

**A REPORT FROM CHICAGO FAMILY
CHURCH
FOR THE DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES
MEETING IN LAS VEGAS (APRIL 13-15)**

April 8, 2015

Rev. Kazuo Takami – District 7

CONTENTS

- ✘ A Case Study: How Chicago built a Consensus on Property Sales
- ✘ Weekly DP Study for College Age Unificationists

TWO BUILDINGS



Ashland Church

- Almost 100 year old
- Distant from members' homes – 45 min to 1 hour drive
- Stopped using for Sunday Service in 2012 when we tried a theater service



Sheridan Road Center

- Almost 100 years old
- Distant from members' homes
- Only 1 family + 1 center members were living

NECESSITIES OF RELOCATION:

- Distant from members' homes – 45 min to 1 hour+ drive-
- No parking lot (Ashland Church)
- High maintenance & repair cost – Both buildings are nearly 100 years old
- Purchased to fulfill the vision in 70's and 80's

GENERAL PROCESS

1) Formed the Building Committee (Started as pastor's personal discussion group → Official Committee, May 2013)

cf. Previously, another minor property (Gilman camp) sales was made in 2011 in Illinois -- It was a good practice at big sales

2) Research --- Jun - Dec 2013

- + Find out building situations (physical condition, financial expenses for maintenance & repair, etc)
- + Compare the Vision of the buildings with reality
- + Appraisals (Current monetary value)
- + Potential usage of the buildings

3) Communication with congregation (Open to talk after Sunday Service, Town Hall meeting, Email announcement)

4) Community Vote - Feb. 2014

TWO VOICES

THE COMMUNITY COULD BE DIVIDED...

[Supportive Voices]

- For future church growth & for everyday ministries (not on Sundays or big events only)
- To inspire coming generations
- If not now, we lose an opportunity – Many 1st gen members will retire within 10 years.

[Negative Voices]

- It's a historical place which True Parents bought!
- Strong attachment toward buildings

Majority were supportive but some members strongly opposed and they were very vocal and aggressive.

DISCUSS ISSUES WIDELY AND PROPERLY

- ✘ Discussed among District Pastor, Pastoral Team, Local Council members (Mixed opinions but at least open-minded to discuss about the building sales)
- ✘ Local council talked with former District Council members, our National Council representative, Pastoral team members, youth leaders and members who have been repairing the buildings - as well as church members
- ✘ District Pastor spoke to Dr. Kim, Dr. Balcomb and Dr. Jenkins and confirmed HQ were supportive to the property sales (Vertical alignment).

EXAMINE THE BUILDING ISSUES FAIRLY

- ✘ Talk to professionals and members on potential usage of the buildings
- ✘ Find out the maintenance expense and estimate a repair cost (cf. Dec. 2014 Heating & Electricity cost - \$2,300)
- ✘ Investigate the buildings' current value – Appraisals on two buildings (Sheridan \$750K, Ashland \$445K)
- ✘ Give an opportunity to those who want to keep buildings to submit their vision and their maintenance plan

COMMUNITY VOTE

After providing opportunities for people to speak (Talk/chat after service, Town Hall meeting), the local council announced a community vote on buildings

- ✘ Voting period – Feb. 1- Feb. 6, 2014
- ✘ Announced at Sunday Service, email announcement
- ✘ Voting Method – Online vote, vote at Learning Center
- ✘ The announcement was translated into Japanese & Hispanic languages
- ✘ In the announcement, the project background, reasons of sales are explained plainly. See attached PDF

VOTING RESULT AND ANNOUNCEMENT



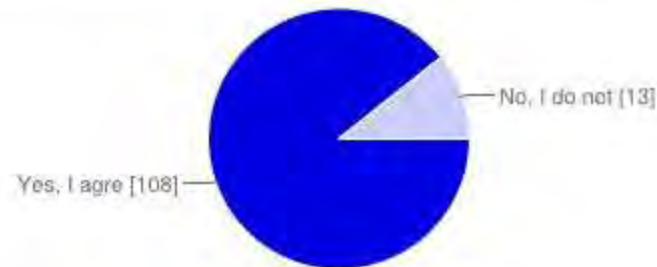
Dear Chicago Family,

Thank you for participating in the vote to determine the future of the Ashland and Sheridan church buildings.

We have received a total of 121 votes during the four day voting period. The result is:

Yes, I agree that we should sell both the Ashland Church and 108 (89%)
the Sheridan Road properties in order to buy an all-inclusive votes
facility in the suburbs.

No, I do not agree with selling both of the properties. 13 (11%)
votes



The voting was carried out to find our community's voice. With the results, we will now proceed to request permission from the US HSA-UWC board to sell the properties and then wait for True Mother's final decision. We are unsure how long this process will take. We'll keep you updated with any new developments.

This has probably been one of the most challenging issues our church community has had to tackle. Our sincere hope is that we can all accept the decision of our community and move forward together.

God Bless you and your family,

Rev. Kazuo Takami
Pastor

Rev. Kunihiro Sagisaka
Associate Pastor

Chicago Local Council



WEEKLY DP STUDY FOR COLLEGE AGE UNIFICATIONISTS

✘ Photo is coming soon

WEEKLY DP STUDY FOR COLLEGE AGE UNIFICATIONISTS

✘ Background

- + No strong young adult ministry in local church
- + Some of GPA graduates are looking for more spiritual-centered lifestyle
- + To make pastor available for them.

✘ Every Thursday, 7-8:30 PM

- + Use DP Master Study Guide
- + Discussions & homework
- + Average of 7-8 people last 2 months



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Rev. Kazuo Takami
Pastor

Rev. Kunitiro Sagisaka
Associate Pastor

Chicago Local Council



The following is an important announcement. The Local Council, District and Associate Pastors as well as 4 former District Council members (who represented Chicago) and other community leaders have come to a consensus about the direction our church should go, in regards to our buildings. The findings of these meetings are below. We are now asking the church community to vote on this issue.

*You are eligible to vote if you are 18 years or older and currently a member of Chicago Family Church. The voting deadline is **6:00 PM, Thursday, February 6, 2014**. If you have any difficulty voting online, you may visit the Chicago Family Church Schaumburg Center to cast a paper ballot (1443 W. Schaumburg Rd., Suite 230, Schaumburg, IL). Note: Husband and wife and children 18 and older can vote separately.*

Please call the church office at 773-442-7114 if you have any problems.

Every vote is important. Please consider the issues carefully and then make every effort to cast your vote. The results will be made public.

Note: Japanese translation of this announcement will be sent by tomorrow morning.

Community Vote on Sheridan/Ashland Buildings

Dear Chicago Family Church members,

As you are all aware the District Pastor, Associate Pastor and Local Council members have been studying and discussing the building issues. When the Local Council was elected, all of the members tried to examine the building issue fairly and without prejudice. In order to make a recommendation we have spoken to real estate professionals and many of our church/community leaders – former District Council members, our National Council representative, Pastoral team members, youth leaders and members who have been repairing

the buildings - as well as our members, in order to come to some conclusion on this issue. In addition, Rev. Takami had the opportunity to speak with Bishop Kim and Dr. Jenkins on the issue.

Here are our findings:

- 1) True Mother's #1 direction is church growth.
- 2) Throughout America there are many church buildings in a state of disrepair such as ours. True Mother has asked that East Garden and Belvedere be preserved as the memorial buildings of True Parents' work in the US. Clearly, if the focus of our American church becomes restoring and renovating the many properties that suffered in order to further True Parents' mission then the impact we can make in the direction of church growth will be reduced as our funds and time will be in use elsewhere. Our True Mother has had to make many tough decisions about beloved properties and equipment that belonged to True Father. However, in making those decisions she has set the standard that the properties are here to serve the mission, not the other way around.
- 3) Our members have a deep rooted connection to our properties in Rogers Park however both buildings have extensive building violations at the present time. The repairs that need to be done would cost an enormous amount of money. Even if repaired, our congregation has already outgrown the space.
- 4) The Sheridan Road Center and the Ashland Church are costing our congregation each month even though they are not being used for church activities. In the extreme cold of December the cost of heating and electricity alone totaled \$2,300.
- 5) Although members want to keep the building(s) and many have worked hard to repair the heating, etc. the reality is that no one has stepped forward with a vision and ability to shoulder the responsibilities of a) repairing the building(s), and b) developing a ministry that would grow to eventually support the building(s).
- 6) Most of the membership and the activities of the Chicago Family Church have already moved to the suburbs far away from the Rogers Park properties.
- 7) Because our financial assets are locked in the Rogers Park buildings which are unable to be used, our congregation has had to move from place to place renting facilities for Sunday service, special events and office space. If we decided to use the properties in an alternative manner, for instance, rental property for college students, our congregation would be left in the current situation.
- 8) The lease for our office is coming due in May. We already have warning that the rent might increase dramatically.
- 9) Dr. Jenkins suggested that a presence in Chicago may be favorable for our outreach programs such as ACLC, WFWP, UPE, etc. We also have treasured members who are still living in Chicago. To rent an affordable office space in Chicago could be an option to serve those needs.
- 10) Any matter regarding the sale of church property needs the majority approval of the local church congregation and then is brought before True Mother who makes the final decision. The next board of directors meeting is in mid February and we are going to present this request at that time.

11) We have already had some requests from interested buyers to look at our Rogers Park properties.

12) To maximize our potential to buy a new property, we would need to sell both buildings. Our hope would be to use those funds to find one building in the suburbs that would serve as an all inclusive facility, housing our offices along with sufficient meeting rooms and gathering places for Sunday service/special events that would be family friendly for children all the way through to the elderly. Bishop Kim has indicated to Rev. Takami that he supports this plan.

Our hope is to bravely move forward into the future that we trust Our Heavenly Parent has been preparing and that our entire congregation can be united together.

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