

The Sunchang Family Church Takes Part in a Catholic Mass

Kyeong Woo Kang
November 13, 2014



Father Lee, our Rev. Kang and our members following a joint worship service in a Catholic church in Sunchang, Korea

Members from the Sunchang Family Church located in Sunchang County, North Jeolla Province, Korea, met at the Sunchang Catholic Cathedral at 7:30 PM on November 13 to conduct a joint mass, a Catholic worship service with local Catholics.

During mass, Father Sang Yong Lee, welcomed the FFWPU members saying that God's kingdom is not created solely through specific individuals or groups but should be created through the combined efforts of all faiths. In response, Rev. Kyeong Woo Kang, pastor in charge of our Sunchang Family Church thanked Father Lee for welcoming his congregation and for his extraordinary expression of true love originating from our Heavenly Parent. He noted that during most of its sixty-years of existence, the nearly two-thousand-year-old Catholic Church had been branding the Unification Church as heretical.

Rather than being a one-time event, Rev. Kang proposed continuing these exchanges so that the two denominations could reach the point of regarding each other as siblings. After mass that day, Father Lee, Rev. Kang and others engaged in conversations and promised to meet again.

Religious people join hands



The launching of the Sunchang Multicultural Youth Volunteer Group

Members of the Sunchang Family Church are actively carrying out interfaith activities in line with True Parents' vision. As part of these efforts, on January 14, they established the Sunchang Association of Religious People. Leading up to the establishment of this association, the Sunchang Family Church focused its efforts on promoting interfaith harmony and peace and inviting religious leaders in the local community to its open worship services. Ven. Jae Young Ko, director of the Sunchang County Multicultural Family Support Center, who is also a monk from the Won Buddhist Order, was deeply impressed at seeing our blessed families actively engaging in service activities

in Sunchang County. He soon began to cooperate with the Sunchang Family Church whenever it hosted events related to multicultural families. He has also participated in the open worship services. Mr. Byeong Moon Kang, the former head of the Confucian Institute in Sunchang, and the first president of the Sunchang Ambassador for Peace Association, was another frequent participant in the open worship services.

One day, after the open worship service, our Rev. Kang proposed the idea of hosting an interfaith service to Ven. Ko and Mr. Kang, the Confucian.

Ven. Ko showed enthusiastic support while Mr. Kang, the Confucian, agreed to take part in this initiative.

Later, Ven. Ko introduced our Rev. Kang to Ven. Beob Yeon from the Gangcheonsa Temple in Sunchang and Father Lee of the Sunchang Cathedral. On this foundation, members of two Buddhist orders, adherents of Confucianism, Catholic Church members and FFWPU members came together to create the Sunchang Association of Religious People. Our Rev. Kang explained his plans to meet representatives from the Sunchang branch of the Christian Council of Korea and invite them to join this association. He expressed his determination to contribute to the local society through this association in line with True Parents' teachings that religion should take the lead in promoting harmony and peace in society.

On March 21, the association hosted an interfaith meeting, the third of its kind, at the Educational Hall of the Sunchang Family Church. Participants were people from six different religious groups: our Rev. Kang, Mr.

Kang, the Confucian, Mr. Kim Kabyong, current head of the Confucian institution in Sunchang, Rev. Kang from the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea, Father Lee, Ven. Ko and Ven. Beob Yeon. The Presbyterian Rev. Kang, who participated as a believer in Christianity, initially showed resistance because of his preconceptions about the Family Federation, but the other religious leaders expressed deep respect for True Parents' global accomplishments. Our Rev. Kang invited his fellow religious leaders to the eleventh Ambassadors for Peace Workshop for Peace in Northeast Asia, which took place in Japan in May for four days. Father Lee and Ven. Ko promised to attend the next workshop.

On October 28, all the members of Sunchang Association of Religious People traveled to our holy ground in Chung Pyung. Secretary-general In Jin Kwon from the Association of Religions in Korea guided them to the Chung Pyung Heaven and Earth Training Center and the holy ground at the Tree of Blessing. He also guided them to the other facilities in the Chung Pyung area including the Cheongshim Peace World Center and Cheongshim International Hospital.

Mr. Kwon explained to the delegation that Rev. Sun Myung Moon began investing in the Chung Pyung area at the end of 1960 and prayed deeply for the sake of world peace and the salvation of humankind. This area is radiant with a beautiful natural environment and is an appropriate place for anybody to come to pray or mediate in order to train mind and body. The delegation toured the training center, which can accommodate more than ten thousand people, and the educational institutions, medical institutions and welfare institutions.

Mr. Kwon explained how Rev. Moon's vision to create an environmental city that integrates different cultures was slowly being realized in the area. One of the members of this delegation expressed that he was honored to be able to visit Chung Pyung, the mecca of the Family Federation, remarking how he could see Rev. Moon's devotion and love for world peace ingrained throughout the area. Another expressed his wish to go to the Cheon Jeong Gung museum on his next visit so that he can see with his own eyes the spiritual legacy Rev. Moon left behind.

Daily practice



*Sunchang Association of Religious Leaders
visiting the Chung Pyung holy ground*

On May 17, at the Sunchang County Youth Support Center, the Sunchang Family Church launched the Sunchang Multicultural Youth Service Corps with the participation of more than 130 people including local leaders of society, religious leaders and fifty service corps members. In a telegram, Mr. Dong Won Kang, member of Korea's National Assembly congratulated us on the launch of this multicultural youth service corps. In his message, Representative Kang expressed his wish that the spirit of helping and serving our neighbors in difficulties would serve as an example for

the youths in the area, at a time when many Koreans were still in sorrow, anger and despair because of the tragic sinking of the Sewol ferry. He expressed his appreciation to the youths and multicultural families for being part of this service corps. The members of the Sunchang Association of Religious People, Ms. Geum Soon Lym, head of the Sunchang District Volunteer Service Center, Ms. Hye Ja Nam its secretary general and other members of the association took part in this ceremony to encourage the newly formed service corps.

Earlier, on September 3, 2008, the Sunchang Family Church formed the Sunchang Multi-cultural Family Volleyball Team. This team is a member of the Volleyball Association under the Sunchang District Council of Sports for All. It often hosts volleyball tournaments to promote exchanges through sports among members of local volleyball teams. In the beginning, a women's volleyball team was formed in which many mothers from blessed families came together to train during the day. Later, after some of these women began to find employment, the training time was changed to 8 pm on Fridays. This enabled

the husbands and children to join the volleyball teams. This soon evolved into a family-oriented sports initiative that promoted the health and well-being of our blessed families in the Sunchang Family Church. These families soon expanded their activities to table tennis and badminton.

On October 15, the table tennis team visited the Muju Family Church and held a tournament among its youths, invigorating the youth association in both churches. In this way, members at the Sunchang Family Church were able to create a harmonious atmosphere at church through sports, which further strengthened the foundation of their heart-based community. This has invigorated members to become more active in their witnessing activities.

In the meantime, elder members at the Sunchang Family Church were taking musical lessons from a Christian elder, Jae Bok Yu, the president of the Sunchang Branch of the National Sijo Association, which celebrates a type of poetry. Mr. Yu was already involved in interfaith activities when he became acquainted with the Sunchang Family Church. He proposed the creation of a Multicultural Family Sijo Choir. From the beginning of the previous year, he had conducted the choir for an hour a week. Once this Sijo Choir began performing at the open worship service, Mr. Yu's associates from organizations affiliated with traditional cultural music began to participate in these services. Many of his associates were civil servants and officials from educational circles. They became interested in the activities of FFWPU and they promised to promote and support these activities. The Multicultural Family Sijo Choir won the top prize at the first National Multicultural Arirang Tournament held in early October 2013. In October this year, they won first prize in the group entry at the fifth National Sijo Tournament in Memory of the one hundred and fourth anniversary of the sacrifice of Master Hwang Hyeon, who appreciated Sijo poetry and who committed suicide in protest against Japan's annexation of Korea. In this way, members at Sunchang Family Church are putting True Parents' teachings into action towards the fulfillment of their providential vision. Even today, with the conviction and pride in their plentiful harvest, they are testifying about True Parents to their neighbors and relatives.