

Minnesota Family Church Rapidly Constructing Its New Church Center

Hyungtae Ha
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Since its groundbreaking ceremony in May, the Minnesota Family Church has worked around the clock to construct a new church center from the ground up. The beautiful new building will meet the community's growing needs with an education zone for the next generation of young Unificationists, a social hall where people can read Divine Principle together, and a banquet hall for Marriage Blessing Ceremonies. The small community has worked together for over three years to make their \$3 million project possible.

It was not easy for the Minnesota community to make the decision to build a new church, however, they knew it was time to make a change. "With our previous church building, we had many issues," says District Eight Pastor Rev. Hyungtae Ha. "We have been thinking of updating the building or purchasing a new building for a while. But we didn't know where to start or whether we could afford it."



Local Unificationists realized that they needed a new church center when they started to outgrow the building that they had shared for a number of years. Many Unificationists were moving to the Twin Cities and starting families, expanding their church community. It became clear that young parents strongly desired a space where they could pass on their values to their children. Plus, Rev. Ha knew he wanted a

church where Unificationists could witness organically. Neither of these goals was possible with the old church building, which had a tiny sanctuary and few parking spaces.



People of the Minnesota Church community began to visit mega churches for inspiration. “We found that all of the churches provided a great education system for children, inspiring messages, and support to families through community programs,” said Rev. Ha. The mega churches were also modern and attractive, which had everyone in the community feeling proud. After visiting the mega churches, Rev. Ha looked over his old church building, which needed quite a few repairs. He wondered if it would be better to repair the old building or start over with something new.

At first, the congregation was resistant to the move. “Many Unificationists had a huge emotional attachment to the old building and wouldn’t agree with selling it,” explained Rev. Ha. The small community talked it out for months. Three generations of Unificationists often gathered after church to discuss their hopes and visions for the future. Along the way, Rev. Ha gauged the fears and needs of the community with question and answer sessions as well as surveys. Finally, after several months, the congregation was in agreement that it was time to sell the old church building.

Originally, Rev. Ha planned to buy a pre-existing church that would meet the needs of the growing community. But God’s vision was even greater than the vision that Rev. Ha had for the church. “After more than two years of searching and failing with the offers we made to purchase a church building, we strongly felt that God was asking us to build our own church from the ground up.”

“After reviewing over 50 potential plots of land, we found this land right next to a beautiful park that was close to our old location,” Rev. Ha continued. “We visited the land with the entire church community several times and prayed together.” After doing this, they felt God’s blessing and knew that it was time to make the purchase.

After buying the land, things just fell into place. “We were amazed how quickly all the challenges were getting solved,” Rev. Ha remembered. “The city also encouraged us to build a church after hearing our story.” The Minnesota church community easily acquired the necessary building permits and tax exemptions to make the project possible. As the days passed, it became more and more clear that God was guiding them each step of the way.

When Rev. Ha looked back on the past few years, he was amazed with how it all worked out. “How could a small community like ours lead this \$3 million construction project by ourselves? We are so blessed as our Heavenly Parent has prepared the right people in the right place at the right time for this project.”

Throughout the months, the community pushed for unity in its decision-making. It was this unity that allowed God to work. “As we have walked through the journey, we have become more clear in our vision for what to build for our future,” explained Rev. Ha.

The Minnesota community is grateful for the donations which have poured in from around the country to make their project possible. With God’s continued support, the church will be up and running by the end of September.