

Zimbabwe blesses 4000 couples from Apostolic Christian Council of Zimbabwe

George M. Ogurie
June 10, 2018



On Saturday June 9, some four thousand couples -- members of the Apostolic Christian Council of Zimbabwe (ACCZ) under the leadership of Archbishop Johannes Ndanga -- participated in the Hyo Jeong Cosmic Blessing of the True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind. The Blessing Ceremony took place at the Harare International Conference Center (HICC) in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital city, under the watch of our beloved True Mother through her representative Dr. Yun Young-ho, secretary general of the Cheon Jeong Gung International Headquarters. This blessing marked the first stage in the accomplishment of the 40,000-couple blessing proposed by Archbishop Ndanga during True Parents' birthday celebrations in February this year.

As early as 4:00 am, ACCZ members, who had traveled overnight from faraway places in Zimbabwe such as Bulawayo, Rutenga and Gokwe began arriving at the blessing venue. Due to the nationwide spread of ACCZ membership, many participants from very distant places could not arrive at the venue on time. From 10:00 am, preliminary entertainment had begun with singing and dancing by various church choirs. They sang mostly in their native languages and sometimes the dances were quite acrobatic. Until after lunchtime, when the Blessing Ceremony eventually started, those singers and dancers had ample time to perform.

When it was time to begin the ceremony, a twenty-man band of drummers and trumpeters escorted Dr. Yun, Rev. Bakary Camara, chairman of the Heavenly Africa Regional Group; and the officiators, Archbishop Johannes Ndanga and Mrs. Judith Ndanga into the hall, where participating couples had already taken their seats and arranged themselves well.



A preface to the ceremony

Rev. Mwalagho Kililo, president of Subregion East Africa, who served as the master of ceremonies, asked everyone to rise as the officiators entered the room. Everyone remained standing while the Zimbabwean national anthem and the Cheon Il Guk anthem played. Bishop Masumbikwa gave the invocation, and then Archbishop Ndanga gave his opening remarks.

The archbishop's address was a profound explanation of the blessing. He started by pointing out the benefits of the blessing -- the protection of one's family from harm, the establishment of a happy family, the bringing of good fortune to the family instead of misfortune, the fidelity and trust that builds between husband and wife, the assurance of eternal joy for all future generations as well as happiness and

blessings. He also explained the meaning of the blessing with biblical verses such as Genesis 1:27 and 28 as the re-enactment and recovery of the original blessing given by God to the first human ancestors, Adam and Eve. Using additional Bible passages he went further to explain the process of the blessing, which consists of five steps. Throughout his presentation, he was full of praise and acknowledgment of True Parents as the ones who bring the blessing to humanity.

After his address, the archbishop himself administered the holy wine to twelve representative couples onstage, while the rest of the participants received theirs in their positions with the assistance of senior blessed couples -- all members of ACCZ -- in forty locations throughout the conference center's large auditorium.

The ceremony flowed smoothly to the end with the holy water sprinkling, True Parents' blessing invocation, the blessing proclamation and presentation of flowers. Rev. Camara and Dr. Yun made some congratulatory remarks. Each in his own way, they expressed the hope that this is the beginning of a massive spread of the blessing in Africa. Ms. Wija Ghomsi gave a beautiful rendition of "Song of the Banquet" as a congratulatory song. Zimbabwe's national leader, Rev. Bosako Iyolangomo, led everyone in four thunderous cheers of Eog Mansei ending the ceremony. After the master of ceremonies had declared the Blessing Ceremony officially completed, members of the ACCZ choir quickly found their way back onstage and began another round of singing and dancing, which brought many people to join the choir for a free-for-all dance. This crowned the whole ceremony with excitement and happiness.



Five bishops and a chief

While waiting to begin the main Blessing Ceremony, Archbishop Ndanga had requested that some of his church leaders receive the blessing separately and privately in a small ceremony. So at about 9:30 am Archbishop Ndanga led a Blessing Ceremony in the Rainbow Towers Hotel suite where he was staying. The following people participated: Chief Njelele of Gokwe District, Midlands Province and Mrs. Njelele; Bishop Sibanda and Mrs. Sibanda; Bishop Matenda and Mrs. Matenda; Bishop Matanhike and Mrs. Matanhike; Bishop Masumbikwa and Mrs. Masumbikwa; and Bishop Mabhena and Mrs. Mabhena, all of ACCZ.

I, as the president of Subregion West Africa (South) coordinated the ceremony and delivered a fifteen minute explanation of the blessing. While Rev. Bosako Iyolangomo and Mrs. Laura Lynn Iyolangomo administered the holy wine.



I emphasized the forty-day separation as a critical component of the process of the blessing. I described it as "sexual fasting," an important condition for God to unleash his blessings upon their families. I enjoined the bishops to take the forty-day separation and three-day ceremony seriously and to accomplish them, as this will give them the moral authority to guide their members to do the same.

They pledged to follow through on all the steps of the blessing. Afterward, PeaceTv interviewed four of them and they all expressed profound appreciation to God and True Parents for the opportunity to participate in the blessing. They also pledged to spread the True Parents' blessing far and wide in their nation, Zimbabwe.

Testimonies

On Sunday June 10, FFWPU members gathered at the Peace Embassy for Sunday Service. Both Dr. Yun and Rev. Camara were present. It was an opportunity for members to share testimonies and reflection on the

blessing just held. Rev. Kililo reported that the church leaders he spoke with all confessed that it is only through the True Parents' blessing that salvation will come to their nation. They want to move fast in bringing many couples to the blessing.

Sumi Wakasaka, a second-generation Unificationist from Zambia, serving as a youth missionary in Zimbabwe, requested that Dr. Yun convey the gratitude of second-generation members in Africa to True Mother for liberating Africa in Senegal. Through that liberation, doors are opening and through the blessing yesterday, more doors will open in other places, she said.

True Mother's expectation fulfilled

Rev. Iyolangomo testified about how much True Mother loves Zimbabwe. He explained that the venue where we held the blessing is the same that True Mother spoke in in 1999 during one of her world tours. At that time, True Mother expressed the wish that we hold a big blessing at that venue. It was very touching for him to see that wish coming true and therefore he attributed the victory of the blessing entirely to True Mother's prayers and efforts.



Regarding True Mother's representative

Pastor Mulenga, from Zambia, who invested himself in mobilizing the ACCZ church members for the blessing, recounted the challenges he faced in arranging transportation to bring people and noted that it was a miracle that that number of couples could make it. He thanked Dr. Yun for coming and said that meeting Dr. Yun was like meeting True Mother. Dr. Yun Young-ho gave the sermon for Sunday service. When introducing Dr. Yun, Rev. Camara, the regional group chairman, said that from what happened the day before, he expects the fire of the blessing to burn widely in Africa. He expressed gratitude that True Mother had sent Dr. Yun to light that fire.

Upon taking the podium, Dr. Yun shared with everyone a message from True Mother, saying that she was very happy with the blessing. Nothing can be a more profound testimony to True Mother's immeasurable grace, mercy, kindness and love. This brought tears to the eyes of everyone present.

Dr. Yun went on to describe all the remarkable things happening within the providence around the world. He also spoke of how True Mother has kept on top of everything. He testified that True Mother lived in total attendance to True Father throughout her life. If True Father slept for three hours a day, True Mother slept even less because she would wake up an hour earlier to prepare for him. After True Father's ascension, True Mother offered sincere devotion to True Father for three years on behalf of all humanity. Dr. Yun testified that once he asked True Mother why she is pushing herself so much and working so hard. "True Mother, you should rest," he told her. But True Mother said, "I am the Mother of all humanity. I cannot rest until the foundation for the salvation of all humanity is firmly established." Her driving force is the fact that she is the Mother of humanity. Come what may, Cheon Il Guk nations will be realized according to True Parents' plans. We should be confident and proceed with our duties diligently. At the end of his speech, Dr. Yun presented a cash gift from True Mother to the Zimbabwean mission. We all posed for a group photograph to conclude the service.

Although the blessing was completely centered on Archbishop Ndanga and the Apostolic Christian Council of Zimbabwe, FFWPU leaders at the Africa Regional Group Headquarters, such as Rev. Abdoulaye Wone and Rev. Jean Augustin Ghoms and their wives, Rev. Moruti Ledwaba, Mrs. Evelyne Chimfwembe, Zimbabwean members and other members from Zambia including the youth envoy and youth missionaries worked hard behind the scenes to make the event a success. Everyone's sincere input was highly appreciated.