

Hyung Jin Moon's Foot-Washing Ceremony Marks District Pastor Ordination at East Garden

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Taking a page from the 13th chapter of the Gospel of John, Rev. Hyung Jin Moon ordained 12 newly elected district pastors by washing their feet at an unprecedented East Garden ceremony Nov. 26, 2012.

Rev. Moon, president of the Unification Church USA, thereby invoked the 2,000-year-old tradition of foot-washing as recorded in John: 13:14-17 and practiced by many Christian congregations today as a standard ritual. Approximately 300 persons attended the ordination ceremony at the church residential center in Irvington, New York where the late Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Mrs. Moon, the parents of Rev. Hyung Jin Moon, lived for most of the nearly 40 years they spent in the United States.

After a formal bow, the participants sang "The Blessing of Glory," led by Dr. Michael Balcomb, the church vice president, who also acted as the emcee. Dr. Chang Shik Yang, the continental director, offered an invocation. Rev. Hyung Jin Moon told the gathering that the meaning of the church Headquarters staff washing the feet of the District Pastors was that "Headquarters is committed to serving the field." He then read and explained the passage from the Gospel of John regarding Jesus washing the feet of his disciples: "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." 15 "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you." 16 "Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him." 17 "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

Rev. Moon told the pastors that "Jesus affirms that he is greater than his disciplines but that his service to them does not diminish his power but enhances it. Our True Mother is encouraging us to enter through the gate that our True Father established 60 years ago."



The newly elected pastors then read an oath of affirmation in unison (see text below).

Rev. Moon, joined by 11 members of the headquarters staff, then kneeled before the district pastors and washed their feet. The pastors, in turn, kneeled before 12 members of the local New York church (who

represented the entire national church) and washed their feet. The pastors then received sacred *Seonghwa* candles to take back to their districts for redistribution. Finally, Rev. Hyung Jin Moon read personal tributes to each of the outgoing district pastors and awarded to them certificates expressing gratitude for meritorious service.



Rev. Moon made a point of emphasizing that the ordination of democratically elected pastors was a step in the transition from Korean leadership to indigenous leadership of the American church that has been underway for decades.

He explained: “It’s often thought by people that we are starting a new dispensation, and we are starting from scratch. But no, we are building and continuing a tradition. We have moved from 1982, when Korean leaders came to America, to American leadership [in the late 1990s], to the witnessing summits [2008-09] that brought to our attention new ideas, and to Rev. In Jin Moon’s Lovin’ Life Ministry [2009-2012] that created a national consciousness through the broadcast. This was very important. Now we continue with products from Headquarters to really support the field. It is important to realize that no sacrifice has been lost. God has been developing our movement. Look at the new people here today. We have elected District Pastors. These are amazing men and women.”

“Let us keep in mind that these District Pastors have been elected to lead America,” Rev. Moon continued, adding, “This is very important. These men and women have shown an exemplary life of faith and dedication – with their spouses, I might add. Our District Pastors represent all of you, the entire national church.”

“Father said, when he was talking about American electoral process, ‘People elect, and Heaven confirms.’ Here we have elected pastors and True Mother has given her direct and personal blessing.”

Rev. Moon’s spouse and ministerial partner, Rev. Yeon Ah Moon, distributed the certificates of appointment to the district pastors.

Rev. Moon then read tributes to each of the outgoing District Pastors. Dr. Yang led the assembly in four shouts of *Eog Mansei*, which translates as “100,000 blessings.”

The affirmation read by the interim pastors is as follows:



Pastor’s Affirmation

As a District Pastor of the Unification Church of America, I recognize and accept that I stand in a position of trust and responsibility. I freely agree to be and to remain accountable both to my community, as represented by the District Council that nominated me, and to the authority of the Church President and ultimately of God and True Parents. I further accept and understand that this position is for an interim

period of one year.



Therefore I make a solemn covenant that I will respect and accept:

- The eternal and unique authority of the True Parents, now represented on earth by the direct leadership of True Mother.
- The spiritual authority and leadership of the President of the Unification Church of America.

I further accept and agree that:

- I am an equal member of a team of District Pastors and that I will cooperate with them as colleagues and brothers and sisters of faith committed to the same goals.
- I will work in partnership and harmony with the elected District Council, and with all the members and communities within the District.

As a faith leader of this community, I affirm my belief and will uphold the key tenets of the Unification faith:

- God, the Heavenly Parent of all humanity.
- True Parents as the eternal and unique ancestors of humankind who represent the consummation of God's Providence
- The authority of the "Eight Textbooks" as scriptures of the Unification faith and the Holy Blessing of Marriage as our central sacrament.
- The commitment to building Cheon Il Guk, the Kingdom of God where all humankind will come to live together as one family under God.

I also accept and commit to uphold the highest standards of personal and moral behavior as an exemplary member of the faith community, with particular respect to the admonitions of True Parents in three areas:

- I will refrain from the misuse of public money, assets and resources. I will work together with the District Council and the finance committee in creating and adhering to an approved budget and plan.
- I accept the teachings and principles of Absolute Sexual morality, and will remain faithful to my spouse and abstain from any form of inappropriate behavior, including the use of alcohol, drugs or other substances.
- I pledge not to disrespect or intentionally hurt the heart of another in carrying out my responsibilities as District Pastor.