

Hold Annual Memorial Services for Members From Your Area Who Have Passed

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On March 18, 2010, True Father held a commemorative Seonghwa Ceremony at the United Nations headquarters in New York in honor of world leaders who had ascended. The ceremony was the beginning of a new tradition by which True Father wanted to open the door for everyone to experience the preciousness of eternal life. True Father has spoken of “death” as a sacred word that should not be synonymous for “sadness and suffering” and that the term Seonghwa (ascension) was created to clarify the true significance of death. He stated, “The moment we enter the spirit world should be a time that we enter a world of joy and victory with the fruits born of our lives on earth. It is a time for those of us remaining on earth to send off the departed with joy. It should be a time for great celebration. That is the way of the sacred and noble Seonghwa Ceremony, the first step the spirit of the departed takes toward enjoying eternal life in attendance to God, within His embrace” (July 8, 2010, Cosmic Assembly – Cheong Jeong Gung Peace Palace in Korea).

Following True Father’s tradition of celebrating the lives of those who have ascended, a number of our communities have been holding annual memorial services for members from their area who have passed to the spiritual world. Some have honored members from a wider area as well.

We’d like to invite our communities to take time to offer respect to their ancestors and remember community members who have passed on. The Korean celebration of Chuseok (this year at the beginning of October) is one opportunity to honor ancestors. The month of November also provides a couple of opportunities that could be appropriate for memorial services. All Souls Day (or All Saints Day) is on

November 1st and is a time, in many cultures, where the spirits of those who have passed are honored. Thanksgiving is also a time where families gather to give thanks and might be a chance to express gratitude for those who have laid a foundation before us.

A Memorial Service can be simple or elaborate or anything in between. Some communities include an offering table, a slideshow with photos of those who have ascended and a reading of their names, sometimes with brief words about their lives or testimonies from their loved ones. The [National Won Jeon](#) ministry is holding a memorial in conjunction with Chuseok. Please also see the testimony below from the Seonghwa Ministry in Los Angeles.

We encourage your participation and prayers. If your community decides to take part in this tradition, or if you already do as part of your annual activity, please let us know and send us some photos.

Contributed by the Seonghwa Ministry of Los Angeles

"The Seonghwa Ministry of the Los Angeles Family Church held their 8th Annual Seonghwa Memorial Festival event, which was held successfully at the church in the evening of Saturday, November 19, 2016. The festival was in a happy and solemn atmosphere. More than 50 blessed members and blessed children ascended to spirit world from Los Angeles area last 30 years.

All of the participants paid respect to each and all of the ascended and offered flowers. Rev. Yang gave a short address about the significance of Seonghwa, Holy Ascension. About 30 families and friends of the ascended attended.

After the event, all participants moved to the dining hall, where they had nice Japanese and Chinese dinner and shared their stories and testimonies of loved ones.

Among the participants, there was a person, who was not an active church member and never heard Divine Principle yet. She was so impressed and moved by the event.

We are planning to have the 9th Annual Seonghwa Memorial Festival next year, on Saturday, Nov. 4, 2017. We plan to expand the invitation to the families and relatives of the ascended, including non-Unificationists."