

This week in history, April 23-29:

Michael Mickler
April 22, 2019

April 24, 2015

Gerhard Peemoeller, "Bodyguard for Christ," Ascends



During the 1970s, a towering figure was always in close proximity to True Parents and members of their family. He was Gerhard Peemoeller, or "Big Gerhard," as he also was known. An impressive 6 feet 6 inches in stature, Gerhard joined the Unification movement in 1972 and came to the United States in 1973. From the moment he encountered Unificationists in his home country of Germany, Gerhard was infused with the desire to be a "bodyguard for Christ," ignited by a vision he had while praying. On coming to the United States he was given the opportunity to join True Parents' security team for speaking tours and later at East Garden. Eventually he became one of three traveling bodyguards for True Parents. In his book *Bodyguard for Christ: One Disciple's Experience Protecting the Messiah*, Gerhard emphasized that the most important aspect of his job was internal unity with True Parents. He outlined the conditions he set for the safety and protection of the children and relatives of True Parents, including a daily breakfast fast, washing and waxing a car every day that True Parents weren't at East Garden, and praying constantly while on duty. After 1980, he

became a leader in the Ocean Church and pioneered work in Virginia. It took him seven years to start to like fishing, but he eventually started to feel like a real fisherman and gained the respect of other fishermen. Gerhard was blessed with Nobuko Komura in 1976 as part of the 74 couples' Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony. He was survived by his wife and seven children.

April 27, 2002

144,000 Clergy Interfaith Marriage Blessing



Based on the Interfaith Marriage Blessing of 60 clergy couples on May 27, 2001 (which included Archbishops Emmanuel Milingo and George A. Stallings, among others), True Father called for a 12,000 Couple Clergy Blessing at New York's Madison Square Garden in September 2001. That was postponed due to the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Instead, True Father announced a Marriage Blessing for 144,000 clergy couples around the world on April 27, 2002. The main venue was the Sheraton National Hotel in Arlington, Virginia, for some 700 representative clergy couples. Thousands of other couples participated in all 50 U.S. states and 196 nations via satellite connection. Commendations for the Blessing came from four U.S. governors and 25 members of Congress, including several U.S. senators. United Press International, Associated Press, ABC National, CBS local, The Washington Times and many Spanish-

language and African-American newspapers covered the event. Religious leaders from every faith tradition offered prayers. Thirty couples came from the Nation of Islam, directly sent by the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan. Twenty-one Buddhist couples came from Korea. More than 21 Sikh leaders came from the Washington area. True Parents declared that the interreligious and international ceremony was a "total victory." Pastor T.L. Barrett Jr. from Chicago, who helped organize the event, declared, "Father [Moon] is a marrying man! He wants everything to be married. He would like a desk and chair or even the two light bulbs to be married, if possible."



April 29, 2010

Coronation for the Establishment of the Abel UN and Luncheon Celebrating True Parents' Golden Wedding Anniversary



On the foundation of "Legacy of Peace" ceremonies held at the UN headquarters (March 18) and in Washington, D.C. (April 1), New York (April 2), Las Vegas (April 3), Hawaii (April 9), and Korea (April 13), True Parents conducted the Coronation for the Establishment of the Abel UN and hosted a luncheon celebrating their golden wedding anniversary at the Chung Pyung Heaven and Earth Training Center with some 1,000 guests from around the world on April 29, 2010. A congratulatory address was given by the Venerable Un San, former president of Taego Buddhism in Korea, who gave his deepest respect to True Parents who have "offered themselves for the actualization of a peaceful, ideal world." The ceremony was prepared as a traditional Korean royal wedding. Afterward True Parents conducted the world-level Golden Wedding Anniversary for the Establishment of the Abel UN and Ascension Festival in Las Vegas on May 9.