

## God's Hope for America Bus Tour - Day 35 – Chicago and Madison

Michael Balcomb  
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On July 26, we opened the day with a prayer breakfast in the Life Center, a church in Chicago; the church and the street upon which it is located are named after our host, Pastor T.L. Barrett Jr.

The breakfast event was hosted by the American Clergy Leadership Conference and featured a variety of speakers, including a reading of letters by Congress member Robin Kelly and Illinois Governor Pat Quinn expressing warm welcome and support. Prayer and song filled the room as we celebrated the unity of us all under God.

Pastor T.L. Barrett Jr. was the keynote speaker. He related his history with Father Moon, who spoke in his church before. Pastor Barrett's church was the first in America to recognize Father and Mother Moon and to support their mission. "Someone must come to America and stop God from leaving!" is a quote from Father Moon with which this church resonates. "Hallelujah!" called out Pastor Nena Bell upon this reading.

"When we are hearing Reverend Moon, we're hearing from the word of God. God didn't stop speaking when the writer stopped writing," said Pastor Barrett. "If people are ready to respond to you, they need to realize when they see you and hear you that they are hearing God as much as when they read the Bible. God is speaking through you." God is speaking to America, the nation and the world through us all. Becoming the living word of God was a major focus of this breakfast meeting.

"What does U.S.A. stand for? It should stand for 'Under Spiritual Authority'!" preached Pastor Barrett. "Saints and prophets had to deny themselves and give it up to God. What Father Moon said is what we here call the three C's: Charge, Challenge, Changed. It is not easy to submit to the word of God. Even Jesus found it difficult, but God wants the USA to be the champion God always meant for it to be. The USA must submit to living under spiritual authority."

Following this gathering, we all went to the Holy Ground in downtown Chicago, inspired and united under God. The spirit was alive in Chicago, and after our prayers and songs at the Holy Ground, we ventured out to yet another Holy Ground in Madison, Wisconsin.

At Hoyt Park in Madison, a passionate speech by Mary Lafayette truly captured the heart of Father Moon. When she got up to speak, she took off her shoes and proclaimed, "I am standing on Holy Ground!" She told the story of first hearing of Reverend Moon, and the warmth she felt in his presence and the love he exuded wherever he went. "I believe that the love that Father Moon had lives inside of me. Love is so great, it can heal all. How I deal with my enemies is through love. I have taught from the knowledge of Father Moon's books and members of my congregation have been healed, especially when it comes to marriage and family."

Following Mary's clear and powerful message, Mika and Kenny Wolfenberger sang "Nothing Without You," bringing calm and peace to us all as we stood under a huge oak tree, the soft rays of the sunset peeking through the tree branches. Our voices chimed in unison prayer, and unison it truly was.

This day showed us the many ways we can experience God: through the energy of praise, the serenity of prayer and song, and the deep love we have for each other and for God.