

## Miilhan Stephens' Maryland Church Mothers' Day Outreach

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*Pastor Miilhan Stephens served as emcee of the Pancake Brunch honoring mothers.*

On May 12th, Mothers' Day, the Maryland Church decided to put its best foot forward and to invite the local neighbor to join in an Open House, including a speech from Landover Hills Mayor Lee Walker, a pancake breakfast and door prizes. Altogether, 20 guests attended the worship service and brunch afterwards. New Hope Principal Joy Morrow, who happens to be a Unificationist, gave a moving sermon on the ineluctable pain that motherhood entails, and Mayor Walker gave a tribute to all the mothers in history, including Mother Mary, Mother Theresa of Calcutta, and Mother Moon, co-founder of the Unification Movement.



*Joy Morrow gave the Mother's Day morning sermon and asked "What is a mother, what is a True mother?" And then answered, "Every single one of us stands in that role, if not to our own child, then to a child in our care." (Photo courtesy of Dennis Holcomb.)*

Morrow, principal of a private elementary school that guides 225 children a day, asked, "What is a mother? What is a True Mother?" She then answered: "Every single one of us stands in that role, if not to our own child, then to a child in our care." She explained that coming from a Catholic background, it had been liberating for her to discover through the Divine Principle that God was not only a Father but a Mother as well. "It was liberating to find that God was also my Mother, my sister, my confidant," she said.



*Mothers were served pancakes by the boys and men of the Maryland Church congregation as part of the Mother's Day Open House event. (Photo courtesy of Dennis Holcomb.)*

Morrow pointed out that the path of every mother is a suffering course. "Really the depth of what a mother is carries a lot of pain. From the moment you conceive that baby, you think about that new life you are carrying every moment." Morrow revealed that she had lost four children in a row through miscarriages and that Mother Moon had seen three of her own children die ahead of her. She urged mothers who had lost children to give those painful experiences to God, as Mother Moon had, so that God could use them for a big purpose.

“One of the hardest things a mother suffers is the loss of dreams,” Morrow said. “Sometimes your children don’t choose to realize the dreams you had for them. But you have to give that to them. After all, this is their life, not your life. You had your shot. But I take comfort in the faith that Father God and Mother God love my children more than I do and are always there for them,” she said.



*Mayor Lee Walker of Landover Hills, Maryland greeted the guests and paid tribute to Mothers in History, including Mother Mary, Mother Theresa of Calcutta, and Mother Moon. (Photo courtesy of Dennis Holcomb.)*

She also explored other tragic challenges. “Mothers sometimes have to experience a loss of hope. Sometimes our children are born with disabilities, or marriages don’t go the right way. Yet, it is only when we are accepting of reality as it is, that we can begin to change,” she said. She concluded that the key for our serenity of mind is “holding on to the feeling of the ever presence of God in our lives.”



*Boy Scouts served the tables and cleaned up the room. Gabriel Marchitelli, second from right above, organized a team of 10 Scouts from Scout Troop 1212 that offered cheerful service. (Photo courtesy of Dennis Holcomb.)*

The sermon was followed by a pancake brunch served by the men and boys of the congregation. Arthur Herstein, Jim Parrish, Paul Miller and Christoph Wilkening turned out 650 pancakes while the boys of Boy Scout Troop 1212 served them out hot just as the mom’s ascended from the worship service in the gymnasium of the New Hope Academy. Sunjay Smith created a video film of the poem, “My Mother,” written as a tribute to True Mother by her first child, Ye Jin Moon, when she was a teenager. Longtime music minister Otmar Weinmann performed an original song dedicated to his Austrian mother, as well as other songs that kept the guests entertained as they plowed their way into plates of pancakes, fruit and sausages.



*Guests were awarded door prizes of hanging flowers. (Photo courtesy of Dennis Holcomb.)*

Hanging plants were awarded as door prizes to the guests. A surprise visit of the neighboring congregation of spirit-filled Christians led by Pastor Ty Adawami of Nigeria brought a bright conclusion to the brunch. Both Pastor Adawami and his spouse, Pastor Akemi preached on the requirements of the “end times” of history. The brunch was attended by 293 participants, larger than usual, according to second-generation Pastor Miilhan Stephens, who served as emcee for the brunch.

Jim Boothby, newly appointed outreach pastor observed “It was a lovely event. The fact that a pastor and

his core congregation came to visit was unprecedented. It was the beginning of a sea change in consciousness, namely the prioritizing of new people. For years we have had events just for ourselves, but this event was mainly for guests, which is what our True Mother has been calling for.”



*The Mother's Day card created by Hsniho Roschuni to invite friend, family and guests to the Mother's Day service and pancake breakfast.*

Pastor Stephens remarked: “It was beautiful to see so many brothers and sisters involved. There were 20 guests, and I met most of them. It was refreshing to see all these new faces. I saw our new members, Ali Koroma working the tables and Sammi Gohr standing with the greeters giving out flowers. It really felt like family.”

Rev. Henri Schuaffler, district pastor of district one, commented about the event: “It's wonderful to see local families like the Burtons take responsibility and organize a great event like this. With the new part-time pastor team plan for the New Hope Family church, we need families like the Burtons to step up. The more we have 'lay ministers' like them helping out, the more great things like this we will be able to do. Hats off to them!”