

## Blessing and Family Ministry: In Memory of Ralph Oppenheimer

Yun-A Johnson  
October 13, 202



### In Memory of Ralph Oppenheimer

Ralph Oppenheimer

Spouse: Eeva-Liisa Oppenheimer

Children: Juhan, Annina

Birthdate: June 1, 1953

Blessing: July 1, 1982

Ascension: October 3, 2021

Seonghwa Ceremony: October 8, 2021

Ralph grew up in the Riverdale section of the Bronx with his parents Hugo and Irma and his brother Melvin. He attended P.S. 24, J.H.S. 141, and Clinton High School before enrolling in American International College in Springfield, MA. Ralph was a remarkably skinny youngster and an excellent athlete. He enjoyed playing touch

football, basketball, and softball with his many friends. Ralph certainly had a mischievous streak growing up as evidenced by the impromptu boxing matches and seltzer fights staged in the basement of his parents' home. Irma would often wonder how the family could go through so much seltzer in such a short time.

Ralph attended Riverdale Jewish Center for worship and study and became a Bar Mitzvah in 1966. He spent several summers at Camp Eagle Hill where he was well-liked and excelled in activities. Ralph always enjoyed cards and board games, and also could often be found at Yonkers Raceway on Saturday nights. At age 17 his father passed away and he began his search for truth and deeper meaning in life. He continued his love for harness racing by working at the famed Hanover Shoe Farms in PA and Green Mountain Park in VT where he competed in an inter-collegiate race in 1974.

While attending American International College in Massachusetts, Ralph discovered the Unification movement and joined on February 12, 1975. He was deeply touched by God and filled with renewed love, hope, and passion for life and dedicated himself to sharing God's heart with others and building peace in our world. He was Blessed in marriage with Eeva-Liisa Ovaska in Madison Square Garden on July 1, 1982 by Reverend Sun Myung Moon and a year later welcomed their first child, Juhan to the world. Then after a 3 year period as pastor in Colorado Springs, Ralph and his family moved back to the Bronx for the Hometown Providence where he supported pastor Galvan and the NYC community through outreach activities and fundraising. He then served as the District Leader in Staten Island for 6 years, during which time their second child, Annina was born.

In 1995 the family moved to Brooklyn, where Ralph took on the role of District Leader and in 1997 he was ordained by our Heavenly Parents and True Parents with the mission of National Messiahship Providence for the Central African Republic and devoted the next twenty years of his life to working on bringing peace and true love to the country and all of its people. He created his own NGO, United to Serve Africa, and bravely traveled to the country countless times throughout his life, often staying for extended periods even during times of civil war. He joyfully worked to support the local community by leading education programs for the women and youth focusing on developing their individual skills and strived to bring unity between the religious and political figures through peaceful dialog and finding common ground. Throughout the years, Ralph met with each of the country's last 4 presidents and encouraged them to lead and uplift their citizens with a parental heart and was also able to meet with and award the current president with an Ambassador for Peace certificate. He would always return home sharing amazing stories, pictures, and beautiful handcrafted artwork for his family and friends. His experience with the Unification movement brought him across the globe, as he also traveled to Brazil, South Korea, Finland, Canada, and all around the United States.

Ralph was a grandfather to 4: Lumi (10) and Leo (6) from his son Juhan and wife Tamayo; Benjamin (3) and Aubrey (1 mo) to his daughter Annina and husband Kevin. He took this role very seriously, always willing and ready to provide a tickle or joke, and loved planning trips with his wife and grandkids to the beach, park, or arcade. Right up until he got sick, Ralph continued to work on building peace in his family, community, and the world. He was a man of absolute faith and embodied love in his life just like this quote from the Bible, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves." - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Ralph was truly one of a kind with a deep heart, generous, funny, and treated those around him with compassion and mutual respect regardless of their religious beliefs, external appearance, or level of wealth. He recognized all of humanity as a global family with God being our Heavenly Parents. He bravely challenged societal norms and was not motivated by money or possessions but instead focused on attaining treasures of the heart and bringing joy to God and all of God's children. He will be missed dearly by all who were fortunate to know him and be in his presence.

Condolences may be sent to:

Eeva-Liisa Oppenheimer (20 Thrasher Ct. Marlboro, NJ 07746)

Donations may be offered via: [www.gofundme.com](http://www.gofundme.com)



## Reverend Ralph Oppenheimer's Memorial Service

**\$9,794** raised of \$15,000 goal



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Barry Geller is organizing this fundraiser.

Created October 4, 2021

Funerals & Memorials

Reverend Ralph Oppenheimer passed away on October 3, 2021 due to respiratory failure as a result of COVID-19 complications, leaving behind his beloved wife Eeva-Liisa, two children Juhan and Annina, and four grandchildren Lumi, Leonardo, Benjamin, and Aubrey.

Ralph was a devoted member of the Universal Peace Federation and spent his life serving his community day in and day out. He tirelessly and selflessly worked to improve the lives of those around him; whether it was driving his elderly neighbors to their appointments, or spending years in Central Africa Republic doing missionary work, he always put the needs of others before his own with a smile on his face.

Proceeds from this fundraiser will be used to pay for his memorial service and medical bills from being in the ICU for the last month. Any remaining proceeds will be used to provide for his beloved wife, as he was the sole provider of the household.







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## Organizer

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Barry Geller

Organizer

Marlboro, NJ

[Contact](#)

## Comments (8)

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Cynthia Hiromitsu donated **\$50**

Sending love and prayers for Ralph and his family.

18 hrs

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Charles Breland donated **\$40**

Ralph, will miss your pure heart and serving attitude. Greg and Keiko Breland

19 hrs

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Alexander Park donated **\$1,000**

Rev. Joong Hyun Park's Family sends deepest love and condolences to "Uncle Ralph"...

1 d

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Louise Honey donated **\$100**

Steve, Louise send our prayers, thoughts and love to the whole family!

6 d

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Emiljun Rapada donated **\$120**

A very generous man who always thinks of others more than himself. Thank you for your life Ralph

7 d

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Richard Karnowski donated **\$500**

I recently lost my wife also.

8 d

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Sam Harley donated **\$100**

A great-hearted brother. Go in peace, Ralph.

8 d

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Thomas Hwang donated **\$100**

Sending love and support!

9 d

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