

The British Family Gathering 2013

David Franklin
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It was early morning on Sunday 25th August in the grounds of Cleeve House in Wiltshire. The scene was desolate with the cool, damp and gloomy skies looking over the huge empty white marquee in the middle of the lawn.

One by one they came from all over the UK, from the smallest 3rd gen. babies up to an ever increasing group of grandparents and all ages, shapes and sizes in between. By 11:00 the marquee was full with 300 excitedly expectant congregants with another 100 younger children in the main hall of the house having their own service with Uncle Ashley Crosthwaite.



Back in the marquee the 43 LG band got the atmosphere alive with singing and our vivacious MC Pastor Matthew Huish led us in prayer and introduced the day ahead. We had a chance to remember and honour 10 of our eldest couples for their invaluable contribution to God's providence and Pastor Simon Cooper presented them each with a commemoration plaque, personalised to reflect their amazingly varied contributions to the Providence in so many different parts of the world.



Not forgetting the great contribution of some of our 2nd generation young people, Robert Haines introduced and presented the Grace Miller Award trophy to this year's winner, Patrick Hanna for his outstanding work with our young people throughout Europe.

Pastor David Earle gave a challenging and thought provoking sermon entitled "What will remain?". He ended with 3 points for our lives. Firstly, to have a healthy questioning mind (especially our young people), about our Movement and the direction of the Providence, but not cross the fine line into intellectual cynicism which damages the purity of our heart and motivation. Secondly, to reflect and discuss together the core meaning of Cheon Il Guk, where two become one and bring down God's spirit into our relationships, husband and wife, parents and children, ourselves and the people we are reaching out to, etc. And, finally, to follow True Father's example and direction to serve others, starting with those in the lowliest and suffering positions in our neighbourhoods, thus practising what we preach, and let our Heavenly Parent lift us up as it is written in Matthew 23 vs 11-12.



Teenagers praying deeply, in the park



7 Day DP Workshop – September/November 2013

After the service ended, still the weather was cool and heavy but out came the picnics and groups gathered all over the lawn to enjoy lunch and communion. The younger ones invaded the 3 bouncy castles and the screaming started.