

God's Hope for America tour in Arizona and New Mexico

Michael Balcomb

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From Las Vegas to Dallas, the God's Hope for America tour has had another interesting and inspiration-filled run. The 43-day revival road trip, split into six regions and 14 mini-tours of the continental United States, completed its Desert Rider mini-tour on June 28. So far, the road trip has encouraged the local communities to come together and has hosted well-known pastors and speakers from multiple faiths. A motorcycle relay has even been organized! If you are interested in joining the tour on your motorcycle for even a small portion, contact Arnold Evanson.

The Desert Rider mini-tour kicked off in Las Vegas, Nevada, and, fitting for the importance of this city in True Parents' mission, this day reached out widely to the public with events such as a press conference at the Las Vegas Holy Ground and a veterans' event attended by more than 155 people. The bus also made stops at the International Peace Education Center, Lake Mead and the Wongu University of Oriental Medicine. More details and photos on the tour's day in Las Vegas are available here:

www.familyfed.org/members/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5077:a-momentous-kickoff&catid=99:national&Itemid=376

Moving on through the dry terrain of Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, the bus made its way from Holy Ground to Holy Ground with a rich array of encounters, community gatherings and opportunities for prayer and reflection.

Phoenix, Arizona



The group gathers on the bridge over one of the canals that now fill the land where the original Holy Ground was blessed by True Father in 1965

On the road to Phoenix the morning of June 26, bus riders took the opportunity to watch movies well-liked by True Parents, including a 1973 John Wayne shoot-'em-up, "The Train Robbers" that might have been filmed along the same route upon which they were currently driving. Experiencing the things that True Parents enjoyed is one of the features of the road trip that make it feel up close and personal, a warm touch that brings True Parents closer to our hearts as we connect to their vision.

The Phoenix Holy Ground, which True Father blessed in a field when he visited there in 1965, was now a new park with many small canals located over the original site, leaving its location up to approximation. Russ Lockmiller had once researched and found what is believed to be the exact original location, so the prayer group assembled as close as possible to that point. They then traveled to a site on the campus of Arizona State University in the city of Tempe where Unificationists had prayed for many years as an alternative Holy Ground.



In Arizona, community members and travelers gather at the Holy Ground to share testimonies.

That evening the Phoenix Family Church hosted a hearty dinner, reviving the weary travelers through the friendliness, care and prayers of the community. Mark Anderson, a Unificationist and 14-year member of the Arizona State Legislature and currently the judge at the West Mesa Justice Court, welcomed the historic tour to Phoenix, saying: "Our state is a place of heart and living for the sake of others. We are proud that True Parents were here on a number of occasions in addition to the original Holy Ground visit. I am confident that the Arizona experience will result in 'heating up' the excitement level and the journey through our beautiful desert will be an oasis for your souls." Attendees of the events in Phoenix can agree that this day further carried the momentum of awakening God's Hope for America across the nation.



A prayer is held at the Holy Ground in Phoenix, Arizona.

Phoenix Photo Gallery on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.851295118233583.1073741838.833527253343703&type=1

Like God's Hope for America on Facebook, tag your friends in pictures and share the posts to help spread the word online as the bus spreads the word on the road!

The Grand Canyon

Spirits were high among all who walked within God's amazing act of sculptural artistry in the Arizona desert. Dr. Michael Balcomb, president of the Federation for World Peace and Unification in America (FFWPU USA), mentioned that God's work of restoration is not only for the sake of humanity but also for His glorious creation, which often has been ignored and underappreciated, as well as badly abused.



The group gathers at an outlook at the Grand Canyon.



The group takes in the magnificent sight of the Grand Canyon.



Demian Dunkley introduces the road trip to a group of tourists at the Grand Canyon



Dr. Balcomb waves from afar atop a canyon rock.



Though not one of the 55 Holy Grounds, the Grand Canyon is just as much a place to pray and feel God.

“What can anyone say about the Grand Canyon?” commented Laura Hornbeck, a traveler on the tour. “You really have to see it to appreciate its magnificence. The Grand Canyon attracts people from all over the world. In fact, many said they talked to more foreign visitors than Americans today. People are getting the chance to know one another quite deeply on this tour. At every stop, our brightly decorated bus and the bookmarks and postcards we are handing out are greeted warmly. We are making connections and encouraging people everywhere to look on the website for more information. Most of all, we are speaking out in support of America’s spiritual heritage. As Father Moon said, the only reason this country prospered so much in such a short time was that God was central to our foundation.”

In addition to his 1965 visit to the Grand Canyon, [www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=852414614788300&set=vb.833527253343703&type=3&theater] True Father prayed on January 2, 2011: “It is the time to establish God's throne at the top of the Grand Canyon. People say how the Grand Canyon is great, but there has been no owner who can love it as God does. The Grand Canyon is an amazing creation.”

We on the bus are proud to be representing the best tradition of America as we travel in the steps of our True Father. He so deeply loved this country that of the 120 Holy Grounds that he dedicated around the world, 55 are located in the continental United States. But as he constantly reminded us, we have not been blessed just for ourselves. We must share what we have received, becoming “elder brothers and sisters” to the rest of the world. America must become again a shining example which can export goodness, not immorality and decadence, to the world.

Grand Canyon Photo Gallery on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.851952171501211.1073741839.833527253343703&type=1

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Now in Mountain Standard Time, June 28 began with breakfast at the Albuquerque Family Church for an amazing spread of food prepared with loving hands by the local community. New Mexico pastors Rick and Janis Schnorr and their team worked hard to offer an unforgettable morning program at the church, then at the nearby Holy Ground. The local band comprising four young women and one young man performed beautifully.



The group gathers at the Albuquerque Holy Ground.

Reverend Twitty, a charismatic local preacher who has been a key member of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) for more than 20 years, sang some beautiful hymns and introduced three of his great-grandsons, who also sang together on stage. Born in 1929 and having served in the military for 25 years, Reverend Twitty met True Father at the foundation of ACLC, at which True Father spoke with great fervor about America and its greatness, how much God loves and needs everyone here.



Members of the 505's, a band at the Albuquerque Family Church, performs during the breakfast event hosted by the local community.

Pastor Rick Schnorr urged all the people attending, and especially the young people, to be role models for their community and exemplify True Father's teachings by living them each day. ACLC Pastor Jesse Dompheh then instilled the point that when we finally can love one another, God's Hope for America will be realized. FFWPU USA President Michael Balcomb read from the speech given by True Father at Yankee Stadium in New York City in 1976, from which the bus tour got its name: God's Hope for America. True Father had told the Americans assembled in 1976 at Yankee Stadium that if America ever departs from God, it will crumble and fall. While we have received great blessings, there is corresponding responsibility. Some people might ask, "What business is it of a Korean how we live in America?" But as True Father said, he came as a doctor to heal the sickness of this nation, or as a firefighter who knows how to extinguish the fire that is devouring the home.

Rick Joswick of Los Angeles said: “Everywhere the bus goes becomes holy ground. Like the ancient Israelites who carried their Ark of the Covenant in the desert, the bus and its people are carrying the love and truth of True Parents across America.”

In the afternoon, riders returned to the “Holy Ground bus” and rode out the rest of the Desert Rider trip, ending with the bus’s arrival in Dallas, Texas, and the dawn of a new day which will begin the next mini-tour: Homestead. Join us when you can—on the bus or at an event near you. For more information, visit GodsHopeForAmerica.org.

Albuquerque Photo Gallery on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.852454341450994.1073741840.833527253343703&type=1