

## **This week in history, February 17-23:**

Michael Mickler  
February 17, 2020

### **February 17, 2010 True Parents Officiate the 1.4 Cosmic Blessing Ceremony**



True Parents officiated the "1.4 Cosmic Blessing Ceremony" at the Korea International Exhibition Center (KINTEX), located in Ilsan, South Korea, on February 17, 2010, or the fourth day of the first month of the Heavenly Calendar. Referred to publicly as the Interreligious Cross-Cultural Holy Wedding Ceremony, it was broadcast via the Internet to 192 nations. Including the 7,000 couples present at the event in Korea, a total of 43,000 brides and bridegrooms participated worldwide. Special congratulatory prayers were given by leaders representing the world's major religions, including Catholicism, Buddhism, Protestantism, Islam, Shintoism and Hinduism.

### **February 17, 2013 Cosmic Blessing Ceremony**



True Parents initiated cosmic-level Blessings in 2009 following the 50th anniversary of their Holy Wedding (Korean count). Couples previously had received the Holy Marriage Blessing on the church and worldwide levels. True Father explained that this was the third and final cosmic-level Blessing in which previously blessed and newly blessed couples would participate. True Parents conducted subsequent cosmic-level Blessings in 2010 and 2012. The Cosmic Blessing Ceremony officiated by True Mother on February 17, 2013, five days prior to Foundation Day, was significant as it was the first such ceremony conducted since the ascension of True Father. At least 3,500 couples gathered for the Marriage Blessing at the Cheongshim Peace World Center in Gapyeong, Korea, and 12,000 altogether by video link to dozens of countries. In her prayer for the couples, True Mother said, "You have lit a beacon of hope for fallen humanity through the great Blessing ceremonies, which first commenced with the Blessing of 36 couples in 1960 and has now been held 53 times until today."

**February 18, 1976**

**Senator Robert Dole Convenes Anti-Unification Movement Investigation**



On February 18, 1976, anti-Unification Movement organizations sponsored "A Day of Affirmation and Protest" in Washington, D.C., which included a two-hour presentation of grievances against the movement to U.S. Senator Robert Dole (R-Kansas) and representatives of seven U.S. government agencies. The "Dole hearing" provided critics of the Unification Movement with a well-publicized, credible forum in which to air their grievances before important national-level figures. More troubling was the fact that Unification Movement representatives were excluded from the proceedings. Senator Dole refused to meet with HSA-UWC President Neil Salonen, and Unificationists could only maintain a vigil of protest at the back of the meeting room. Whereas the Day of Hope tours of the early to mid-1970s were conducted within a climate of receptivity, the Yankee Stadium and Washington Monument rallies of 1976 unfolded within a climate of increasing negativity and even persecution.

**February 20, 2013**

**Wonmo Pyeongae Foundation Inaugurated**



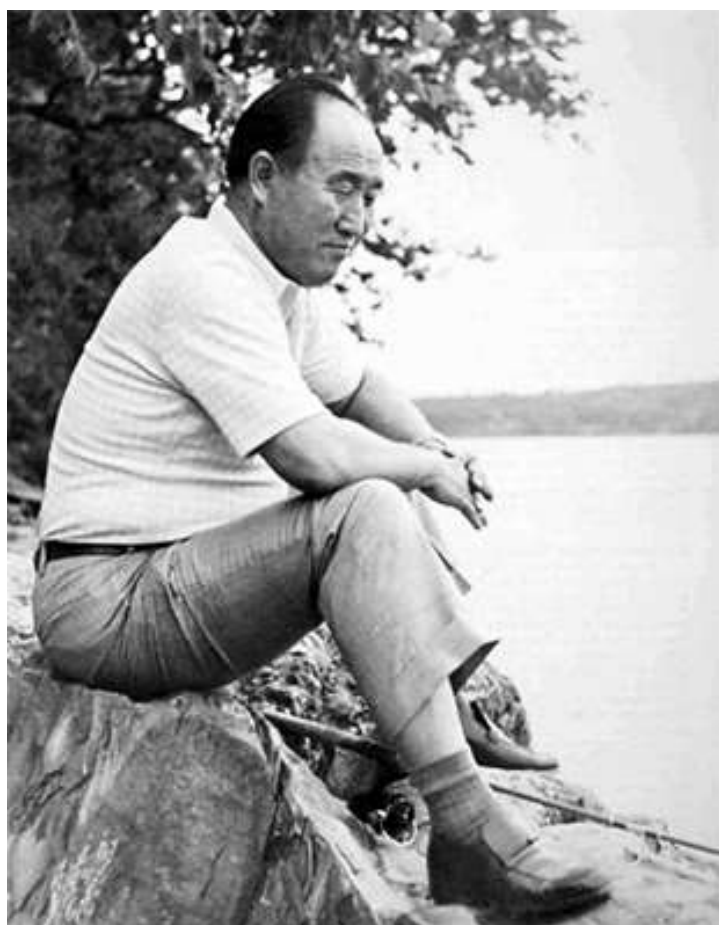
The Wonmo Pyeongae (Eternal Parent's Love) Foundation was officially inaugurated as a non-profit foundation on February 20, 2013 (Korea time) at the Cheon Jeong Gung in Gapyeong, Korea, before an audience of approximately 1,000 people. True Father originally proposed the idea for the foundation in 2011. The Wonmo Pyeongae Foundation has five main functions: 1) scholarships for Unificationist undergraduate and high-school students; 2) educational support programs and contests; 3) the Sunhak Peace Prize to commemorate True Parents' contributions to world peace; 4) social contribution awards to candidates or organizations that have served in areas such as counseling, serving multicultural families, and service for the handicapped; and 5) scientific research on peace theory and support of symposia. During her Founder's Speech, True Mother said, "Dr. Sun Myung Moon devoted his lifetime to build a global family, and his desire is embodied through the Wonmo Pyeongae Foundation." As its first project, the foundation during its inauguration ceremony awarded four billion won (\$3.7 million) in scholarships to 745 selected individuals and organizations.

**February 21, 1977**  
**74 Couples Holy Blessing**

On February 21, 1977, True Parents officiated at the largest Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony yet held outside Korea. Seventy-four couples from eleven nations took part in the ceremony, which was conducted in the Terrace Room of the World Mission Center (New Yorker Hotel) in New York. True Parents previously had conducted a Blessing for 43 couples (13 couples in the United States, 8 couples in Germany and 22 couples in Japan) during their Second World Tour in 1969. True Father explained that the Holy Blessing of 74 Couples was made possible on the foundation of the victory of 1976 in America, notably the Washington Monument Rally. He said that he especially wished to give the Blessing to "sorrowfully separated couples from the 777 and 1,800 families" and those who had not been able to participate in the 1975 Blessing due to mission responsibilities.

For the first time since the Holy Blessing of 36 Couples, True Parents posed for photos with each couple individually. They also held a banquet for participants after the ceremony which included a number of "games" such as couples competing to stare into one another's eyes the longest without blinking or trying to make one another laugh, then trying to make True Father laugh, unsuccessfully. Even though True Mother and the children joined in, True Father "refused to budge" until "there was a glimmer and he broke his seriousness to please us all." It was reported, "The room filled with joy." Col. Bo Hi Pak announced that such a banquet had not happened before.

**February 21, 1980**  
**True Father's 60th Birthday**



*True Father fishing on the Hudson River near the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) circa February, 1980*

In early 1980, elders of the Unification Church were eagerly preparing to celebrate True Father's 60th birthday. This was because in East Asia, the 60th birthday has special significance, meaning that a person has completed five 12-year cycles of the Oriental zodiac. It signifies accomplishing one big cycle in one's life and starting another and is considered the most significant birthday in an individual's lifetime. Therefore, church leaders were immersed in a multitude of detailed preparations for that celebration. However, unexpectedly True Father summoned Col. Bo Hi Pak and asked him to abandon all plans for a celebration and immediately go to Latin America. He had intuited the need for a new initiative to support Latin American governments, which were increasingly under pressure because of the communist takeover of Nicaragua in 1979 and the growth of communist insurrection in countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala, and Peru. He gave Col. Pak instructions to establish contacts and offer resources in educating young people, the military, and civic leaders so as to avoid a fate similar to Nicaragua's. This led to the founding of CAUSA International and a new chapter in Unificationists' "victory over communism" activities.

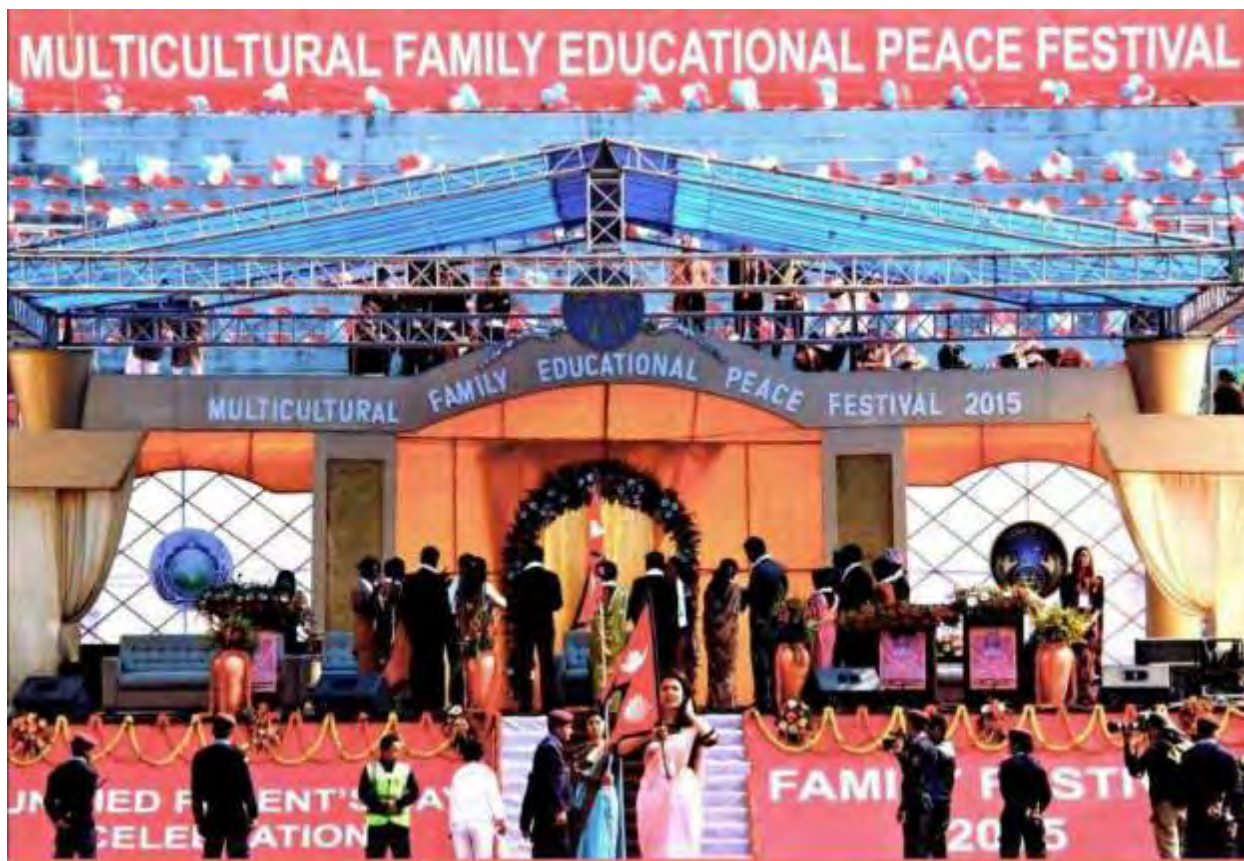
**February 21, 2010**  
**Opening of the Cheon Bok Gung**



*True Father speaks at the opening of the Cheon Bok Gung*

True Parents dedicated the Cheon Bok Gung, or "Unification Peace Temple," on February 21, 2010. In 2008, True Father had called for the establishment of a 20,000-member church in Seoul that would serve as a platform to influence the nation. He later increased the goal to a 210,000-person congregation that would influence Korea and eventually the world, not just socially and culturally but also spiritually. Efforts to construct a "growth-stage" Cheon Bok Gung began in earnest with the acquisition of a large public building in Seoul's Yongsan district. The church's worldwide membership, led by Japan and Korea, donated nearly \$100 million for the purchase and subsequent renovation costs. This was completed in early 2010, and Unificationists undertook an hour-long march from the previous church headquarters to the new sanctuary, which also would serve as International and Korean church headquarters. In his dedication prayer, True Father prayed that the Cheon Bok Gung "become the candlelight in a garden around which all people who resemble heaven in heart can assemble. ... Let it serve as an ecumenical foundation and become the temple embodying the original essence of Your exemplary love as it governs beyond all people and the universe."

**February 21, 2015**  
**70,000 in Nepal Attend International Peace Blessing**



Approximately 70,000 citizens of Nepal gathered to affirm marriage and family on February 21, 2015, as they filled the National Stadium in the capital, Kathmandu, to pledge to uphold premarital purity and marital fidelity. As many as 15,000 people were turned away. At the Multicultural Family Educational Peace Festival, which was organized by the Nepalese chapter of Universal Peace Federation (UPF), unmarried teenagers and young adults took a Pure Love Pledge in front of their peers and parents, promising to remain pure. Married couples reaffirmed their marriage vows of love and fidelity in front of

their children, friends and neighbors, and the nation. Religious leaders from six faiths offered their prayers and blessings. Nepal Parliament Member and Family Party President Ek Nath Dhakal, who promoted the festival, stated, "This is the 18th time that the festival has been held in Nepal." The two-hour program was broadcast live on 10 television stations in Nepal and internationally via satellite. Nepal's Vice President Parmanand Jha told his compatriots, "Without first creating true love and peace at home, we cannot dream of building a peaceful and loving nation." Concluding his remarks, he added, "This is the way to build a nation of peace." Dr. Sun Jin Moon, international chair of UPF, spoke about the universal nature of the Interfaith Peace Blessing, saying, "Our hope is that, beginning with this Blessing, each couple and family will cultivate a higher awareness of our Creator's deepest heart and purpose."

### **February 22, 1948**

#### **True Father Arrested a Second Time in North Korea**

True Father received a revelation in 1946 which said, "Go across the 38th Parallel! Find the people of God who are in the North." He immediately responded and arrived in Pyongyang on June 6. He began evangelical work but was arrested by communist police on August 11 and accused of being a spy from the South. He was brutally tortured and finally released on November 21. After recovering, he resumed evangelical work, and within a year his congregation had become quite large. Some 80 ministers of established churches whose members had begun attending the new congregation's services wrote letters of complaint, and True Father was arrested a second time by communist authorities on February 22, 1948. This time, in addition to accusations of espionage, he was charged with "disturbing public order." True Father again was severely tortured, tried on April 7, convicted, sentenced to 5 years' labor, and transported to Heungnam Prison on May 20, 1948.

### **February 22, 1968**

#### **Holy Blessing of 430 Couples**



True Parents gave the Holy Marriage Blessing to 430 couples (436, technically) on February 22, 1968. True Father noted that 1967 marked 4,300 years of Korean history (the Dangun era). He stated that the 430 Couples corresponded to the 4,300 years of Korean history and that the Holy Marriage Blessing connected Korea to the Unification Church. True Father also noted that it took the Israelites 430 years to return to Canaan from Egypt and that "we too have set out to restore the world, which is our Canaan." The following year, True Parents conducted their second world tour and blessed 43 couples worldwide, which connected to the 430 Couple Holy Blessing internationally. The 430 Couple Holy Blessing included the first non-Korean couple, Osami and Tetsuko Kuboki from Japan. Their Blessing connected Korea and Japan. True Father later stated, "The Blessing ... is not just for Koreans. The fact that I connected the 430 Couples to the 43 Couples on the foundation of the family on the world level signifies the birth of a new race transcending ethnicity and nationality. That is how I see it."

### **February 22, 1982**

#### **Unification News Begins Publication**

Volume 1, Number 1 of Unification News was published on February 22, 1982. The lead story was "New Day for Civil Rights," which covered True Father's support for the Minority Alliance International (MAI) and its first awards banquet. For nearly 30 years, until December 2011, Unification News was the

monthly voice of American Unificationism. For most of that time, "The Newspaper of the Unification Community" was edited by Richard Lewis. In a 2010 interview, he noted that it was established at the same time as The Washington Times. He recalled that True Father spent two hours on a cold Sunday morning at Belvedere in February talking "about the fall of communism and how important The Washington Times was going to be." Then, right at the end, almost as an afterthought, he said, "Oh, Dr. Pak. I want you to create a second newspaper at the same time so that we're never tempted to use The Washington Times as our church newspaper." He then "held up two dummies, one of the Unification News and one of The Washington Times." As the newspaper of record for the American Unification community, it covered True Parents' momentous work over the course of three decades, regional and local Unification news, and commentary. Its mission is now carried on by the Family Federation for World Peace through its online website and newsletter.

**February 22, 2007**  
**Cross-Cultural Marriage Blessing Ceremony**



On February 22, 2007, the "Cross-Cultural Marriage Blessing Ceremony in the Sacred Reign of Peace for the Realization of a Peaceful World" took place at the Cheongpyeong Heaven and Earth Training Center in Gapyeong, Korea, with True Parents as the officiators. Many children of UPF Ambassadors for Peace received the Blessing on this day, with 521 new couples formed in the midst of much love and blessings. The brides and grooms also participated in the "True Parents' Birthday and Commemorative Celebration for True Father's 88th Birthday," held the next day.

**February 22, 2013**  
**Foundation Day**



True Father proclaimed Cheonju Pyeonghwa Tongil Guk ("the Nation of Cosmic Peace and Unity"), abbreviated as Cheon Il Guk (CIG), on November 15, 2001. It is the Unification equivalent to the Kingdom of Heaven and represents an extension in the order of salvation from the individual and family to the creation of a heavenly nation. The Cheon Il Guk era refers to the time period during which the foundation of Cheon Il Guk was to be established. According to True Father, the movement was on a "tight schedule" of twelve years, extending until Foundation Day (the thirteenth day of the first month by the Heavenly Calendar), when the necessary conditions for the start of Cheon Il Guk would be fulfilled. The most important of these was the "marriage" of the "God of Night" (the eternal Godhead, transcendent of time and space, the creator God) and the "God of Day" (perfected Adam and Eve, the "Parents of Heaven Earth and Humankind"). "God's Holy Wedding" was consummated on Foundation Day, and on that basis Unificationists worldwide renewed their Marriage Blessings. The Cheon Il Guk Coronation Ceremony of the True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind, also conducted on Foundation Day, marked the first year of Cheon Il Guk and expressed the church's commitment to "peace and harmony for humanity."

**February 23, 1977**

### **Year One of the Kingdom of God**

The year 1976 was decisive in True Parents' global ministry. It was a year of extremes. On the one hand, it was remembered as the year in which opposition to the movement reached its peak. The kidnapping and deprogramming of members continued, negative parent groups in the U.S. coalesced and were able to gain a public hearing before a powerful senator and numerous federal officials, and by the end of the year mainstream Jewish, Protestant and Catholic institutions turned on the Unification movement. On the other hand, in spite of these obstacles, the movement carried out rallies on a huge scale at Yankee Stadium and the Washington Monument. On January 1, 1977, True Father stated that the church had laid an "invincible foundation" for "horizontal expansion throughout the world." At True Parents' Birthday, celebrated in the New Yorker hotel in New York City on February 23, 1977, True Father pointed out that according to the lunar calendar, 1976 ended on February 20. As he put it, "The year of victory is gone, now the year of joy has started." He concluded his talk, "[Today in the Light of Dispensational History](#)," by saying, "This is the new beginning of the history of God. Therefore, this is the original first year of the Kingdom of God. This is the Year One."

**February 23, 2017**

### **International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) established**



True Mother established the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) on February 23, 2017 before an audience of 1800 students and VIPs from various FFWPU organizations at Cheong-Ah gymnasium in Songsan-ri, Gapyeong, Korea. True Mother's vision was that the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) and the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) work closely together in providential roles.

In her "Call to Action," True Mother referred to IAYSP as the Cheon Il Guk "Special Forces" who will create the environment to expand Cheon Il Guk throughout the world. She referred to those present as "Brave warriors" who will respond to an order with "absolute obedience." She declared, "Just as in olden times, during the Korean Shilla kingdom, when to revive and protect the nation the Hwarang [a group of elite youth] was established, only through the revitalization of the university movement and the CARP movement is national restoration possible."

True Mother appointed Dr. Robert Kittel IAYSP president. After distributing the Pure Love Pledge card to those in attendance, Dr. Kittel asked, "What are you the leaders of?" As everyone answered loudly, "THE FUTURE!" Dr. Kittel surprised everyone by replying, "Sorry, but NO! You are the leaders of the PRESENT!" Dr. Kittel said UPF, representing the Father, will work with lawmakers and governments to institutionalize laws and advocate government policies that protect the family. WFWP, representing the mother, will nurture a motherly heart that teaches and shares the logic of love in our homes, societies, nations and world. Finally the IAYSP representing children and lineage will inculcate the values of living for the sake of others and pure love in the hearts and minds of our youth. He defined IAYSP as "an umbrella association bringing together all the youth-based organizations of our global family."