

How I joined the Unification Church

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I lived in San Francisco during the late 1960s, and I was basically a shy person. My best friend was a Japanese-American named Michael Ozaki. Through him I began searching for more internal things.



I joined the US Navy in 1971 and became a radioman on a ship out in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. During those long hours, days and weeks at sea, I began to become serious in looking for a religious philosophy, but not a religion, since they really weren't accomplishing much in achieving peace.

After I came back from combat in Vietnam, I went home on leave to San Francisco. I decided to contact my friend, Michael, who was now attending UC Berkeley. While there, I saw this group of people with an interesting sign, so I took their photo.

After I went back to San Francisco, I went to the Civic Center where the main library was located, to find some books on religious philosophy. As I was about to enter the door, a pretty blue-eyed blond Swedish girl stopped me and prevented me from going in. Her name was Karrin Louise Westerdale. She wanted to invite me to her center where she and her friends wanted to talk to me about their group. I decided to go with her, it was impossible to hurt her feelings, and went to the Page Street Center.



As we sat down to lunch, they began to pray, and I thought, “Oh, a religious group.” We talked for a while, and then she asked me if I could come back that night to hear a talk. I told her I would think about it. I thanked her and left. As I was in the parking lot, a voice suddenly appeared and told me: “You’d better go to this thing, it’s going to change your life!”

Well, I decided to go. When I arrived, she was called downstairs and she had such a happy smile when she saw me. We then heard this Asian man (Papa-san Choi) hear his talk. Well, I couldn’t understand a word he said. Well, Karrin took me to the kitchen and gave me the entire talk again. This time I understand everything and was exactly what I was thinking about at that time. So, I told her: “Great, what do we do next!” The next couple of days, I went with her putting leaflets on cars and went with her to the Eighth Avenue center, which actually was a block or two from my grandmother’s house.

Well, my leave was up and I had to go back to Hawaii. Karrin found out that her spiritual sister, Carmela Acohido, was going to help open a church center there. When Carmela got settled she would write and I can visit.

A couple of months later, I did get a letter and the next chance I got, I went to visit. Carmela and the new state leader, Bruce Brown, were there with big smiles. After having one of Bruce’s famous taco dinners, we sat and talked. The next day, and without hearing any lectures, I moved into the center, all this time still being in the US Navy.

After a couple of weeks with them giving me the lectures on Divine Principle, Bruce and I sat in the brother’s bedroom for the last lecture. We had t-shirts and cut-off jeans on, no shoes of course, sitting on the floor and his notes strewn all over the floor. Before he finished, I realized then who those two people in the photographs really were.

I joined that very day, July 2nd, 1973, and have been in the church ever since.