

This week in history, April 2-8:

Michael Mickler
April 2, 2018

April 2, 2004 ACLC Al-Aqsa Mosque Pilgrims Safe after Siege



Begun in 2003, in the heat of the Palestinian Second Intifada, the Middle East Peace Initiative (MEPI), a project of the Universal Peace Federation, organized several dozen "peace pilgrimages" to Israel, the occupied territories, and, on occasion, to Jordan over the course of the next decade. In its first two years, more than 10,000 religious leaders, civic officials, NGO leaders, professionals, and Unificationists from throughout the world participated in the pilgrimages. American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) participants were prominent in the earliest of these, and a number of them undertook high-risk trips into Gaza. During the fifth pilgrimage, four MEPI pilgrims went to Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Jerusalem Temple Mount to join Friday prayers and make arrangements for the larger pilgrimage contingent to visit when hundreds of Israeli soldiers stormed the compound. True Father was notified of the situation while in a boat on the Hudson River, where it was his practice to pray for the pilgrimages. With the U.S. State Department, and even the U.S. Marines, at the ready, due to the presence of U.S. citizens inside, the situation was diffused only when Al-Aqsa negotiated the safe exit of the worshipers. Prior to their exit, Imam Bundakji, a member of the MEPI delegation, called from the mosque to say that he might not make it out alive but wanted to tell MEPI's Jewish delegation that his love for them "remained unchanged."

April 1-16, 1998 True Mother Goes on American Speaking Tour



True Mother embarked on a 16-city speaking tour from April 1-16, 1998 under the banner: "Blessed Marriage and Eternal Life".

April 1, 1941

True Father Departs Korea to Study in Japan



From the 1943 graduation album of the Waseda Technical High School, Tokyo. True Father stands in the back, center.

After graduating from the electrical engineering department of the Kyongsong Institute of Commerce and Industry in Seoul, True Father traveled to Japan to continue his studies. Korea was under Japanese colonial rule, and this was the first time True Father left his native land. In his autobiography, *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*, True Father noted that he went "because I felt that I had to have exact knowledge about Japan." Nevertheless, his leave-taking was painful. On the train from Seoul to Pusan, he "couldn't stop the tears from flowing," covered himself with his coat and "cried out loud." It grieved him, he said, "to think that I was leaving my country behind as it suffered under the yoke of colonial rule." He promised that he would return, "carrying with me the liberation of my homeland." True Father boarded the ferry from Pusan to Shimonoseki, Japan, at 2:00 a.m. on April 1, 1941. On arriving in Tokyo, he entered Waseda Koutou Kougakko, a technical engineering school affiliated with Waseda University. He stated that he chose electrical engineering "because I felt I could not establish a new religious philosophy without knowing modern engineering."

April 1, 1975

Day of Hope Rallies Begin in Korea



True Father long considered the United States to be the gateway to the world. In early 1975, the church launched activities worldwide based upon its successes in America, particularly True Father's Madison Square Garden rally in September 1974. The initial step was the creation of a global "Day of Hope" team. On January 14, the first global team, which included some 340 American and European members, boarded a chartered jumbo jet in Los Angeles for Tokyo. There they joined forces with an even larger contingent of Japanese members to evangelize and hold Day of Hope rallies in Japan. After spending nearly 80 days in Japan, the global team of more than 500 members traveled by ferry to Pusan, South Korea, on March 27. There, from April 1 until May 17, they supported massively attended Day of Hope festivals in Pusan, Taegu, Seoul, Incheon, Jeonju, Kwangju, Taejon, Cheongju and Chuncheon. These

culminated in the "World Rally for Korean Freedom," which was held at Yoido Island Plaza in Seoul before an estimated 600,000 to 1.2 million people on June 7.

April 1, 1980

Today's World Begins Publication



The very first issue of Today's World

Today's World served as the Unification Church's leading international missionary newsmagazine for thirty-two years, from April 1, 1980 through 2012. It included sermons of True Father and church leaders; extensive coverage, including glossy photographs, of the True Family and their activities; historical testimonies; and reports from missionary outposts in Africa, South America, the Middle East, Oceania and southern Asia. It provided an indispensable account of international Unificationists, indexed by year, during its years of publication. In its earlier years, Today's World was published out of New York. During the 1990s, it and the movement's World Mission Department relocated to Korea. After 2012, Today's World was superseded by Internet and e-publications, notably iPeaceTV and True Peace Magazine, which provide international coverage.

April 3, 1995

New Hope Farm Declaration



True Parents offered a number of declarations in conjunction with their providential work in South America in the 1990s. One of the most important was the New Hope Farm Declaration delivered at 5:00 a.m. on April 3, 1995, in front of representative leaders of 160 nations gathered at the New Hope Farm in Brazil. It was in this [declaration](#) that True Parents declared the principle of "absolute faith, absolute love and absolute obedience," which in 1998 was added as Pledge No. 8 to the Family Pledge. True Parents declared that New Hope Farm Jardim was a training site for practicing this principle; in loving the earth, water and nature; and in showing the world "a community of love transcending skin color, culture and nation."

April 3, 1997

The Building True Families for World Peace Rally in Korea



The Building True Families for World Peace Rally in Korea concluded on April 3, 1997, in Seongnam, the twenty-second city where the rally took place. It began on March 13 with the rally in South Gyeongsang Province. In each city, True Father gave words of encouragement through the speech "View of the Principle of the Providential History of Salvation," while True Mother gave the keynote speech titled "In Search of the Origin of the Universe." True Father emphasized, "The Returning Lord will come in the flesh and form new relationships based on God's lineage; he will do so through the international mass Blessing Ceremonies." (Materials provided by the FFWPU History Compilation Committee)

April 3, 2007

Rally to Declare the Beginning of a New Universal Civilization of Peace



True Father declared a "Great Jubilee Year" in 2007. He said the reason for the declaration was the rise of the Pacific Rim Era. On April 3, True Father began a tour in Korea for the purpose of declaring the beginning of a new universal civilization of peace. He spoke in 25 locations of Korea. The first of the rallies took place on April 3 in the Changwon Stadium in South Gyeongsang Province. More than 9,000 Ambassadors for Peace from the province gathered that day along with guests, relatives and friends of the local members. The program began with entertainment, then a reading from the messages from the spirit world. A Holy Wine ceremony and Holy Burning ceremony were held for all the participants. True Father delivered the [speech](#) that he gave on March 17 in Kona, Hawaii, when he declared the dawn of the Pacific Rim Era to representatives from 120 nations. It was entitled "A Providential View of the Pacific Rim Era in Light of God's Will: The United States and the Future Direction of the United Nations and the World."

April 4, 2002

Ceremony for the Total Liberation of 6,000 Years of Providential History



On April 4, 2002, the Ceremony for the Total Liberation of Six Thousand Years of Providential History took place at East Garden, New York. This was a special ceremony that liberated the evil spirits that had blocked central figures within the providence of restoration from completing their responsibilities and one through which the eight levels of liberation were attained. On 2.22 on the lunar calendar, at 0:22 minutes 22 seconds, in connection with the Chung Pyung Heaven and Earth Training Center, True Parents carried out liberation in a prayer. In the prayer True Father said, "Now that we have welcomed an era in which we can newly pioneer and organize, we desire to

dedicate this sacred liberation ceremony of all indemnity." (Materials provided by the FFWPU History Compilation Committee)

April 5, 1973

True Father Meets South Vietnamese President Nguyễn Văn Thiệu

On April 5, 1973, True Father met with the visiting president of South Vietnam, Nguyễn Văn Thiệu. According to Freedom Leadership Foundation (FLF) Special Assistant Mike Leone, "The meetings were very, very successful." In the late 1960s and early 1970s, one of True Father's main goals was "to prepare for the fight against communism." Since 1969, the FLF had spearheaded the Victory over Communism (VOC) efforts in the United States for the Unification movement. Through the organization, True Father met numerous U.S. senators and congressmen in the early months of 1973, as well as President Thiệu. The meetings were an important step in developing the campaign to fight communism, something that would become one of the defining characteristics and focal points of the movement in the years to come.

April 7, 1989

Holy Weddings at the World Mission Center

Three special Holy Blessings were held in New York City in the Grand Ballroom of the World Mission Center on April 7, 1989. These Blessings were significant because there were three categories of Blessing candidates: matched couples, previously married couples, and individuals. The 42 Couples Blessing consisted of matched couples, connected to the 1,275 Couples Blessing in Korea. The 138 Couples Blessing and 57 Members Single Blessing comprised, respectively, previously married couples and individual members over 60 years old. There were 37 nations represented, and the oldest Single Blessing candidate was an 87-year-old sister from France.

April 8, 1997

Proclamation of the Era of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification

True Parents proclaimed the Era of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification at a rally at the Central Training Center in Guri, Korea, on April 8, 1997. Approximately 1,000 national messiahs and leaders from Korea and Japan were in attendance as True Father announced that the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity (HSA-UWC) would officially change its name to the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU). (Materials provided by the History Compilation Committee)

April 8, 2013

The Passing of Lady Margaret Thatcher



Former U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1925-2013) was a friend of the Unification movement. In 2007, on the 25th anniversary of The Washington Times, she sent a warm video tribute. The following year she accepted the Universal Peace Federation's Leadership and Good Governance Award, and in 2010, on the occasion of True Father's 90th birthday, she sent a hand-written greeting expressing her hope that it would be a "splendid occasion." Her appreciation stemmed from a common interest in combating global communism and promoting the values of "family, faith, and freedom." She likely was unaware of True Parents' pronouncements regarding an emerging era of women. Nonetheless, her career as a national and world leader provided a model that resonated with Unification values.