

This week in history, August 23-29:

Michael Mickler
August 24, 2015

August 23, 2013

First Anniversary of True Father's Universal Seonghwa (Ascension)



Some 25,000 Unificationists, national-level leaders, academics and clergy from 60 countries attended the first anniversary of True Father's Universal Seonghwa at the Cheong Shim World Peace Center in Gapyeong, Korea on August 23, 2013. Those who could not physically attend the event participated via live Internet broadcast, which was sent out to 193 nations. Numerous events and exhibitions commemorating the life and achievements of True Father preceded the occasion including a Keepsake Exhibition that included 120 personal items such as True Parents' wedding clothes from 1960 and the suit True Father wore during his meeting North Korea Premier Kim Il Sung. The Memorial Ceremony included remarks by visiting dignitaries. The Hon. Jose de Venecia, former Speaker of the House in the Philippines said he "couldn't imagine" Rev. Moon passing away given his "endless enthusiasm" and "superhuman energy." At the same time, he noted, "I never met Father Moon when Mother Moon was not by his side. They were inseparable ... We are blessed that Mother Moon, who knows Father Moon better than anyone else does, is herself standing strong in carrying on the great work that Father Moon began." A highlight of the second part of the memorial was a Musical Gala Show, "Crown of Glory," which depicted True Parents' life course. Songs that True Father loved were sung and true Mother stated, "It feels as if True Father might stride forward with a bright smile and ask, 'How have you been?'"



August 24-30, 1980

True Father Hosts World Tuna Tournament in Gloucester, Massachusetts

True Father considered the ocean to be a solution to world hunger and a key to future human survival. He also wished to revitalize American seaports and spoke of the need for youth, especially inner-city youth, to be exposed to the challenges and excitement of sea-going life. An early effort to stimulate interest and excitement was the "World Tuna Tournament," which the Unification Church sponsored in Gloucester, Massachusetts, from August 24 to 30, 1980. Total prize money was \$100,000: \$70,000 for first prize,

\$20,000 for second, and \$10,000 for third, the largest cash prizes ever awarded in a tuna-fishing tournament. The tournament was controversial, given the negativity toward the Unification Church in the United States at that time, and many Gloucester fishermen boycotted the event. Nevertheless, 88 boats entered, 15 of which were part of the churches' fleet. In the end, True Father's New Hope boat won first prize, which was donated to charity. The World Tuna Tournament was a stepping stone toward the establishment of "Ocean Church" later in the year.



August 24, 1992

True Father's Declaration of Messiahship

In early July 1992, True Parents spoke in five cities around Korea at rallies sponsored by the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP). In his [speech](#), "The Reappearance of True Parents and the Ideal Family," True Father stated, "God chose me to be the Messiah." True Father intended this as a declaration to the Korean nation and had the speech reprinted in newspapers. On August 24, 1992, he made the same declaration, this time at a banquet at the Little Angels performing Arts School for dignitaries attending the first World Culture and Sports Festival. In his speech, titled "Becoming the Leaders in Building a World of Peace," True Father stated, "my wife, WFWP President Hak Ja Han Moon, and I are the True Parents of all humanity ... we are the Savior, the Lord of the Second Advent, the Messiah." True Father intended this to be a declaration on the world stage. It laid the foundation for his subsequent declaration of the Completed Testament Age and the globalization of the Holy Marriage Blessing during the 1990s.

August 25, 1992

International Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony of 30,000 Couples

True Parents conducted the International Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony of 30,000 Couples in the Seoul Olympic Stadium on August 25, 1992. It was the centerpiece of the first World Culture and Sports Festival (WCSF), held from August 19 to 30, and the largest Marriage Blessing ceremony yet conducted by True Parents. True Father stated that it marked the beginning of the worldwide Marriage Blessing era through which anyone, regardless of religion, could be blessed. He also noted that it occurred in the year that True Mother stepped forth as a public figure. Afterward, True Father announced that True Parents would conduct a Marriage Blessing for 360,000 couples.



August 25, 1995

International Holy Marriage Blessing of 360,000 Couples

True Parents took a major step forward in the August 25, 1995 International Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony of 360,000 Couples, which was the central event of the second World Culture and Sports Festival, held August 20 to 27. The main site was at Seoul Olympic Stadium where 36,000 couples and additional onlookers gathered. The remaining couples were linked simultaneously to the main ceremony at more than 500 satellite locations in 160 nations. True Parents extended an invitation to people of all religious persuasions to participate in the Blessing. As pointed out by Dr. Tyler Hendricks, president of the Unification Church in the United States at the time, "The Blessing isn't about changing your religion but about changing your character." For many

thousands of previously married couples who participated in the International Holy Marriage Blessing of 360,000 Couples, the Blessing was both a blessing of their existing marriage and a public expression of

their commitment to God, humanity and each other.

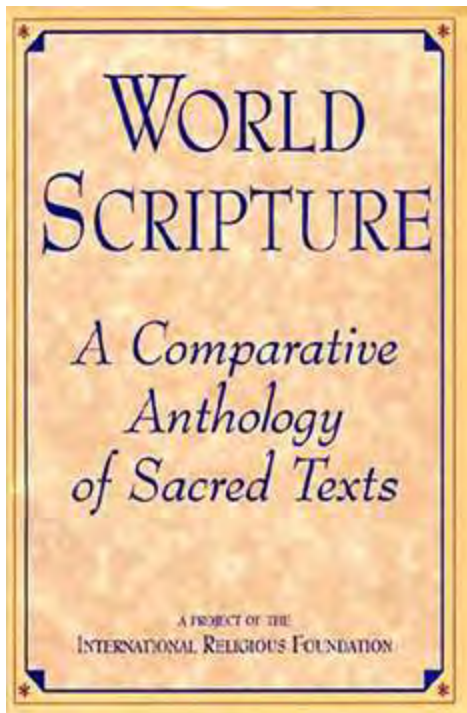
August 27, 1991

Inauguration of the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace (IRFWP)

On August 27, 1991, the inauguration of the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace was held at the Little Angels Performing Arts Center in Seoul, Korea. Some 1,200 people attended, notably representatives of twelve world religions including Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. Religious scholars also attended the event. Participants vowed to work together to further world peace and interreligious unity. In True Father's keynote address, "[Religion's Mission for World Peace](#)," he emphasized that peace can be attained when there is harmony among religious traditions and a movement to realize world peace is pursued based on the activities of the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace. (Materials provided by the FFWPU History Compilation Committee)

August 27, 1991

Unveiling of "World Scripture"



A highlight of the Inter-Religious Federation of World Peace's (IRFWP) Inaugural Assembly was the unveiling of "[World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts](#)." Commissioned by True Father at the first Assembly of the World's Religions in 1985, completion of the nearly thousand-page text required the labors of more than 40 scholars and religious leaders from every faith. "World Scripture" compares passages from the sacred writings of the world's great religions as they deal with all the significant issues of life: God, the purpose of life, sin, salvation and the spiritual path, and demonstrates that there exists a vast sphere of spiritual common ground. The text was edited by Dr. Andrew Wilson, professor of Biblical Studies at Unification Theological Seminary, and contains over 4,000 passages gathered from 268 sacred texts and 55 oral traditions. Religions represented include Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, Jainism, Sikhism, Shinto, Zoroastrianism, Baha'i Faith, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the Unification movement, among others. Scriptural texts are gathered around 165 topics and concerns shared by most or all religions.

August 28, 2006

Holy Blessing of the Third Generation



True Parents officiated a Holy Wedding Ceremony for the third generation of Unificationists, which included some of their own grandchildren (seen on stage). On the foundation of True Parents' victory in realizing God's kingdom of a peaceful, ideal world, a Holy Wedding Ceremony was officiated by True Parents on August 28, 2006.