

This week in history, April 6-12:

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April 6, 2020

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.

April 10, 1960
Parents' Day Established



True Father at the 47th True Parents' Day celebration

Parents' Day was the first Holy Day established in the Unification tradition. True Father established it on April 10, 1960 (March 15, according to the lunar calendar). Unificationists observe Parents' Day -- now designated as True Parents' Day -- on the first day of the third month of the Heavenly Calendar. The establishment of Parents' Day followed True Parents' engagement on March 27, 1960. It signified that God had finally established His first son and daughter as the True Parents of humankind. True Father later stated, "Parents' Day is the first time since God created all things and humankind that there is one balanced man, one balanced woman, balanced in love, to whom God can descend and with whom He can truly be." Following Parents' Day, True Father established Children's Day (1960), Day of All Things (1963) and God's Day (1968) as Holy Days. They were set up to celebrate the emergence of the True Family, or True Parents' family, and the foundation upon which a new world can take shape and a new history begin.

April 10, 1985
First Interdenominational Conference for Clergy Visit to Korea



ICC participants pray at the Rock of Tears in Pusan

Prior to his release from the Danbury Federal Correctional Institute, True Father asked American members to focus on educating 70,000 ministers, and on that foundation to send 7,000 ministers to Korea. This request led to the creation of the CAUSA Ministerial Alliance, the 300,000-videotape project, and, beginning in April 1985, the Interdenominational Conference for Clergy (ICC) seminars. Under the theme "Rev. Moon and Korea in the Providence of God," 64 ministers from 21 denominations attended the first "advanced seminar on Unificationism" from April 10 to 19, 1985. From 1985 to 1988, the U.S. Unification Church sponsored 38 ICC seminars for 7,069 American clergy and religious leaders who traveled to Korea and usually Japan. The "meaning of the 7,000" was connected to the time of Elijah, when throughout Israel God prepared 7,000 people who had never bowed down to Baal (I Kings 19:18). The visits preceded significant breakthroughs in Korean society, including the 1988 Seoul Olympics and

eventually True Parents' meeting with North Korean President Kim Il Sung in 1991.

April 10, 1992

Women's Federation for World Peace Inaugurated



The Women's Federation for World Peace, chaired by True Mother, sponsored "Sisterhood Ceremonies" during the 1990s

On April 10, 1992, True Mother delivered the keynote address before a filled Seoul Olympic Stadium at the inauguration of the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP). In her speech, True Mother testified to "the reappearance of the True Parents ... the conclusion and final fruit of human history." She stated that "women have the mission to give proper guidance to men who lead lives of moral decadence and disorder" and noted, "the Women's Federation for World Peace must someday develop into a federation of families for world peace." Established on the foundation of the Women's Federation for Peace in Asia, WFWP has become a women's organization of international scope with members in 143 countries. In 1994, more than 200,000 Korean and Japanese women "came together to create sisterly ties" on thirty-eight occasions under the auspices of WFWP. In 1995, WFWP sponsored "sisterhood ceremonies" between some 8,000 Japanese and American women, culminating in dramatic "bridge crossings" which were moving to many participants, including former first lady Barbara Bush. She and her husband, former U.S. President George H.W. Bush, subsequently accompanied True Mother and spoke in support of WFWP on a six-city speaking tour of Japan. In 1997, WFWP received general consultative status with the United Nations' Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This was a signal achievement.

April 10, 1992

Muslim Couples Participate in the Holy Blessing

On April 10, 1992, forty-two Muslim couples took part in the 1,265 Previously Married Couples' Holy Blessing in Seoul, South Korea. Their Blessing was the culmination of an Interreligious Leadership Seminar. True Father termed the participation of Muslims in the wedding "a miracle." In fact, it was extremely significant, as it broke the religious barrier and opened the door for True Father to extend the Blessing to people of a faith other than Unificationism. This was a key stepping-stone toward expanding the providence of the Blessing and instilling interreligious harmony as one of the Unification Church's key pillars. In the years since, the Holy Marriage Blessing has been given to thousands of people of all races, nationalities, and religions.

April 10, 1997

The Era of the Family Federation Begins

On April 8, 1997, True Father proclaimed: "We have entered the era not just for the unity of Christianity but for the unity of the world. Therefore, as of April 10, we should put aside the name 'Unification Church' and instead work under the name of the 'Family Federation for World Peace and Unification.'" He further stated: "With the completion of the mission of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, the mission of religion has been brought to a conclusion. For the first time in human history, we have entered a new era that does not require salvation through religion. The objective of the Family Federation lies in transforming families into ideal families, thereby restoring and perfecting God's ideal of creation and establishing the ideal heavenly world." True Father noted that until now, religion has

focused on the individual. "All religions without exception," he said, "preached salvation for the individual and never once mentioned salvation for the family, tribe or nation." The Unification tradition, on the other hand, "is preaching the salvation of the nation and the world based on the family."

April 11, 1960
True Parents' Holy Wedding



April 11, 1960 (March 16 by the lunar calendar) marked the historic day in the Unification tradition of "the marriage supper of the Lamb." True Parents joined in holy matrimony in the Chungpa-dong headquarters church. Wedding decorations were put up in the main hall, the walls and floor were covered with white cloth, and a platform was erected. When preparations were completed, True Father consecrated the hall with salt. This began the church tradition of consecrating belongings with Holy Salt.

As described by Rev. Young-hwi Kim, True Mother, dressed in a white hanbok (the traditional Korean dress) with a long wedding veil over her head and ornaments befitting a bride, came down the stairs from the second floor, arm in arm with True Father. A chorus of "Song of the Banquet" was their wedding march. The ceremony was carried out twice, first in the Western style with a wedding veil, and then in the Korean traditional style with a blue silk hanbok, square belt and black hat for the groom and a bridal headpiece and Korean royal dress for the bride. The offering table for the Holy Wedding was set up according to revelations received from Heaven, with some forty kinds of food in cylindrical columns. After the meal, celebrations were held in the same hall,

joyously highlighted by True Parents' dance. True Father said that because of this ceremony, the Principle and the existence of the Unification Church would become known throughout the entire world, and the Will of God would be accomplished.

April 11, 1990
True Parents Meet Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev



Organizers of the 11th World Media Conference, which took place in Moscow in April 1990, learned by late afternoon on the day of True Father's address to the conference, that President Gorbachev had given his approval for a meeting with True Father. Larry Moffitt, who helped organize the media gathering, noted that the "maximum victory" for the Moscow event "was defined early on as a cordial meeting between True Father and Gorbachev." In fact, expectations had risen to the point that a failure to secure

such an invitation would have been interpreted as a providential setback. Thus, organizers breathed a collective sigh of relief when True Parents, along with twenty-eight former presidents or prime ministers and several assistants, entered the Kremlin at 4:30 p.m. on April 11, 1990, and were seated in a conference room.

There was an initial meeting of President Gorbachev with all present, which was followed by a private meeting between the president, True Parents, one ambassador and a couple of senior staff. During the 90-minute open meeting, President Gorbachev said that the media conference was "very important" and expressed satisfaction that it had been "very successful so far." True Father thanked him for the opportunity to come to Moscow, explained that all former heads of state at the table were supporting him, and urged him to consider the World Media Conference his "asset."

Dr. Bo Hi Pak, who attended the half-hour private meeting in President Gorbachev's personal office, reported that the president was "completely free, embracing and talkative." The Segye Ilbo newspaper reported that President Gorbachev "asked Rev. Moon to help either directly or indirectly in the development of the Soviet Union by using the multinational economic foundations and worldwide organizations of the Unification movement."

April 12, 1986

36 Couple Unificationist-born Young Adult Holy Marriage Blessing



A new era began for the Unification Church on April 12, 1986, at the Little Angels Performing Arts Center in Seoul when True Parents gave the Holy Marriage Blessing to 36 Unificationist-born couples. This was the first Holy Marriage Blessing of Unificationist-born young adults apart from the Marriage Blessings of four of True Parents' own children. On April 8, True Father called candidates in Korea to assemble and began the matching engagement, which continued into the following day. Unificationist-born candidates outside Korea were matched by photograph. Those participating were the sons and daughters of Unificationists who had participated in the 36-, 72-, and 124-Couple Blessings. Through the marriage of their children these early Unificationists became relatives.

In his message to the newly engaged couples, "The New Historical Vanguard," True Father described the occasion as "an amazing providential event." He called upon the young couples to "renew the true tradition of the Unification family" by being "standard-bearers ... for the sake of all the people of the world." He also asked them to "learn the historical lesson" from the Israelites who perished after returning to Canaan "by aiming at worldly goals requiring knowledge, money and power." Finally, he called upon them to be "victorious over the entire world" by going "through suffering that no one else in the world can handle." He advised them to "find the abandoned path that the people of this world would consider worthless. That is the path God is asking you to walk."