

## This week in history, April 20-26:

Michael Mickler  
April 20, 2020

### April 20, 1955 Rev. Young Hwi Kim Joins the Movement



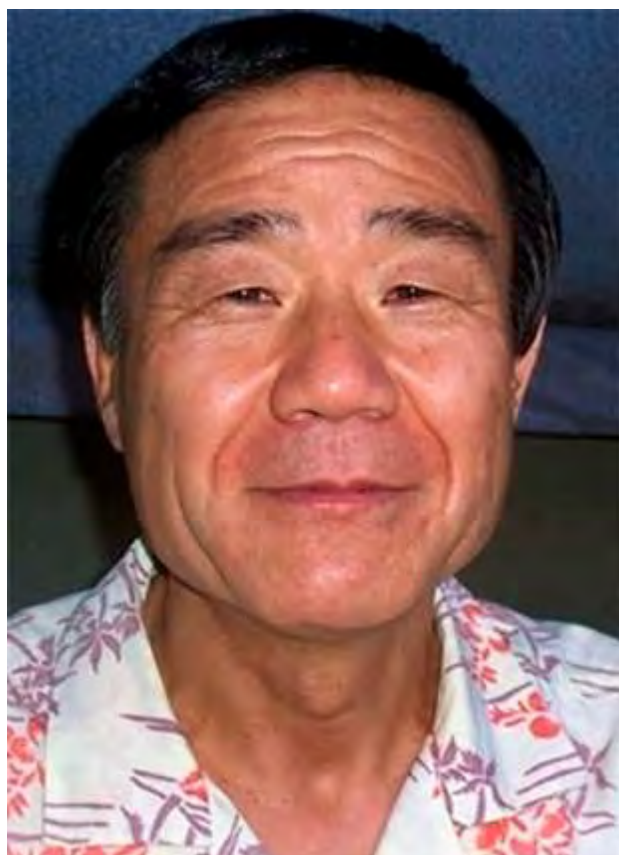
*Young Hwi Kim and Dae Hwa Chung receive the Holy Marriage Blessing in 1960*

Rev. Young Hwi Kim (b. 1928), who with his wife were one of the original three couples engaged by True Parents prior to their own Holy Wedding, joined the Unification movement on April 20, 1955. He had studied electrical engineering at Seoul National University and joined the first class of Korea's Special Air Force Academy in 1953. He subsequently served the Unification movement in various leadership positions over the last sixty years.

Following Rev. Hyo Won Eu's passing in 1970, he became the second president of the Korean Unification movement. He was the lecturer at the first Divine Principle workshop in the United States overseen by True Parents and author of *The Divine Principle Study Guide, Part 1*.

He served as a regional leader representing True Parents in several European countries and as their envoy to the United Kingdom. In 2013, Rev. Kim represented True Mother in a five-city U.S. revival tour. He also served as director of the Cheon Seong Gyeong project in Korea.

### April 21, 2007 Hirokazu Ota Released by Paraguayan Kidnappers



Hirokazu Ota, a longtime Japanese Unification Church leader, Japanese national messiah to Paraguay, and president of the Unificationist-affiliated land management company in Paraguay, was kidnapped at gunpoint, along with his secretary, on April 1, 2007. Asian people there (Koreans, Japanese, Chinese) are thought to be rich and are frequently targeted by criminals. Mr. Ota, his secretary and two bystanders, one of whom was a police officer, were abducted while traveling by car. The kidnapping gang, which was thought to involve as many as 25 people, raised the initial ransom demand from \$25,000 to \$300,000. Negotiations were difficult, with Mr. Ota and his companions being relocated numerous times as the kidnappers attempted to stay ahead of Paraguayan authorities. In the end, through the efforts of the Paraguayan police, the Japanese Embassy, the Church and company officials, a reported \$138,000 ransom was paid and Mr. Ota was released in Ciudad del Este, a city on the eastern border with Brazil. Mr. Ota recounted his harrowing experience in several news conferences and testimonies. The following year, the Brazilian kidnapping ringleader was shot to death by Paraguayan police in a

gunfight.

**April 22, 1980**

**Noticias del Mundo Established**



True Father founded the Spanish-language newspaper Noticias del Mundo on April 22, 1980, as an effort to begin a relationship with the Hispanic community in the United States and Latin America that would help turn the tide against communist infiltration of the Western Hemisphere. Earlier, True Father set up the anti-communist educational organization CAUSA and sent Dr. Bo Hi Pak to meet officials in Latin America. In his remarks at its inauguration, Dr. Pak, the paper's founding president and publisher, expressed True Father's desire for Spanish-speaking Americans to help shape the nation's future and to correct misunderstandings and misrepresentations in the North American press. Leadership of Noticias Del Mundo later passed to Phillip V. Sanchez, the former U.S. ambassador to Honduras and Colombia.

**April 24, 2015**

**Gerhard Peemoeller, "Bodyguard for Christ," Ascends**



During the 1970s, a towering figure was always in close proximity to True Parents and members of their family. He was Gerhard Peemoeller, or "Big Gerhard," as he also was known. An impressive 6 feet 6 inches in stature, Gerhard joined the Unification movement in 1972 and came to the United States in 1973. From the moment he encountered Unificationists in his home country of Germany, Gerhard was infused with the desire to be a "bodyguard for Christ," ignited by a vision he had while praying. On coming to the United States he was given the opportunity to join True Parents' security team for speaking tours and later at East Garden. Eventually he became one of three traveling bodyguards for True Parents. In his book *Bodyguard for Christ: One Disciple's Experience Protecting the Messiah*, Gerhard emphasized that the most important aspect of his job was internal unity with True Parents. He outlined the conditions he set for the safety and protection of the children and relatives of True Parents, including a daily breakfast fast, washing and waxing a car every day that True Parents weren't at East Garden,

and praying constantly while on duty. After 1980, he became a leader in the Ocean Church and pioneered work in Virginia. It took him seven years to start to like fishing, but he eventually started to feel like a real fisherman and gained the respect of other fishermen. Gerhard was blessed with Nobuko Komura in 1976 as part of the 74 couples' Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony. He was survived by his wife and seven children.