

## FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: 20th Anniversary Of 2003 Blessing

Knut Holdhus  
July 13, 2023



3550 couples at 2003 Blessing in South Korea, 30,000 globally

We congratulate all the couples who took part in the 2003 [Blessing](#) ceremony 13th July 2003 in South Korea and other locations around the world, organised by the [Family Federation](#) (FFWPU). The main event was held in the large indoor arena Yu Gwan-sun gymnasium in [Cheonan](#), a city of about 700 000 inhabitants, 85 km south of the capital Seoul. [Father](#) and [Mother Moon](#) officiated in Cheonan, where 3550 couples from many different countries participated, the majority from South Korea and Japan. Simultaneous events in different corners of the world were connected to the main ceremony in South Korea via satellite and internet, so that according to the organizers altogether 30,000 couples received the [Blessing](#) on their marriage.



From the front page of August 2003 issue of Korean magazine Shisa News Monthly

The Korean magazine Shisa News Monthly covered the 2003 [Blessing](#) in a large report in its August issue,

"The event showed how [Rev. Moon](#) actualized the unity of all different peoples through racial and religious reconciliation and the order of [true love](#), as well as how [FFWPU](#) is taking the initiative to promote ideal families.

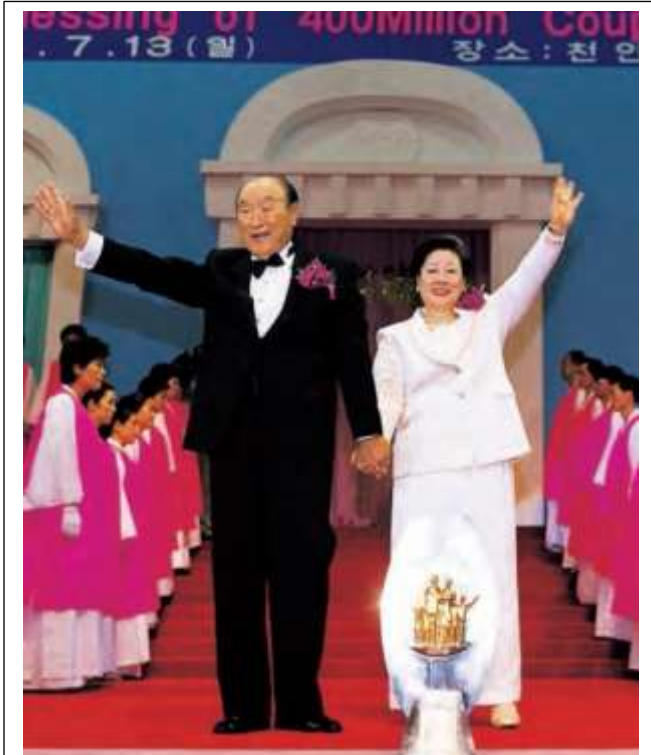
The event showed the scope of the activities in which [FFWPU](#) has been involved, including those that aim to overcome the problems caused by sexual promiscuity and crises of sexual identity, which are threatening to families, nations and, moreover, world peace."



Religious leaders in Cheonan 13th July 2003

Representatives of different religious traditions - Buddhism, Sikhism, the Druze faith, Islam, Hinduism,

Christianity and native American spirituality - prayed for the couples.



*Father and Mother Moon 13th July 2003*

[Father](#) and [Mother Moon](#) and their assistants in the arena and cities throughout the world sprinkled holy water on the all the couples. The blessing vows were read out by [Sun Myung Moon](#), and everyone shouted a loud yes to each vow. He prayed for the thousands of men and women about to start their married life before the Holy [Marriage Blessing](#) was proclaimed.

In his benediction prayer, [Father Moon](#) said,

"We know that this occasion, upon which the eyes of people throughout the whole cosmos are riveted, is the place of [blessing](#) You have so wished for - the occasion where we are establishing the basis to find Your nation, and the starting base upon which You can build Your family.

Therefore, please be present at this ceremony, and embrace everything here in its entirety, including the brides and bridegrooms, and the guests, surrounding them in Your bosom of grace.

Please allow the [Kingdom of Heaven](#) on earth - the liberated physical world of glory, and the [Kingdom of Heaven](#) in heaven - the liberated spiritual world, to become one in heart, in mindset and in body, and bestow on us the grace to enter the era of the kingship of love and Your liberated [Kingdom of Heaven](#) on earth and in heaven, by leading us in this ceremony in person."

Hamilton Green, Prime Minister of Guyana 1985-1992, said in his congratulatory address,



*Hamilton Green 13th July 2003 in Cheonan*

"My friends, from the dawn of our civilization, every society has upheld the practice of [marriage](#), unions between a man and a woman blessed by the Creator and based on the religious beliefs of the contracting parties. Over time, we have brought a custom to this union, taking place between persons of similar race, religion, social and economic status.

Indeed, up until now, in many places, a union that crossed these artificial barriers of race or religions was not acceptable. Indeed, in colonial days, these marriages were not recognized. In my part of the world, it was difficult for a young Hindu to marry a Christian or a Muslim, or vice versa. Those who attempted to overrun these age-old tribal religious boundaries incurred the wrath of family, friends and the society of which they were a part.

Thanks to the perspicacity and the vision of Rev. [Sun Myung Moon](#), together we have enjoyed a glorious journey beyond the narrow confines of those traditional boundaries. This

wonderful and beautiful interreligious, world peace [blessing](#) ceremony is the manifestation of a goodness that is bringing us all together to share hope, fellowship and love.

This great leap forward demonstrated by this ceremony is like a bright beacon of glorious light that will lead us to a world of peace and contentment and so fulfill the prophecies of all the great prophets.

We need to recall that for centuries, religion has been the basis for violent conflict, hate and the wanton waste of life and destruction of property. Religious bigotry allowed one group to believe that their way, and their way alone, was the only correct and authorized road to salvation - any other had to be wrong and unacceptable. Today, we assembled here are part of a dynamic and pervasive change.



[...] The family unit is the foundation upon which the modern society is built. [Marriage](#) is the beginning of the family unit. It is therefore important that [marriage](#) and marriages do not suffer from the defect of fetteredness of or the quirks of history.



*Some of the couples 13th July 2003 in Cheonan*

That we, as we did a moment ago, witness marriages, some mixed but all blessed by a variety of religious leaders, is a wonderful and rewarding experience - clearly the start for a safer world. These couples happily vowed to be true husbands and wives. Our modern-day apostle, the Rev. [Sun Myung Moon](#) has made this possible. These [marriages](#), with their attendant [blessing](#) represent our hope to fulfill our dream for a happy and a peaceful world."

Part of the two hours long program of the 2003 [Blessing](#) was performances by Korean, Japanese and Filipino singers, including Hyun Chul [a popular middle-aged Korean singer].

The spectacular [Marriage Blessing](#) Ceremony was the main event of World Culture and Sports Festival 2003.

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*Featured image above: Father and Mother Moon officiating at the 2003 Blessing 13th July in Cheonan, South Korea. Photo: Ogawa, Kogensha, Japan / [Family Federation](#)*

*"20th Anniversary of 2003 Blessing" - text: Knut Holdhus, written based on report in the July 2003 issue of "Today's World", a monthly magazine published by the [Family Federation](#) 1980-2013.*



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# Family Federation

## The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification

The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification is a global federation of individuals and families who aim to create a world of peace and unity beyond national, cultural, religious and ideological barriers, a world where everyone may live together in peace and harmony.



*Father and Mother Moon 1st August 1996.*

### In a nutshell

**Name:** Family Federation for World Peace and Unification

**Founded:** 1996

**Founders:** Rev. [Sun Myung Moon](#) (1920-2012) and Dr. [Hak Ja Han](#)

**Teachings:** [Unificationism](#), a long series of revelations received by [Sun Myung Moon](#). See: [Brief about the Teachings](#) of the Family Federation

**Goal:** The [Kingdom of Heaven](#) on Earth. A harmonious world family, where everyone may experience peace, security, freedom and love.

**Strategy:** Unite all good forces

**Distribution:** Largest in South Korea and Japan, but found in most nations.

**Background:** The Family Federation took over many of the functions of the [Unification Church](#) and its basic teachings.

**Frequently asked questions:** See: [Faq](#)

### Three ideals

As the name indicates, the Family Federation is based on three ideals – family, world peace, and unification.

- **The family ideal.** Most religions focus on the individual and its spirituality. The Family Federation teaches a broader concept of spirituality, where your [relationships](#) to your loved ones are of decisive importance for your eternal life. As [God](#) is the source of love, [marriages](#) blessed by [God](#) and families full of [true love](#) are the very foundation for the [Kingdom of Heaven](#) that [God](#) longs for. It is a love kingdom, and the family is a [school of love](#).
- **World peace.** If there is love and peace in the home, there is hope that we may also create societies and nations with peace. The family is the fundamental social institution. If we can learn to love our fellow human beings on micro-level, in a family, we may also do so on macro-level, i.e. in the society around us and in the big world we live in. Well-functioning families are the very key to reducing crime, alcohol and drug abuse, the number of suicides and many other social problems.



- **Unification.** We talk about unification on all levels, from the individual to the global level. [God](#) is the source of unity, evil the source of division. Therefore, the goal of the Family Federation is to remove the barriers and create a world of unity, a social unity, such as that between husband and wife, between parents and children, different social groups, nations and religions, but also unity between the inner world and the outer, between mind and body, spirit and matter, religion and science.

## The inauguration

The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification was first founded in the USA 31st July 1996 by [Sun Myung Moon](#) and his wife [Hak Ja Han](#), and in many European nations soon after that.

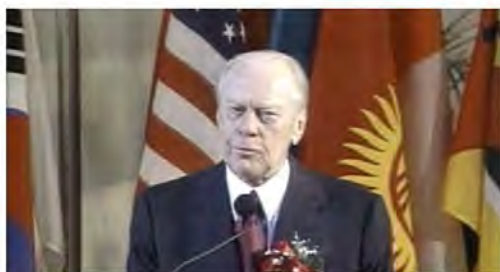
As co-founder, [Mother Moon](#) gave the inaugural address titled "View of the Principle of the Providential History of Salvation", reading a prepared text. [Father](#)

[Moon](#) spoke without a script at the closing banquet the following day, 1st August, at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. His speech was titled "In Search of the Origin of the Universe".



*The Inaugural World Convention of the Family Federation 31st July 1996*

Gerald Ford, U.S. President 1974-1977, spoke at the inauguration 31<sup>st</sup> July 1996. He said,



*Gerald Ford 31st July 1996*

"While the world's finest athletes test themselves in Atlanta, this gathering is sort of a spiritual Olympics. Like the Olympians, you have assembled from all over the world to further the cause of peace among nations.

But while those Olympians are dedicated to gold and glory, you in this room pursue other objectives. The glory you seek, comes from God, not gold.

If at times

I sound a bit like an Old Testament prophet, it's because there is nothing about which I feel more strongly, more deeply, than the survival and the strengthening of the family. No civilization that neglects the family, can be called civilized for long, and no political philosophy that takes the family for granted, will be taken seriously by anyone who values morality, compassion and peace."



*National Building Museum, Washington DC. [Public domain](#) image. Cropped*

The chronicle "40 Years in America" describes the event,



*[Mother](#) and [Father Moon](#) 31st July 1996*

"The movement's most spectacular world convention was held in Washington, D.C. from July 30-August 1, 1996, inaugurating the Family Federation for World Peace (FFWP).

This event included a cast of luminaries rivaling anything the movement had yet undertaken: two former Presidents of the United States, Gerald Ford and George Bush; former President and Nobel Peace Prize winner Oscar Arias of Costa Rica; former Prime Ministers Edward Heath of Great Britain and Brian Mulroney of Canada; thirty-six one-time heads of state or governments; university presidents including Boston University's John Silber; Christian television personality Robert Schuller; Christian Coalition Executive Director Ralph Reed; Coretta Scott King, the widow of Martin Luther King, Jr.; Maureen Reagan, the daughter of former U.S. President Ronald Reagan; well-known comedian Bill Cosby; and Christian singer-actor Pat Boone. In addition, the main proceedings were covered live by C-SPAN television network. (p.443) [...]

The establishment of the FFWP represented a new stage in the movement's development. Rev. Chung Hwan Kwak, who was appointed International President, maintained that the FFWP was more important than the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity (HSA-UWC) or [Unification Church](#). HSA-UWC, he noted, was "not [True Parents'](#) ultimate organization".

The rationale for this assertion was connected to the historic shift that underlay the emergence of the Completed Testament Age. As noted previously, Rev. Kwak





[Completed testamentary.](#) As noted previously, Rev. Kwak explained,

'Religious organizations have always been centered upon the salvation of the individual, but we have now progressed to the salvation of the family. [...] Such an organization is not a church; it is the Family Federation for World Peace.'



[Sun Myung Moon](#) 1st August 1996



From the Inaugural Convention 31st July 1996.

Given this understanding, it wasn't surprising that the FFWP rather than the [Unification Church](#) was the main sponsor of the World Culture and Sports Festivals and International [Marriage Blessings](#) after 1996." (p.444) (From the section "Federations for World Peace and Unification", in "40 Years in America – 1959-1999 – An Intimate History of the Unification Movement", by Michael Inglis and Michael L. Mickler, published by HSA Publications Oct. 2000, 624 pages.)

The Family Federation was launched on the foundation of the [Unification Church](#), a spiritual movement [founded](#) in South Korea in 1954. The original intention was neither to establish a church nor a new religion.

The Family Federation took over many of the activities and tasks of the [Unification Church](#) and the same basic teachings, but has a pronounced goal of creating a world of peace and unity based on well-functioning families.

[More](#) about the Family Federation

Text: Knut Holdhus



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## Rev. Sun Myung Moon – Father Moon (1920 – 2012)

### In a nutshell

- **Name:** Sun Myung Moon. In Korean 문선명 (Moon Seon-myeong – the family name always comes first in Korean). Written in Chinese characters, the name is 文鮮明. He was born as 문용명 (Moon Yong-myeong), but changed his name in 1953. Many call him Father Moon.
- **Born:** 25<sup>th</sup> February 1920 (6th day of the first month according to the Oriental lunar calendar) in Sangsa, a hamlet in Chongju (town status since 1994) of North Pyeongan province in Korea, now North Korea).
- **Married:** 11th April 1960 to **Hak Ja Han**. Together they realize the ideal of **True Parents**. They had 14 children together. This was his second

Sun Myung Moon founded several organizations, including the **Unification Church in 1954** in Seoul, South Korea, with his wife **Hak Ja Han**, the **Family Federation for World Peace and Unification** in 1996 in Washington DC, and the **Universal Peace Federation** in 2005 in New York.

He and his wife are also known for arranging so-called “**Blessing Ceremonies**” since 1960, the year they themselves **got married**. The ceremonies are often called **mass marriages** or mass weddings.

Father Moon is also known for founding several newspapers, including **The Washington Times**, in 1982.

Sun Myung Moon was a skilled orator, and his speeches have been published in collections of over 600 volumes, mainly in Korean, but extracts from the speeches have been translated and published in a wide range of languages.

His original religious teachings are called the **Unification Principles** (Wolli – 원리 – in Korean – translated as Divine Principle in English. The Korean word wolli actually means principle or principles.)

Sun Myung Moon was far more than a religious leader. He thus founded and supported dozens of organizations to promote international understanding and create lasting peace in the world.

He was an outspoken opponent of totalitarian atheistic communism and founded several organizations that developed a systematic ideological critique of communist ideology.



### Timeline

**1920:** Born after World War I into a Korea suffering and struggling under Japanese occupation.

**1935:** Easter 1935, he had a mystical life-changing **encounter with Jesus Christ**, who commissioned him to a great mission and taught him personally.

**1940s:** In his student years, he found crystal clear answers to the mysteries of religion and life’s big questions.

He was tortured for his involvement in the underground Korean independence movement.

**1945:** After World War II and Korean independence, he began to share his profound insights with key persons and movements **God** led him to. Met with misunderstanding in South Korea. He walked to North Korea and built his own movement there. Soon arrested and tortured by the Communist regime. In 1948, sentenced to 5 years in a concentration camp.

**1950s:** Miraculously **saved from certain death** by UN forces. Came as a penniless refugee to the South.

The rapid growth of his



North Korea. Public domain image. Cropped



his second marriage. First married on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1945 to Seon-Gil Choi, but divorced on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1957. A son was born to her in 1946.

- **Died:** 2nd Sept. (European time) 2012 (3rd Sept. Korean time) in Gapyeong, South Korea, aged 92.
- **Autobiography:** "A Peace-Loving Global Citizen"
- **Teachings:** **Unificationism.** See also **Brief about the Teachings** and the **Unification Principles.**
- **Education:** Graduated in September 1943 from the electrical engineering department at Waseda College of Engineering in Tokyo, Japan, affiliated with Waseda University, one of Japan's top universities.

systematic ideological critique of communist ideology.

Sun Myung Moon also strongly believed in culture and sport as peace-making activities and invested in football clubs, symphony orchestras, and ballet. Already in 1962, he formed a dance troupe for children, The Little Angels, which eventually became outstanding ambassadors for Korean culture.

Father Moon invested large sums in establishing a car factory in North Korea. He saw the ocean's resources as the key to fighting hunger and malnutrition and invested in fish farming, and also developed fish products rich in high-quality protein.

Sun Myung Moon organized a long series of interfaith conferences to promote cooperation between religions and also proposed the creation of an Interfaith Council at the United Nations.

He was, in addition, an ardent advocate of the construction of a tunnel under the Bering Strait to unite the nations of the world by means of an international highway.

Ever since it became clear that the messianic task could not be completed through Jesus because of his untimely death, **God** began to prepare the world again, as he had done before the birth of Jesus. As the **Unification Principles** (Divine Principle) shows there are striking points of similarity between the 2,000-year period before Jesus and the last 2,000 years.

**God's** preparations for the **Kingdom of Heaven** intensified in the last centuries before the coming of Jesus. Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, and others laid spiritual foundations in their respective parts of the world. Major reforms were carried out within Judaism. Greek and Roman civilizations created major changes here in Europe.

In the same way, the last centuries from the Renaissance and the Reformation have been a time characterized by great upheavals. The purpose of all these changes has been to create the conditions for an ideal world without war, suffering, and injustice.

The prerequisite for **God's** and humankind's longing for a harmonious world to become reality is that someone shows us the way to **true love**, true marriages, and true families. That is why **God** has also prepared the world for **True Parents**.

The Messiah comes to realize the ideal that **True Parents** represent, namely a man and a woman who has achieved the standard that men and women, fathers and mothers, should have, according to **God's** original plan.

movement after the Korean War in 1953 was **officially registered** in Seoul in 1954.

Against all odds, with a handful of followers, he built what, within 25 years, became a global movement.

**1960s:** **Holy Marriage to Hak Ja Han** in 1960. Began holding larger and larger **Marriage Blessing** events, first for his followers and then for people of all faiths and nations.

**1970s:** Preached throughout the USA. His rallies filled big stadiums; the largest in Washington attracted 300,000. In South Korea, he gathered 1.2 million in 1975. Established schools, newspapers, a hospital, humanitarian aid organizations, shipbuilding facilities, and businesses. Started annual conferences for hundreds of eminent scientists, media people, and academics. **Blessed the marriage** of several thousand couples.

**1980s:** More newspapers were established, including The Washington Times. Organized large interreligious conferences. Formed organizations are exposing weaknesses of atheistic materialism. Predicted the imminent collapse of Communism in 1985. **Large weddings** are held for 15,000 couples.

**1990s:** Personal meetings with top leaders of the Communist world – President Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow and Chairman Kim Il-sung in Pyongyang. Seven years later, he built a car factory in North Korea. Launched global educational, interfaith, and peace initiatives: **Family Federation for World Peace and Unification**, and Women's Federation for World Peace. Millions of couples receive **marriage blessing**.

Published *World Scripture – A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts*.

**2000s:**

Major efforts for peace in the Middle East. Launched the Universal Peace Federation.

120-nation speaking tour at the age of 85. Received many honorary doctorates.

Autobiography *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen* published 2009. Became a



bestseller in South Korea.

**2010s:** Died at the age of 92 in 2012. Dr. **Hak Ja Han Moon** continued to expand the activities throughout the world. Large religious groups with millions of followers started to embrace the teachings.

Sunhak Peace Prize was established to support individuals and organizations excelling in work for peace and environmental protection. **Large weddings** for thousands of couples every year.

**2020:** World Summit 2020, with thousands of VIPs, including many heads of state, held in Seoul.

Launch of global peace networks connecting parliamentarians, religious leaders, media experts, scientists, students, academics, and entrepreneurs. Continuing efforts for Korea's reunification.



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