

God's Hope for America Bus Tour - Day 27 – Rhode Island and Plymouth

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The Providence Rhode Island Holy Ground is the 33rd that Father Moon created in 1965. Brothers and sisters from all over New England came to connect with and support the #GodsHopeforAmerica Pilgrimage. The Holy Ground is set between 4 tall pines in a beautiful park almost in the backyard of church. The swans in the serene lake just next to the grounds seemed to swim closer as if to hear us. The wonderful Holy Ground Ceremony began with a prayer given by the previous Providence pastor, Dmitry Vitchilsky, followed by a reading by Mary Giossi, a Mayflower descendant. Moving testimonies were begun with one brother, Mr. Sawada, who shared that he was a student during the preparation time for Father Moon's trial before Danbury. He was amazed and really felt God's Love when Father Moon seemed more concerned that the brother would miss a semester of school than for his own future facing trial. Another sister from Germany spoke about hosting Father and Mother Moon in Berlin before the wall came down. How serious and focused Father Moon was all day as he prayed and made conditions for Communism to end! Mother was so loving and gracious.

Following the services at the holy grounds, we walked just across the street to have lunch at the church. After we had enjoyed fellowship and bonding of people who were meeting again after many years apart, testimonies were given by those who had been travelling on the bus. Charles and Clark, new members to our movement, gave inspirational testimonies of finding God, while Hannah, Unificationist-born, stressed the need to inherit all that was built.

Our group then headed to Plymouth Rock. President Michael Balcomb began: "Once again, I, the Brit, have to explain to you Americans what happened. The pilgrims were taking a vacation from Britain and their cruise ship collapsed on the shores of America. They had a financial problem and had to stay here. So that's what happened, any questions?" With that amusing introduction, our group prayed at Plymouth Rock, toured the town of Plymouth and the Mayflower replica, and enjoyed an ice cream party and waterside shops.

Plymouth Plantation was a very rich experience of the determination of the Pilgrims who left England and then Holland to find a place they could worship God and live a totally God-centered way of life as they believed the Bible taught. 52 lived until the first Thanksgiving out of more than 100 who came. In the museum a chart representing the various families who came and who survived showed how almost every family lost a loved one, some entire families died. But they kept their vision and hope for the future centered on God. The Native Americans came to their aid particularly Squanto and Massasoit. There was a peaceful mutual respect until the leaders of both communities died 40 years after the Pilgrims' arrival and the next generation came into conflict and hostility leading to a devastating war.

We spent some time talking to people about the purpose of the Pilgrimage, reminding ourselves in the process that we are pilgrims, as well. Many people clearly agree with the need for a God-centered revival for our nation. We hear comments when people read the bus, "Yeah, God's Hope for America, we need more of that!" or we receive a thumbs up as we pass by. It is truly time for a revival. It starts with each individual, family, and community. Pilgrimage participants feel more revived daily. The response from Americans is favorable. As Father Moon said, "Together we can make God's presence in America a living reality."