

FFWPU and ACLC Give Holy Marriage Blessings to Native Americans of OK

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A small group representing FFWPU and American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) had an unforgettable experience meeting and giving the Holy Marriage Blessing to Native Americans in Oklahoma during a five-day visit.

The members of this group were Rev. Marilyn Kotulek, the ACLC-Oklahoma co-chair; Rev. Jun Orikasa, the FFWPU-Oklahoma state leader; Rev. John Ngoran, the executive director of ACLC-Oklahoma; and Minister Reiko Jenkins, the co-chair of ACLC Women in Ministry. From April 19 to April 21, 2017, they visited the extended family of Rev. George Akeen, one of the chiefs of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribe.

Rev. Akeen has visited Israel a few times with the Middle East Peace Initiative (MEPI) and has met True Parents many times. He is also a co-chair of ACLC-Oklahoma.

We had told Rev. Akeen that we wanted to visit his family members to give them the Holy Marriage Blessing and pray for them. He took this to heart and called many members of his family to come meet us. He was very happy to introduce us to all his family. More than 40 couples received the Holy Marriage Blessing through this special week and the previous powwow.



It was very special that I could stay at Rev. Kotulek's home in Oklahoma City during this visit and meet her husband, who was recovering from open-heart surgery, her daughter, Lindsey, and granddaughter,

Kayla. Rev. Kotulek has always taken loving care of me and all Women in Ministry guests during our visits. Last year she gave the Holy Marriage Blessing to her family at her granddaughter's wedding.



A few of Rev. Akeen's family members live in the nearby town of El Reno. First we went to Rev. Akeen's home to discuss with him and his wife, Eleanor, how we would do all the visits. After warmly welcoming us, they explained about the Cheyenne and Arapaho tradition of the Dog Soldiers: native warriors who go to a mountain alone at age 18, with only a knife, to survive completely on their own for 365 days. Rev. Akeen is one of only 700 men who survived that course and is the head of the Dog Soldiers Society. They had to go through training that included walking on fire. He said, "We have to keep our tradition." He wants to invite us to the Sun Dance this year, in which men continue ritual dances for four days without eating or drinking. The Sun Dance is a grueling ordeal for the dancers, a physical and spiritual test that they offer in sacrifice for their people.



After a while, Rev. Akeen's daughter Jeannie Bigfoot and sister Pat Pewo came to visit his home. We read a part of True Father's autobiography together and then gave the Holy Marriage Blessing to Rev. and Mrs. Akeen as the first couple. Then we asked Rev. and Mrs. Akeen to bless his two families. That was the first house.

On the second day, April 20, we visited the family of the Cheyenne ceremonial leader (arrow keeper), Rev. William Wayne Red Hat, who had passed away a week earlier in the town of Canton, Oklahoma. He was a well-known leader, and the Cheyenne and Arapaho families were deeply saddened by losing their spiritual leader. We asked Rev. Akeen if we could visit Rev. Red Hat's widow, although it was only four days after the funeral. Without any hesitation, he said, "If you want to go, then we will go."

After almost two hours of driving, we arrived at Rev. Red Hat's home. We had not called beforehand, so her granddaughter Dorothy and two security people were a little hesitant to introduce us to Mrs. Nellie Red Hat, but she came out and the seven of us greeted her. We sat together outside in the warm sunshine at the very peaceful prayer ground, explained why we were there, and said we wanted to give our condolences and prayer. I described the reconciliation work we have been doing with Native Americans over the past 10 years. She looked very sad, but welcomed us with calm dignity and listened to us very sincerely. After we spoke about True Parents, Rev. Akeen offered to give her the Holy Wine. On the foundation of Rev. Akeen's prayer and the simple explanation of the meaning of Holy Wine, she received it.



Rev. Akeen later told us that she mentioned to him that she had been feeling down before we came, but that our visit lifted her heart and spirit. We were so grateful to Rev. Akeen's courage to take us there.

Then we visited Rev. Akeen's daughter, Jeannie Bigfoot, at her home. Seven or eight teenage children, her grandchildren and their friends were waiting with their mother, and she had even prepared dinner for us.

We showed a video introducing ACLC and another video about our reconciliation work with Native Americans. Then Rev. Akeen's friends came over, so the house was full. Rev. Akeen again led the Holy Wine ceremony, and everybody received it. Mrs. Nell Penn, a friend of Rev. Akeen's, asked us to visit her home, so we agreed to go there the next day. We had a meal together, which had been prepared with a loving heart. The teenage children were very kind, respectful and gave native gifts to all of us.

On the third day, April 21, we were scheduled to go to the village of Grant, which is one hour's drive from El Reno, to visit Rev. Akeen's sister, Pat Pewo. Because of terrible rain and winds in the morning, we thought we might not be able to drive there, but the weather improved.

Rev. Akeen's two brothers, his mother, Ella, his nephew and some friends were there. Jeannie Bigfoot, Rev. Akeen's daughter, whom we had visited the night before, came also with her three children and grandchildren. It was a full house. Mother Ella was explaining that they used to go by bus to Dallas, Texas, to take part in different meetings of the Unification movement.



We had a wonderful fellowship, and Rev. Marilyn Kotulek led the prayer meeting. She asked each person to say something, after which she prayed and prophesied for each person. Then everybody received Holy Wine from Rev. Akeen.

Afterward we went to Mother Ella's house, located in the big backyard, as well as a burial ground where Rev. Akeen's father was buried. We prayed at the burial ground and also saw traces of Rev. Akeen's old house, which burned down years ago. He is hoping to rebuild someday. It turned out to be a beautiful spring day.

Then we drove to the home of Mrs. Nell Penn, Rev. Akeen's friend. Her son Shawn and other friend Wanda Whiteman and her granddaughter joined us. Rev. Mona Bearshield, the speaker for the revival which we had scheduled for the next day, also arrived from the city of Lawton. They all knew each other. Again Rev. Akeen offered Holy Wine. Then Rev. Kotulek led the prayer meeting. She asked each person to tell us of any prayer requests for family members. Then we prayed in unison, holding hands in a circle. The prayer was so powerful that Wanda's 8-year-old granddaughter Bindi started to cry intensely and shake. Her grandmother said that it was the first time that this kind of thing had happened to her. We knew that God had touched her heart and spirit. It was a beautiful revival meeting.

On the fourth day, April 22, the revival meeting was held at the Baymont Inn in El Reno, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. More than 50 people joined us, including chiefs and their wives, Native American pastors and many children.

Rev. John Ngoran was the MC. Minister Pat Washington led a small choir in singing a few spirituals a cappella. We honored Rev. Akeen's family and all the ministers.

Rev. Kotulek introduced Pastor Bearshield as the keynote speaker. She had brought her youth ministry team to read Scripture, and her 6-year-old granddaughter sang amazing songs. That really brought a revival spirit. Rev. Bearshield gave a powerful message, saying that if you believe in something and act on it, Heaven will open up and things will happen. Her husband was a pastor, and before he died he passed that position on to her. In taking on that responsibility, her life of faith has truly become a testimony to her words.

She reminded me of our True Mother, who is standing strong to testify without ceasing to Heavenly Parent and True Parents.

After we enjoyed the wonderful lunch prepared by Minister Sue Nichols and others, Rev. Gerald Panana gave a beautiful speech and sang Christian songs for us. We felt such a peaceful spirit from hearing his speech.

Then Rev. Akeen offered a prayer for receiving the Holy Wine. We had as very special guests Chief Larry Roman Nose of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribe and his wife. He said he was very happy to be there and he told us that he respects Rev. Akeen very much.

To conclude the meeting we made a circle with all the participants, and Rev. Akeen gave a prayer honoring Rev. William Wayne Red Hat and his family. It was a very moving event, with so many people attending after we visited Rev. Akeen's family over the previous three days.

Our Oklahoma brothers and sisters have given so much love, prayer and sacrifice over the years, shedding



many tears to reach out to Native American families and pastors. On the foundation of their diligent work and effort, especially their continuous monthly prayer breakfasts and pastors' forums studying Divine Principle, God is opening the doors wide to connect the people of Oklahoma to True Parents.

The next day, Sunday, Rev. Kotulek, Rev. Ngoran and I attended the New Church-Omega Fire Ministries in Oklahoma City, led by Pastor Rev. Dr. Roseline Nsikak of Nigeria, who has been doing ministering work together with Rev. Kotulek for the past 20 years. She is a powerful pastor. The service was done with so much prayer that I could feel many great spirits gathering. I prayed for Jesus and True Parents to be with us.

After the service we went to lunch together with Pastor Roseline and her assistant. When we entered the restaurant, somebody waved to Rev. Kotulek—a minister of City Church in Oklahoma City, Pastor Richard Hogue and his wife, Marilyn, who already knew Rev. Kotulek. We introduced ourselves, and they were so kind and warm to us.

It was such a productive five days from the beginning to the end. We want to continue reaching out to the families and leaders there and especially to the young generation, to bring God's Blessing to their lives. We are immensely grateful to True Parents for anointing us to give the Holy Wine to bring all families to be engrafted to the Tree of Life—the True Olive Tree that Jesus spoke of in the Bible.