

## True Father's 1000 Day Memorial Celebration at the International Peace Education Center

Michael Balcomb

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True Father's 1000 day Memorial Celebration took place on May 30, 2015, the first official event held at the International Peace Education Center (IPEC). More than 2,000 people attended the event in Las Vegas. So many people were eager to see the newly finished center that four overflow rooms were completely packed.

"This was a really big deal," commented Shinyoung Chang, Editorial Director for the National Ministry Team. "The fact that the vision for this building was actualized in just three short years, in time for True Father's 1,000 day ascension ceremony, and the fact that America was able to unite together under True Mother's direction and make this happen, is worthy of celebration!"

The event started out with an introduction video, describing the process of building the IPEC and thanking those who donated. A musical group of young Unificationists from Albuquerque, New Mexico, the 5-0-5s, performed the songs "Elias" and "Stand By Me."



*True Mother awards American Unificationists for their service*

Dr. Balcomb, President of FFWPU USA, welcomed guests from all over the world, and those watching over broadcast. He then introduced a video that outlined True Father's life and mission.



“It’s not possible in ten short minutes to encapsulate 93 years of love and dedication,” Dr. Balcomb said. “True Mother is now encouraging us to move forward and move on. We are so lucky to welcome True Parents here in Las Vegas, where Father invested the final four years of his life. We are happy to dedicate this building to him.” Dr. Balcomb then invited the Emcee, Dr. Michael Jenkins, the Director of Business Investment and Asset Development for FFWPU-USA.



Dr. Jenkins spoke about the significance of this particular celebration: one thousand days since True Father ascended. In the Korean culture, the number ten represents a new beginning, and once a baby is born, their 100 day of life is celebrated as a “real beginning,” as is the 1,000th day. Dr. Jenkins explained that the celebration of True Father’s glorious, victorious ascension is marking his life in the spirit world as a new beginning. True Mother wanted to hold the celebration in America to kick-start the nation.

Archbishop George Augustus Stallings, co-chairman of the American Clergy Leadership Conference, gave the invocation. “Even though True Father’s body lies asleep in the earth,” he prayed, “his spirit has returned to You, and that he and You are one. Wherever You are, so is he. And You are ever-present with us. In his final prayer, True Father said that everything is accomplished. The table is prepared. And now we must invite all of humanity to experience True Parents, to share in the joy and the peace, prosperity and happiness that is brought with the True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind.

“May the True Parents ever inspire us to work for everlasting peace and live for the sake of our enemies, so that we can bring about the era of Cheon Il Guk.”



Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Continental Chairman for North America, gave the welcoming remarks. He reminded the attendants that True Parents have invested in America for more than 40 years, and have loved the city



of Las Vegas for a long time. “After True Father’s ascension, True Mother told us that we must complete the IPEC by any means.” He also took a moment to thank True Parents, without which the IPEC would not have been possible. He also thanked the Japanese blessed families who gave without hesitation, because they knew that the IPEC was True Parents’ will. He also thanked all of the donors in America, and the contractors, consultants, and the local community, including the Fire Marshall for helping the IPEC become a state-of-the-art facility, both in safety as well as in performance.



“When I look back over the last three years, I am so grateful and amazed at the guidance that True Mother has given us,” Dr. Kim said. “IPEC is just part of the story,” he continued. “True Mother has been investing so much in the future generations, by beginning the Universal Peace Academy, supporting CARP and Cranes Club, generously giving scholarships, and compiling the holy texts for future generations.”



Rev. Mari Curry gave a tearful reading of an excerpt from the first chapter of the new Cham Bumo Gyeong Holy Scriptures, and former congressman Dan Burton gave the congratulatory remarks. “True Mother’s urgency inspired us to commit our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor to ensure that

America fulfilled its God-given responsibility to achieve peaceful unification of the Koreas.” Congressman Burton went on to list True Parent’s great achievements, not least the Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony. Congressman Burton had participated in the Marriage Blessing Ceremony with his wife Samia in March, and he laughed when he said, “My wife tells everyone that I have become a better husband since we participated in the Marriage Blessing. Our marriage has been enriched and strengthened since that day.”

After two more videos, one giving a summary of True Mother’s recent words, and another reporting on her recent victorious travels to Europe and New York, Unificationist Matt Hill performed the song, “Danny Boy,” which is one of True Mother’s favorite songs.

Sun Jin Moon, FFWPU International President, introduced her mother. She thanked the attendants for being there, and called True Parents’ investment in Las Vegas and IPEC a testament to their hope for America. “Let it be a beacon of hope. Let us live our lives centered on the truth,” she said.

True Mother was then warmly welcomed on stage. People had travelled from near and far to welcome her to the completed IPEC building, and she seemed so vibrant and healthy on stage. She asked us very seriously to think about America’s responsibility, especially the unification of Korea.



After her address, True Mother gave gifts to people who have worked very hard for the providence in Korea, Japan, and America, and she especially made effort to thank Second Generation Unificationists for their dedication. The celebration came to a close with a banquet meal, and more musical entertainment.

The staff, having stayed up much of the night in preparation, expressed gratitude (and a little exhaustion) at being a part of such a historic event. Benjy Uyama, the volunteer coordinator, called the weekend a “fantastic experience. We were so grateful to prepare to receive True Mother at the IPEC. In the evening yesterday, some people finished preparations around midnight—some people stayed here all night—but everyone was still smiling, cracking jokes with each other. So that was a good sign.”