

Ki Hoon Kim and Michael Balcomb honor Japanese Pioneer Missionaries' at 40 Year Reunion

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More than 100 Japanese Missionaries shared tears and stories at a 40-year reunion at the Belvedere Estate in Tarrytown, New York.

More than 40 years ago, groups of zealous Japanese missionaries started arriving in the United States at the urgent request of True Father who had just arrived in the United States himself. Many of the 250 missionaries arrived knowing not a word of English, but were willing and determined to do whatever True Father asked them to do to serve God's providence. On Saturday, Aug. 17, 2013, 100 of them gathered at the Belvedere Training Center in Tarrytown, NY to trade stories, view hundreds of slides of the old days and to hear from legendary church leaders.



Church President Dr. Michael Balcomb and his wife, Fumiko, honored the names of 20 missionaries who have ascended and he expressed his gratitude to the life work of the Japanese missionaries in attendance.

The names of 20 missionaries who had already ended their mission on earth were read, and they were honored by silent prayer. Dr. Michael Balcomb, president of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) USA, said in his opening prayer the session:



The missionaries listened intently to two lectures from Rev. Ken Sudo, 82, fit and alert, who had served as the chief lecturer in the United States through most of the 1970's.



Dr. Neil Salonen, president of the church in the United States from 1972 to 1980, was one of the speakers to address the reunion.

“As the pilgrims came to America in the 17th Century, these Japanese pilgrims came here to plant the seeds of a new Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This is a day we can be grateful for. In a sense, Japan gave of its life’s blood to America. Many of us have Japanese spouses, and we are more grateful than words can say.”



Archbishop Ki Hoon Kim, continental director of North America, spoke about the responsibilities of American as the elder son nation to show filial piety to true parents and guide and take care of its younger brother and sister nations.

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There were more than 100 people who filled the room during the 40-year missionary reunion to listen to Rev. Sudo speak.

Rev. Ken Sudo, 82, fit and alert, said that Foundation Day in February 2013 was the crossing point of good history versus evil history and that from that point God’s fortune will be coming to brothers and sisters to enable them to fulfill the purpose of creation. He explained that the Unification Church is where people can learn about the nature of love. He also emphasized a core teaching of the Unification movement regarding the path of salvation necessarily linked to emotional growth within marriage.

“Without a spouse, you cannot fulfill the purpose of creation. You can become a great wife because of your husband. You can become a great husband because of your wife. God’s purpose is to make your spouse happy. We have to become happy families,” Rev. Sudo said.

Dr. Neil Salonen, president of the church in the United States from 1972 to 1980, told the reunion: “From the beginning of time, God was trying to set up a culture in which someone lived according to God’s values. I’ve been thinking a lot about him. There is no adequate way to describe his unique character. The

one thing I found about True Father that was outstanding was his unchangeable nature. He didn't change his mind. You knew where you stood, because you knew where he stood."



Participants enjoyed a humorous moment during one of the presentations.

Later he said, "Actually we Americans are the masters of compromise. We disagree with each other and then say, 'Let's split the difference.' So, along comes True Father who never compromises, and he brought with him his Japanese missionaries. The Japanese missionaries taught us (the Americans) about loyalty. To this day, if I have something that really needs to be done, I give it to a Japanese member, and I have no doubt it will be carried out."



The honored missionaries gave a toast, "kanpai," before they enjoyed their meal of beautiful Japanese bento lunches.

"For more than 40 years our job was to stick with True Parents. Our job is to stick with True Mother now. Now our job is to unite with her. Satan is the one who wants to make things complicated, and it's wrong. I believe in the core of my heart that God's restoration will go on until everyone has come home."



The gathering then felt transported by a performance of three Japanese songs by opera singer Seiko Lee.

Rev. Takeru Kamiyama, who spent a year in Danbury Federal Prison with True Father in the 1980s, recounted how intently he missed True Father after his passing a year ago and gave to each missionary a short printed excerpt from one of True Father's talks. The gathering then felt transported by a performance of three Japanese songs by opera singer Seiko Lee.

The missionaries gathered on Sunday for a guided tour of the East Garden residences of True Parents.