible and other religious teachings in order to unravel these mysteries of life and human history. During this time, he went into deep communion with God and entered the vast battlefield of the spirit and flesh. Through denying his personal desires he overcame temptations of knowledge, wealth and physical pleasure. He came to understand God's own suffering and His longing to be reunited with His children. He learned the difficult steps that humankind would have to take in order to return to God and establish true peace on earth. After receiving his commission from God, he knew he could not succeed in his task without a profound understanding of the Creator and His creation. He intensified his quest for the truth, spending days and nights in passionate prayer, rigorous fasting and study. His method was to posit specific questions, research answers in the physical and spiritual worlds, and then seek confirmation for those answers through prayer. On several occasions he was guided directly by Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha and other saints and sages of all faiths, who met him in spirit and contributed to his understanding of God and the complex history of God's relationship with humankind. By the age of 25, he had developed the fundamentals of the Divine Principle and Unification Principles.

Rev. Moon graduated from high school in 1941 and went to Japan to study electronic engineering at an industrial college affiliated with Waseda University. During his time in Japan, he continued his intense prayer and search for the truth. A school friend during that time said that in his room he kept three Bibles -- one in Korean, one in English and one in Japanese, which he studied continuously.

He also was a Christian leader in the Korean independence movement against the Japanese occupation of Korea. Young Christians and communists were the strongest leaders of the independence movement against the Japanese occupation. In Japan, some of his closest school friends were communists, and while their atheism pained him, he recognized their sincere dedication to a utopian ideal. A fellow student at that time, Aum Duk-Moon, reports that Rev. Moon defended communists to his Christian friends, saying that they were good people and that Koreans should work together to save their country. He was eventually imprisoned by the Japanese for his student underground activities and tortured for not revealing the names of his collaborators. This imprisonment was what would be his first of six imprisonments under four governments: Japan, North Korea, South Korea and the United States

Rev. Moon returned to his native land in 1943. Upon returning from Japan, he was married to Sang Il Choi, a strong Christian from a well-known Presbyterian family.

In 1944, Rev. Moon was again arrested and severely tortured by the Japanese occupation government in Korea after his name came up in the interrogation of a communist student friend who had been active in the anti-Japanese underground in Tokyo. He refused to confess and was finally released.

In spite of such treatment by the Japanese, his cousin and companion at the time reports that Rev. Moon showed only love and respect to Japanese people. When the war ended in August 1945 he persuaded others not to take revenge on local Japanese officials and worked secretly to get them safe transport back to Japan.

By 1945 he had systematized his teachings, which came to be known as the Divine Principle, and he began his public ministry. The Divine Principle is the fundamental teaching of Rev. Moon and the Unification Church.

The Republic of Korea, although an Asian country, is recognized having perhaps the most fervent Christian faith of any nation. Rev. Billy Graham was so impressed by the spiritual vitality of her churches during his first visit to Korea that he predicted that one day Korea would send missionaries to revive the West. In this atmosphere of fervent Christianity, Rev. Moon's original plan was not to start a separate denomination but to work with other Christians to build God's kingdom on the earth. He worked hard to introduce his new revelations to existing Korean Christian churches. But his new teachings were not well received. American Christian missionaries disregarded him as an unschooled "country preacher." Korean ministers, jealous of the young man's impact on their congregation members, accused him of espousing false teachings. Despite his many efforts to reach out to established Christian churches, they did not respond to his new ideas. Rev. Moon soon realized that he was headed down the lonely path of a pioneer religious visionary.

In 1946 while buying rice for his family, Rev. Moon was told by God to leave his family without notifying them and go to communist North Korea to preach.

Before World War II, the center of Korean Christian activity was Pyongyang, now the capital of North Korea; it was called the "Jerusalem of the East." Among the spirit-filled churches were many with strong messianic expectations. Some of these churches had received revelations that the Messiah would be born in Korea, and they were directed in various ways to prepare to receive him.

He began to teach publicly, despite the dangers presented by the communist-dominated government. As a poor preacher with new interpretations of the Bible, Rev. Moon was more vulnerable than leaders of the established churches and was, therefore, one of the first religious figures to be imprisoned by the communists.

Rev. Moon at a North Korean court

Charged with disturbing the social order, in November 1946, the young minister was imprisoned and tortured. The police believed him to be dead and tossed his body into the prison yard. Some of his followers found him and carried him away to tend to his broken body. Miraculously, Rev. Moon survived and regained his strength. Undaunted, he began preaching in public once again.

Hungnam prison camp

In April 1948, he was arrested a second time and sentenced to five years of hard labor in Hungnam prison. He was among the first of the Christian ministers sent to the Soviet-style North Korean gulag. Hungnam was an extermination camp where prisoners were deliberately worked to death. Few lasted more than six months. Yet in that horrific concentration camp, Rev. Moon survived for nearly three years. Although he did not speak a word of the Divine Principle, many of his fellow prisoners looked to him for spiritual strength and became his disciples.

On June 25, 1950, the North Korean army invaded the South in a lightning attempt to unify the entire peninsula by force. UN and American forces, under Gen. Douglas MacArthur, rescued the beleaguered South. One month after the capture of Seoul, UN forces reached the gates of Hungnam prison. Knowing the UN forces were near, the communist prison authorities began to execute the prisoners. The prison camp was liberated by UN forces just hours before Rev. Moon's scheduled execution.

Despite his brutal prison camp experience, Rev. Moon did not immediately flee to the South. Instead, he returned to Pyongyang and spent 40 days searching for the members of his scattered flock. He eventually found a few members and then traveled south on foot with two of them. One of his followers had a broken leg and protested that he would slow the party down. Rev. Moon insisted on bringing him and for the long trek either pushed him on a bicycle or carried him on his back.

The first church (Pusan)As one of hundreds of thousands of war refugees, Rev. Moon arrived in the southern port city of Busan, where he and one disciple built the first Unification Church from discarded army ration boxes. At that time, he told his small following that one day the message of the Divine Principle would be spread all over the world. He prophesied that people from all over the world would venerate that hillside. Rev. Moon's predictions sounded unbelievable. Today, in fact, tens of thousands of people make a pilgrimage to the spot.

Beginning his evangelization work in the South after nearly five years in the North, Rev. Moon was rejoined by his wife. However, he continued to dedicate himself night and day to his religious mission. She could not accept his dedication to the mission at the sacrifice of his family. Finally, she filed for divorce, in spite of Rev. Moon's strong opposition to a divorce and efforts to dissuade her. (His only child from this marriage and his family are loyal followers of Rev. Moon.)

On May 1, 1954, in Seoul, Rev. Moon founded the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, Rev. Moon's faith community which became popularly called the "Unification Church" worldwide.

The church immediately attracted followers from a major Christian women's university, Ehwa University, a school closely linked with the Korean government and with the mainline Protestant denominations. Because many students were joining the church, the school sent professors to investigate. When several professors also joined, instead of sincerely welcoming this new church, the school persecuted it. The university president ordered the professors and students to either leave the church or leave the school.

Coincidentally, newspapers in Seoul suddenly began to print alarming stories about the Unification Church, sex orgies and Rev. Moon being a North Korean agent. Rev. Moon was thrown in jail, to be released weeks later when no charges could be found. Again, the following year he was thrown in jail on charges of evading the military draft, even though during the time in question he had been in Hungnam prison. After several months confinement -- and sensational media coverage -- the charges were dropped. His release received scant notice in the press. Thus, began the pattern of collusion between religious leaders, government and the media that to this day suppresses Rev. Moon and his church.

Amid this severe persecution, Rev. Moon nurtured a growing community of faithful disciples, known as the "weeping church" because of the tearful prayers of Rev. Moon and his followers. By 1957, churches were established in 30 Korean cities and towns.

In the late 1950s, the first international missionaries were sent, one to neighboring Japan in 1958 and two to the United States in 1959.

Rev. Moon was blessed in holy marriage to Hak Ja Han on March 16, 1960. Their blessing was followed by a series of group marriage blessing ceremonies for their followers. Hak Ja Han and her mother, a devout Christian, had also fled south during the Korean War. They soon thereafter joined the Unification Church. Since their marriage, Mrs. Hak Ja Han has dedicated herself entirely to supporting Rev. Moon and his mission.

The International Federation for Victory Over Communism was the first of many organizations and activities founded by Rev. Moon to bring about the peaceful downfall of communism. Rev. Moon taught that communism should be defeated ideologically through education about the fallacies of Marxism-Leninism, offering a counterproposal consisting of universal principles called Godism, conferences, global networking, rallies and demonstrations in Asia, the United States and Latin America.

God directed Rev. Moon to expand his ministry to the world level by going to the United States in 1971. America, which embraces all peoples, races and religions, represents the world. What happens in America has global repercussions. He expressed gratitude for America's role in liberating his homeland. But he also knew that God expected much more from this land that had been so richly blessed. It was clear to Rev. Moon that America had drifted from its original ideals.

The "Day of Hope" speaking tour began February 3, 1972 in Alice Tully Hall at the Lincoln Center in New York and went on to seven major US cities with the purpose of reviving traditional Judeo-Christian values.

The Unification Church had centers in ten states, and in 1972 pioneer leaders were sent out to the forty remaining states to found Unification Church centers. In the same year, evangelical teams traveled from state to state in a membership campaign, and thousands of young people accepted his message and dedicated themselves to the Unification Church.

After the successful Madison Square Garden event on September 18, 1973, public speeches were given and banquets hosted for thousands of society's leaders in all 50 states.

Rev. Moon met with US President Richard Nixon during the Watergate crisis of 1974. Through rallies and newspaper statements, he urged Americans to forgive the beleaguered Richard Nixon at the time of the Watergate scandal. Any public relations strategist would have advised him against such action, which called on Americans to "forgive, love and unite." Virtually no one at the time was willing to side with a president on the verge of impeachment, but Rev. Moon does not flinch when he receives God's directions. He also foresaw the serious consequences of undercutting the American presidency in a world still dominated by the communist threat. His appeal was met with scorn, even though his "forgive, love and unite" message embodied the essence of Christian practice.

As a result, the rapid growth of the movement in the United States, it went through a period of persecution similar to what other new religious leaders and movements have faced in the past -- the new was seen to be strange and threatening. Rev. Moon's appeal for a true Christian renewal of America was initially welcomed. However, this receptivity proved shallow when, in 1974, he became an easy target for the now-hostile news media unhappy over Rev. Moon's "forgive, love and unite" message concerning the Watergate scandal.

The fair and objective coverage of the past was replaced by portrayals of Rev. Moon and his church in the worst possible light. All sorts of unfounded allegations from Korea were dug up. In this atmosphere of hysteria, the enthusiasm and idealism of his young followers was reinterpreted as "brainwashing." Rev. Moon was portrayed as a hypnotist and an agent of a foreign government. Religious and racial bigotry and persecution, a phenomenon in the United States as old as the country itself, showed its ugly face. Even though the United States was founded for the sake of establishing religious freedom, regrettably, religious intolerance remains today. The Unification Church bore the brunt of America's religious intolerance for three decades.

With churches already established in Korea, Japan, North America, and the Western European countries, in May 1975, Rev. Moon sent out missionary teams consisting of one Japanese, one American and one German to countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Oceania, bringing the total number of nations with Unification Church representatives to 120.

Rev. Moon continued his Day of Hope tour, accompanied by a Global Team of young followers from America, Europe and Asia, with speeches in Japan and Korea, concluding with a rally at Yoido Island near Seoul which was attended by 1.2 million people. Rev. Moon spoke a message of determination to stand against communism in South Korea and establish a world centered on God, at the height of the Cold War during a time of great tension between North and South Korea.

The Unification Theological Seminary, established in 1975 in Barrytown, New York, offers Master's Degrees in Divinity and Religious Education, with a recently added Doctorate of Ministry degree. It was founded as an ecumenical seminary, and faculty members have belonged to a broad range of religious denominations. Rather than concentrating solely on Unification theology, students learn philosophy, psychology, world religions and homiletics, as well as the histories, theologies, and scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and other world religions.



Starting with dialogues at the Unification Theological Seminary, the New Ecumenical Research Association for Christian Unity and continuing with other initiatives, such as the Assembly of the World's Religions, Rev. Moon promoted interreligious discussion, understanding and cooperation to solve the problems of poverty, war, injustice and breakdown of the family. The 1985 Assembly of the World's Religions was attended by 1,000 distinguished religious leaders and scholars. A key social teaching of Rev. Moon is that the world's most difficult problems will be best solved by religious leaders working interreligiously rather than by purely political and economic initiatives.

An estimated 300,000 people of all creeds and colors came to hear Reverend Moon speak at the "God Bless America Festival" on September 18, 1976 at the Washington Monument in the nation's capital. To date this was the greatest religious rally ever assembled in Washington, D.C. At this historic rally, Rev. Moon called upon America to fulfill its blessing as one nation under God, and to create "one world under God." He referred to himself as a "doctor" or a "fire fighter" from the outside who has come to help America meet its third great "test" as a nation, that of "God-denying" communism, and to revive its religious heritage. He proclaimed that the Unification Church with its "absolutely God-centered ideology" had the "power to awaken America and raise up the model of the ideal nation upon this land."

He called members from around the world to England in 1978, where he gave them daily guidance and sent them around the country in a grass-roots community service initiative called "home church." He gave direction to members around the world to choose an area of 360 homes and serve the people and be examples of God's love.

Under strong pressure from a few politicians who saw an easy way to garner favor with voters riled up by the bad press about Rev. Moon and the Unification Church, the United States government launched a plethora of official investigations of Rev. Moon involving nearly twenty federal agencies. Hearings were conducted on Capitol Hill to warn of the dangers of new religious movements.

Meanwhile, a five-year Internal Revenue Service investigation finally produced a politically-crafted indictment against Rev. Moon. This indictment, handed down in 1981, charged him with evading income taxes nearly a decade earlier, as well as conspiracy to avoid those taxes. The total amount of taxes supposedly evaded was less than \$8000.00. No one in the United States has ever been indicted for tax evasion of such a small amount. The indictment's real purpose, however, was to spur Rev. Moon to leave America.

However, the US government and some politicians underestimated Rev. Moon's religiosity and commitment to his mission in America. When the indictment was handed down, Rev. Moon was in Korea. His lawyers recommended that he not come back to America, since there is no extradition treaty between the United States and Korea and by staying away he could avoid conviction and imprisonment. However, he did not follow their advice. He was, after all, a man of God, not a criminal fleeing the law. He immediately returned to the United States. He told his counsel: "I will not abandon my mission in

America. That I will never do."

Upon arriving in New York for the Federal District Court arraignment he spoke only one sentence: "Your Honor, I am not guilty." The outcome of the trial was a foregone conclusion. He was convicted and sentenced to spend eighteen months in a federal prison. When, the Supreme Court refused to hear the case, despite forty amicus briefs from mainline Christian leaders, legal associations, civil liberty groups and state governments, he prepared to go to jail.

Still, the US Justice Department tried to negotiate with Rev. Moon's attorneys, determined to achieve their goal of him leaving the United States permanently. On the condition that Rev. Moon depart for Korea and never come back to the United States, they said the government would waive his prison sentence. He flatly refused. His comment was, "It must be God's will that I go to prison. There must be a providential reason why I must go this way." Imprisonment was not new to Rev. Moon: He already had endured imprisonment in communist North Korea, South Korea and Japan during World War II.

In the meantime, protests were being made all around the nation over the injustice Rev. Moon was suffering as a result of religious persecution. Many Christian leaders who never knew or cared about him began to realize that the government had made a serious assault on religious freedom. Christians, including the National Council of Churches headed by Rev. Dean Kelley and non-religious groups representing more than 160 million Americans, came to his legal defense.

A US Senate Subcommittee published the following report on Rev. Moon's conviction:

We accused a newcomer to our shores of criminal and intentional wrongdoing for conduct commonly engaged in by a large percentage of our own religious leaders, namely, the holding of church funds in bank accounts in their own names. Catholic priests do it. Baptist ministers do it, and so did Sun Myung Moon... we charged a non-English-speaking alien with criminal tax evasion on the first tax returns he filed in this country. It appears that we didn't give him a fair chance to understand our laws. We didn't seek a civil penalty as an initial means of redress. We didn't give him the benefit of any doubt. Rather, we took a novel theory of tax liability of less than \$10,000 and turned it into a guilty verdict and eighteen months in a federal prison.

I do feel strongly, after my subcommittee has carefully and objectively reviewed this [Rev. Moon's tax] case from both sides, that injustice rather than justice has been served. The Moon case sends a strong signal that if one's views are unpopular enough, this country will find a way not to tolerate, but to convict. I don't believe that you or I or anyone else, no matter how innocent, could realistically prevail against the combined forces of our Justice Department and judicial branch in a case such as Rev. Moon's."

Without bitterness, Rev. Moon served time in Danbury Federal Prison, the sixth imprisonment of his life. He quickly won the respect of fellow inmates for his humble and friendly ways. He is pictured on the left conversing with Rev. Takeru Kamiyama, an aide who was imprisoned with him.

On August 20, 1985, Rev. Moon was freed after completing thirteen months of incarceration. Upon his release, major Christian and civil rights leaders, including Rev. Jerry Falwell of the Moral Majority and Rev. Joseph Lowery of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, held a press conference decrying the persecution and imprisonment of Rev. Moon and to welcome him back.

During his Danbury imprisonment, Rev. Moon founded The Washington Times in 1984, and it became the second largest daily newspaper in America's capital. Its initial purpose was to be instrumental in the peaceful fall of communism, a goal achieved in conjunction with the Reagan Administration, and then with the end of the Cold War, to promote family values and support of the role of religion in society.

Rev. Moon organized a major conference of news media leaders and former heads of state in Moscow in April 1990. This fulfilled a pledge he had made in 1976 that one day he would organize a "great rally for God in Moscow." During this conference, Rev. and Mrs. Moon met with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Through several interviews, televised and in print, he gave a message of hope to the Soviet people, urging them to turn toward God. A strong opponent of communism, Rev. Moon taught that the ideology was mistaken but he came to love the communist people. Since the fall of the Soviet Empire, he has funded numerous activities to assist former communist countries in their transition to democracy and freedom.

Rev. Moon made a crucial step in 1991 towards the establishment of world peace through the peaceful reunification of North and South Korea. Risking his life, he traveled to North Korea in December 1991, and met with President Kim Il Sung, under whose regime he had been tortured and sent to a labor camp. His purpose was to seek ways to bridge the gap between the two countries. The North Korean ruler, who had suppressed religion for forty years, met and graciously welcomed Rev. and Mrs. Moon. In the same visit Rev. Moon was permitted to return to his hometown and the house of his birth, placing flowers on

the graves of his parents and embracing proud and tearful surviving relatives.

Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon, the devoted wife and mother of 14 children, began her own public activities for world peace in 1992 with the founding of the Women's Federation for World. Her mission is both to lead peacemaking work and promote the central role of women in creating a just and peaceful society. Today, after years of intense international work, Mrs. Moon is recognized as one of the most effective woman leaders in the world. She has spoken in such notable venues as Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., the United Nations in New York City, the Kremlin, the Great Hall in Beijing, and congressional buildings in Japan, Korea, and Canada. Perhaps no other woman leader has addressed so many large audiences in as many countries as Mrs. Moon.

Her first world tour in 1993 took her to 44 cities in the US, 27 cities in Japan, 40 university campuses in Korea, and 41 nations around the world. In 2006, accompanied by her adult children and grandchildren, she undertook two world tours for peace at the incredible pace of a country per day. She and her family spoke to enthusiastic audiences in 120 countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Oceania and Latin America. She was received as a dignitary and met with many heads of states, prominent religious leaders and political leaders.

Rev. Moon announced the end of the era of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity in 1992. In its place, he founded the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, building a network of families from every race, religion and culture, united in the belief that centered on God's love, happy marriages and successful families are the cornerstones for solving the most fundamental problems of society.

Well-known for officiating at mass wedding ceremonies for his followers, Rev. Moon began in 1997 to invite people of all faiths to join in dedicating their marriage to God and world peace. World Peace Blessing ceremonies began with invocations by leaders of various religions. Newlyweds and couples renewing their vows make a sacred promise to love each other faithfully, live together in peace, and raise up their children and grandchildren to uphold purity and fidelity. A special contribution to world peace is made by couples who bridge the divides of race and religion, pledging that they and their families will promote understanding, respect, and harmony.

Rev. Moon proposed the creation of an international council of religious, civic, and political leaders to supplement the peacekeeping work of the United Nations. The Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace (known as the Universal Peace Federation since 2005), has been active throughout the world with Ambassadors for Peace who work for peace in their nations and internationally.

A month after the September 2001 attacks on the United States, Rev. Moon organized a peace conference that brought together religious and political leaders from around the globe; a second, unprecedented conference for international Muslim leaders in Indonesia in December 2001, was titled: Islam and the Future World of Peace, reflecting Rev. Moon's confidence in Islam's potential to be a major partner in the global quest for peace.

Rev. Moon dedicated himself to address the world's most unsolvable challenges, among them achieving peace in the Middle East and a peaceful reconciliation between North and South Korea. The Middle East Peace Initiative exemplifies his approach to peace by calling on leaders of all fields, including government, academia, religion and the arts, to join in interreligious peace missions to the trouble spots of the world.

The Universal Peace Federation was established in 2005 to create a global council of religious and other leaders to supplement and support the peace-making work of the United Nations. It has a Global Peace Council with distinguished leaders from all continents and Ambassadors for Peace committed to the vision of a global human family under God.

UPF is a non-governmental organization with Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN.

UPF was inaugurated in September 2005 at a gala event at the Lincoln Center in New York City. After that, the founders embarked on a World Peace Tour, inaugurating chapters on six continents. After a journey of more than 70,000 miles, 280 hours of airtime, and 60 time zones the tour concluded in Toronto, Canada three months later.

While the Internet links people the world over on an information super-highway, there is no highway with bridges and tunnels to connect all the continents. The idea for a Bering Strait crossing was promoted during the UPF Peace Tours of 2005 and 2006 as a vision for overcoming cultural and religious boundaries as well as geographic and political divisions.

Beginning in 2006, a number of Rev. and Mrs. Moon's children and adult grandchildren, accompanied by

their spouses, joined Mrs. Moon on a history-making world tour for peace to 120 nations. Audiences worldwide were inspired that Rev. Moon's important work is being effectively continued through the dedication of the second and third generations of his family.

The initial Peace Message of 2005 was developed for diverse audiences and to address complex issues facing the globe. In 2006 and 2007, the momentum generated from the initial tours continued locally in more than 14,000 locations organized by Ambassadors for Peace inspired by the vision of the Peace Tours.

Going up into the mountains for meditation and prayer has long been a tradition among the peace-loving people of Korea. For decades Cheon Pyeong Lake northeast of Seoul was a beloved prayer retreat for Rev. Moon. As he prayed in the hills nearby, his conviction grew that one day there would be a peace village here and people from all over the world would come to his homeland to learn peace.

In addition to the Cheon Jeong Gung Peace Palace, Museum and Meeting Center there is a training center, hospital, seminary, and stadium at the complex.

UPF initiated a 'Legacy of Peace' memorial program at the United Nations headquarters in New York on March 18, 2010 to honor Hédi Annabi, the UN Chief of Mission killed with 100 other UN personnel in the earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010 and seven other prominent individuals associated with UPF who had recently passed away and whose lives were dedicated to peace. Rev. and Mrs. Moon were present at the programs in New York and Las Vegas. Similar events were organized by UPF chapters around the world.

A tireless advocate for peace, Rev. Moon and his wife traveled in Asia, Europe, North America, and Africa in 2011 to speak to the public on the theme of "Building a World of Universal Peace."

Rev. Sun Myung Moon passed away on September 3, 2012, of complications of pneumonia. He is survived by his wife, ten of their 14 children, and more than 40 grandchildren.