

Kikuno Allen, Japan, 1968



I joined the movement in Japan in 1968. I never felt that I would go abroad until 1972, when I felt God's calling to go to America. True Father was in the United States at the time and asked Japanese missionaries to come. I responded to True Father's request and arrived in America in the fall of 1973.

At that time I didn't know English or anything about American culture, but I had great hope when I heard True Parents speak. Members gathered early Sunday morning at Belvedere [in Tarrytown, New York] to hear True Father. During his talks he frequently mentioned that a unified and peaceful world will come from international blessed marriages, and he asked who would participate. In my heart, I responded to Father and prepared for a future international Blessing.



Kikuno Allen at left, front row. Mrs. Won Pok Choi, left, True Mother, center, second row.

In 1975, I was back in Japan with the international global team led by Reverend Reiner Vincenz. I applied for the matching and soon went to Korea. Matching candidates assembled at Sutek Ri international training center near Seoul. When we arrived, I shared with another Japanese sister that we should write a letter to True Parents expressing our willingness to respond to their vision for international Blessings. We wrote the letter and went to where True Parents were staying and looked for someone who could deliver the letter. Suddenly, a Korean elder appeared who was a missionary to Taiwan; she spoke Japanese, and we found that she was close to True Parents. She quietly listened to us and graciously agreed to deliver our letter to True Parents.

The next day all Japanese American missionary candidates were called to True Parents' living quarters. My heart was pounding when I heard this and wondered what was going on. When we got there, True Father was holding our letters in his hand! He said, "who dares to write this letter to me!" We raised our hands and Father came over to us and pinched my cheek. It was unexpected, but I felt tremendous love and support from True Parents. Father said, "You want the international Blessing, but you don't understand how difficult it is to do this. Who will take responsibility if you break the Blessing?" Father was very serious and not smiling.

He said that he had to take responsibility if the Blessing was broken.

He continued giving us internal guidance and ended by saying that we should expect to be matched among us Japanese. There were about twenty to thirty of us.

The following day True Parents matched us and, to our surprise, most of the matchings were international. I was matched to an American brother, Michael Allen, and we were blessed on February 8, 1975 in Seoul at the 1800-couple Marriage Blessing. We were separated for three years while I worked as a missionary in Japan and Korea, and Michael was a state leader in America.

At first, it was not easy to have a harmonious relationship with

my spouse. We had language and cultural differences, and even our approach to a life of faith was different. At times it was painful and I remembered True Parents warning to us that it would not be easy. Whenever I had a struggle in my marriage or life of faith, I remembered True Parents' vision for world peace based on international marriages and their parental heart for us. This helped me to break through my limitations and immature attitude. Heavenly Father blessed us with three beautiful children, one daughter and two sons. Michael and I have now been together for thirty-five years and are very grateful to Heavenly Father and True Parents.