

God's Hope for America Bus Tour - Day 15 – Before the Storm

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Florida meant the beach, so the stop in Tampa and Miami Florida was a much-anticipated one on the tour. They left Tallahassee happy and with a new energy on the bus, which now included a senator, a minister who had run for congress, a prophetess and a pastor of a non-denominational church from Georgia. With fresh, new road trippers on the bus, there was a lot of singing and high spirits. New passenger Senator Donzella James of the state of Georgia shared about her experience with True Parents, whom she had met “accidentally” when she sat in on a meeting in D.C. that included a group from Atlanta, Georgia. She has since learned it was not accident that brought her to True Father, but God’s desire for her. She has come to understand God better through her experience with the Unification faith and she really loves True Mother.

When they arrived in Tampa, it was hot and the sweat just poured off of the 70 or so people that gathered at the Holy Ground located just outside the Tampa Lowry Park Zoo. The bus received a red-carpet welcome with a rendition of “God Bless America,” after which they made their way to the amphitheater for more singing and prayer and received a proclamation and welcome message from the mayor of Tampa, Bob Buckhorn. A letter of welcome and solidarity was read from Archbishop Roberto Toca from the Odessa Cathedral of the Antiocean Catholic Church also testifying to the work of True Father. Pastor Kim Ste. Pierre from a Korean church in Tampa read the prayer from George Washington.

They then moved on to the Holy Ground located at the edge of the main parking lot. Local Unificationists worked with the zoo who gave special consideration to the group to hold their event. Prayers and songs could be heard clear throughout the zoo entrance. Afterwards, they had a Korean lunch of bibim bop (rice bowl with vegetables, meat and hot sauce) prepared by the Tampa Family Church Korean teacher.

Entertainment came complete with dancing and a serenade by a trombonist Kevin Brennan, swing dancing and chatting with old and new friends. The sky overhead this whole time was overcast and threatened rain. Plans for the beach were nearly cancelled, but they forged ahead anyway to the beach in Naples and swam in the Gulf. The threat of storm clouds persisted and, after 20 glorious minutes of splashing about in the Gulf waters, the clouds above cracked with thunder and lighting and scared everyone back to the beach.

They all headed for cover as the rain sloshed in buckets around them, and learned the next day that a water spout was spotted nearby. This was not the first time they had come this close to a natural disaster dealing with the rain. In Kansas, a tornado had just missed the little group. Still, they did witness another beautiful sunset just before the storm and knew True Father was present still.

Tampa, Florida Photo Gallery on Facebook

[<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.855983844431377.1073741850.833527253343703&type=1>]. As with the God’s Hope for America page on Facebook, you can tag your friends in pictures and share the posts to help spread the word online as the bus spreads the word on the road! Come back tomorrow to hear about the rest of the Cajun mini tour, including Little Rock, Jackson and New Orleans!