

## *Helen (Chin) Alexander, San Francisco, California, 1968*



I joined the Unification movement in San Francisco in 1968 at age 18 when I was reborn in tears by the heart of God revealed through the Divine Principle. I remember saying to Phyllis (Yamato) Kim on Sunday, December 1, 1968 after a Thanksgiving weekend workshop which began on Friday, November 29, "My whole life has been waiting for this!" She really did not expect to hear this, nor was there any realistic purpose for me to say this. But what I felt was very real and profound beyond words after three days of hearing Divine Principle directly from our missionary central figure, Mr. Sang Ik Choi. The Divine Principle as presented revealed the heart of God, and I could not stop weeping.

Similar to my husband's experience joining in England in 1968, there was not yet any Divine Principle book. An English translation of the late President Hyo Won Eu's notes on True Father's words was used. Based on this, special lecture charts created by David Hose, who was an artist, were used.

As in the rest of America and Europe, where the earliest missionaries of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity had been dispatched, and where early members were joining the Unified Family in centers, the Holy Spirit also actively worked in 1968 in San Francisco. At this time in San Francisco, many more people heard the Divine Principle at the "Center" and joined the "Family" operating as the International Re-education Center, which over the course of three years became an association and then a foundation. Our education materials adopted a new title and were revised for outreach purposes. By that time, members were involved with very busy

outreach activities, starting a tradition of bringing in many members in the San Francisco Bay area.

While we did not specifically reach out to Christians, the background of most members was Christian. I was born in San Francisco as a second-generation, American-born Chinese. My mother, who became a Christian at a young age in China, wanted a faith-based upbringing for us as children. She spiritually contributed so much before and during my time as a member. As a teenager, I would see her read the Bible and pray each morning before eating. Years later, she advocated my joining the church. My mother decided by herself to read the first Chinese Divine Principle edition from cover to cover ten times. She believed that Rev. Sun Myung Moon was a great man of God and did a 40-day prayer condition for him to succeed in his work, while maintaining devout faith in Jesus as the Christ. She also supported and encouraged my Blessing.

Before the church, in my first year in college, I somehow began searching very deeply for the truth. My mother always talked about true love as God's love. One afternoon, I was reading about altruism. Then, I heard a voiceless voice inside me for the first time say to me, "You must have absolute confidence in me. You must forget about all your socialization from parents, family, friends, and society and follow me absolutely." About a month later, interestingly, it was the physical teenage daughter of my mother's "Christian spiritual daughter" who was first witnessed to. She herself did not like Christians, but one day I saw her and felt a strong urge to phone her. When I heard her mention a Korean religious philosopher by the name of Sun Myung Moon, I invited myself over to the center.

One day shortly after the life-changing workshop, I was left alone on my own devices in the center to study as I wished, and I selected with great interest the words by True Father. When I read his words on the Blessing, it dawned clearly on me that he was the Lord of the Second Advent according to the lectures I had just heard. When I saw

Onni Durst, who was then still called Soo Lim, I asked, “Why didn’t anyone tell me that Sun Myung Moon is the Messiah?” She replied calmly, “It is so much better that you could realize it on your own.”

In February 1969, I met True Parents for the first time. They arrived in our humble center on 8th Avenue near Golden Gate Park in the Richmond district. Our brother, Joachim Becker, had just laid a board floor over the dirt basement in the house. True Mother was only 26 years old. I remember being so awed and humbled, realizing that she must be the True Mother of the universe, because she was the “epitome of objectivity.” Before departing, True Father told all of us to work hard and promised that they would soon come back.



Members in San Francisco celebrate their first God’s Day on January 1, 1969. Those who had been members for more than six months wore Holy Robes. Seated in the second row are Sang Ik Choi and his wife; also present are Helen Chin Alexander, Nina Zedicoff Bergman, Alice Hamaker Fleisher, Phyllis Yamamoto Kim, Daikon Onuki, and Beverly Lee Ralph.

True Parents came again later to the center at 44 Page Street. There, while True Father was speaking one morning, I saw him carrying the weight of the entire universe, beyond the capacity of any human being. I repented and resolved to strengthen my life of faith.



Members witnessing on the subway for the Day-of-Hope Tour

In January 1972, about 84 of us young people joined True Parents for the Day-of-Hope Tour. We stayed at the Bronx center with True Parents, and every day we met at the feet of our True Parents, receiving their love and internal guidance. One day, Shin Wook “Lady Dr.” Kim, saw visions of fire coming out of the Bronx center. Soon after the eight-city tour, many of us were sent out to plant Unification Church centers in all 50 states through witnessing and teaching Divine Principle. True Father would gather us together monthly at Belvedere to educate us in love and truth and sometimes call us to account for the providence.

Then in February 1975 just about all of those in this group were matched and blessed by True Parents in the 1800-Couples Blessing.

Even before returning to America, we were already being assigned

to foreign missions. In May 1975 I became a missionary to Hong Kong. Then I joined my husband in England in 1980 and returned to America in 1983 for the mobilization of “American” couples. Since then, I have had the privilege of focusing on family-related providential responsibilities, serving as a Belvedere/East Garden staff family, and learning to thrive as a blessed central family according to the hopes and expectations of God and True Parents.

My husband is Ian Alexander, and he joined in England. My son Joshua was blessed with Jessie in May 2008. We hope that our eldest daughter, Hannah, will be matched and blessed soon. Our second daughter, Joa, just graduated from college, and Aeri, our youngest daughter, will have another year in college. I hope that our family will succeed in the Blessing and that through us many others will be blessed.