

## Our New Jersey Japanese community's New Year's party for the Clifton Family

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On January 1, 2017, members of our Japanese community in New Jersey held a New Year's party. About 100 people gathered for the day's events, including several of our western and second-generation Unificationists from the wider Clifton Family Church community.

During the first half of the party, we took time to reflect about all that we did in 2016. Compared to previous years, we felt that, overall, we were better able to value and practice unity in fulfilling our responsibilities. We also invited representatives of several Unificationist organizations to introduce themselves and share about their work during the past year. Finally, we awarded those who worked hard in support of church activities and ministries such as tithing and outreach in 2016, and Mr. Hiroshi Inose, Cheon Il Guk IW and Kodan Chairman, gave a brief keynote speech.

During the second half of the event, we transitioned over to the New Year party. Whenever we hold an event together as Japanese members of our community, we always make an effort to welcome new guests and other members of the wider community. This time, around 50 guests and community members joined us for the party.

This year, I learned something from our young people who helped organize the event. They were highly cooperative and helped each other out, and seemed to become one in mind and heart from my perspective. I felt that it would be wonderful if we also can be like that, and more powerful.

We tried adding new things to the party this year so people could participate more, which required more passion to prepare than we may have needed in previous years. Seeing the participants' smiles throughout the party, I believe that this effort was worthwhile.

While looking at the pictures taken at the event, I hoped that God and True Parents were smiling along with us. In the year ahead, we are going to continue trying new things for the sake of others.

