

Peace Starts With Me Youth: My Hyojeong Promise retreat with Sun Jin Moon

Naokimi Ushiroda
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From June 21 to June 23, over 300 young people, including members of Generation Peace Academy (GPA) and the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP), gathered at the International Peace Education Center (IPEC) in Las Vegas, Nevada for the [Peace Starts With Me Youth: My Hyojeong Promise](#) weekend retreat.

Hosted by the Youth and Young Adult Ministry (YAYAM) department of Family Federation for a Heavenly USA, the weekend was designed to support and connect young people to the [Peace Starts With Me Unity Festival](#) held at the MGM Grand on June 22 featuring Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, also known as True Mother. The youth weekend also launched the [Hyojeong Promise](#), a pledge intending to create a generation of individuals who are spiritually fulfilled, have happy families, and improve the world.



The weekend kicked off on Friday, June 21, with a special welcome from Sun Jin Moon, President of Family Federation International. She shared that the greatest challenge in her relationship with God was accepting the position of President, which allowed her to support True Mother directly.

"Originally in my life, never had we had an opportunity to serve True Parents in this way. We were growing up and living in an era where it was only passed down to sons," she said. "What helped me find God the most was this mission. Being called by our True Parents saying, 'I need you to step up and stand beside me. I need you to bring peace to this world.' That's why each and every one of you are here, too."



Sun Jin Moon closed by sharing how even in this world full of conflict, she sees a world of peace coming into reality through the participants who gathered. She said, "Please use this time to reach out to your brothers and sisters, your parents, your teachers, whoever it is to find joy, healing, and forgiveness." Participants felt Sun Jin Moon's deep heart and were moved by her vulnerability and sincerity toward God and True Parents.



Tasnah Bercy, National Young Adult Ministry Coordinator, launched the Hyojeong Promise. She also led

two activities to help participants share and receive God's love. "God is an essential part of our lives, but the relationship is a work in progress. It can fluctuate," said Mrs. Bercy. "When it's easy, it's easier to let God in. In the moments of our inadequacy, it can be hard to feel God's love." Learn more about the Hyojeong Promise [here](#).



Friday concluded with a special Summer Soulstice Concert prepared by the CARP Las Vegas Band and the YAYAM team. Young people from different cultures and religions gathered to honor God and unite as one family. Powerful musical performances by Gifted Youth with Purpose, an interdenominational gospel group, the CARP Las Vegas Band and the Los Angeles Band engaged the audience and brought up the energy. Between songs, a Catholic, a Muslim, a Unificationist, and a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints each spoke about the importance of uniting under God.



On Saturday morning, Naokimi Ushiroda, National Director of Youth and Students Ministry, led a guided reflection with the audience about their future spouse. Mr. Ushiroda emphasized that God wants everyone to be happy. Kaeleigh Moffit, National Youth Ministry Coordinator, shared her testimony about her marriage. She emphasized how the habits that we have, good or bad, are carried with us into marriage. "It's important to address those and learn how to overcome them to become the healthiest version of myself to have a fulfilling marriage," said Mrs. Moffit.

After the morning session, all 300 plus participants were bussed to the MGM Grand to join the Unity Festival. During the event, they performed "Mujogeon (Unconditionally)". The youth thoroughly enjoyed the music, the festivities, and especially True Mother's speech. When True Mother took to the stage, the

participants sat in front of the stage, showing their support and soaking in every word she spoke. True Mother called to every person in the room to stand up and bring America back to God. The youth joined in cheers of determination and agreement.

On the last day, Sunday, participants joined the [Victory Celebration](#) with True Mother and Family Federation USA at IPEC. During the event, the youth workshop presented True Mother with a gift; a map of the United States covered in sticky notes from the states where participants came from and the names of three people they will be sharing this experience with.

The entire experience was jam-packed with love and opportunities to commit to a life with God. Because of the dedication of the YAYAM team, each participant was able to walk away with a sense of purpose and a new commitment to a happier, God-centered life.



Reflections

"Despite all that she encountered in the past, Sun Jin Nim maintains a filial heart toward her parents and leads a life dedicated to Heavenly Parent and True Parents' vision. It really helped me better comprehend two major points: the extent of the suffering our parent, God, must endure as He is unable to directly reach out to His children, and how the heart of a true filial child will have faith that endures even the harshest of challenges for the sake of our Heavenly Parent." – S. Tamura, 19, Bay Area, CA

"I'm sincerely grateful to have the chance to attend the Peace Starts With Me rally alongside other second-generation Unificationists across the country. Being present in front of True Mother with all of our brothers and sisters made the event incredibly special. It's hard to see the bigger picture of all of our efforts when you have a small community at home, but being able to attend such an event with brothers and sisters from communities of varying sizes across the country helped me realize and respect the power we hold when we rally together. I hope to attend many more youth events in the future and to stay close with the friends that I made despite the distances." – H. Nkulu, 16, Arizona

"Although this workshop was rather short and didn't have the more intimate workshop feel that I tend to enjoy, I'm glad I was a part of the whole experience. This weekend made me realize how far our church has come. True Parents are no longer exclusively self-proclaimed, as they have others who are testifying on their behalf. It's so moving and reassuring to see other people of different faiths reacting so positively to True Mother's message." – M. Thurston, 25, San Diego, CA

"This weekend has given me hope in myself and reaffirmed my commitment of reviving God's family. In the end, God knew what I wanted to accomplish, and so He revived me by letting me sit close to my Mother and at least letting me hear what she needs. What she needs is help, and I want to be able to do that. I mean, God has led me to this moment, and I'm grateful for it. Now, what can I do that God and True Parents can be grateful for? They asked me to help, and how can I turn Them down after They took the time to see me?" – R. Miller, 21, Maryland

"Only towards the end of my GPA year did I realize [how much my parents were investing into me], and when I did, I felt so sorry for my parents for neglecting all the love that they were trying to pour into me. When I finally went to apologize to them, they responded with an apology towards me. They worked so hard and had every right to say anything, but the one thing they said to me was an apology. That they couldn't be a better parent for me and my siblings. I was shocked. But that experience was a new starting point in that relationship. And now it's so powerful, and I do feel that I experience God through my parents the most." – Anonymous, 20, Seattle

The Hyojeong Promise

Hyo Jeong is the Korean word for “filial piety” which encompasses the deep longing of each human being to be one with the heart of God. Through the heart of Hyo Jeong we live a life based on the three elements of the Hyo Jeong Promise.

The Promise



A living, thriving, personal relationship with God, my Heavenly Parent

We believe that at the core of our identity lies one undeniable truth: we are each a son or daughter of God, our Heavenly Parent.



Integrity, purity and fidelity for the sake of my future marriage and family

Why is it that so few of us are able to build marriages that last? We believe that the root of this issue stems from our general approach to life, which is to look towards others to make us happy.



Positively impacting humanity and the world around me

We live in a world that promotes a “me first” mentality. But if each of us only thought about our own needs, where would that leave everyone else? Our world is made better by those who selflessly give to others and build a brighter future for those who will come after them

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