

# British Family Annual Gathering 2014

Tom O'Connell

Arriving at **Cleeve House** early on Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> August, it felt great to be in the countryside. The majestic marquee was already up and filled with a hive of activity – setting the chairs in place, final touches to the stage, testing the microphones. The lawn was beautifully trimmed. Clearly Carlo and his staff had been working hard. Most of all it was a beautiful sunny morning with the sun promising to stay all day!

The HARP workshop was preparing for the graduation ceremony. Rucksacks and suitcases were neatly lined up in rows on the patio with team numbers in place. Very principled, very organised.

Brothers and sisters were clearly so happy to meet friends both old and new and taking time to enjoy the fresh air. By 11.00am the marquee was full with happy people, looking forward to the Sunday Service.



Samuel Read who had been co-ordinating the HARP Workshop all week was our MC. Giving a very warm welcome to everyone he then invited the Music Ministry band led by Chris Moloney to the stage who created an uplifting atmosphere with songs like "10,000 Reasons", "New Song of Inspiration" and several more.

Marva Sobambi who had spent day's preparing her prayer moved everyone's heart with the depth of her opening prayer.







The Sermon titled, “The Emergence of Parents” was given by Tim Read. Engaging with the audience throughout his sermon, he challenged everyone to reflect of the level of love we have towards others.

## PRESENTATIONS AND AWARDS



Ten STF graduates were acknowledged for their efforts with Samuel Raynbird tearfully sharing some special experiences and realisations. Miranda Gardiner was overjoyed to have had the opportunity to attend the Hawaii workshop with True Mother and shared some personal reflections.



Nearly 100 excited HARP members sang a beautiful song which they had prepared during their workshop and conducted by Ruth Johnson, our UK HARP Director.

The giving of awards is a very important and significant part of our UK Annual Gathering and this year was no exception. **The Grace Miller Cup** was awarded to Ruth Johnson as an outstanding 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. Elders were recognised with beautiful **plaques** for their generous giving of heart over many years. David and Patricia Earle, as acting national leaders, in the absence of Jack Corley presented the plaques to Bernard & Masako Chellew, Hamish & Chantal Robertson, Syed & Margaret Ali and Joan Langrick.

Certificates of appreciation were also presented to 4 Japanese missionaries Kimika, Yuri, Yoko and Seunhwa who have been working with our London communities and returned later to Japan.



## SPECIAL AWARD



David Franklin whom so many of us know, not only in the UK, but throughout Europe received a special award in recognition of over 36 years of service as General Affairs Director.

David Earle shared a moving testimony of knowing him over so many years. David was set to retire at the end of August 2014. More than 300 brothers and sisters gave both David and his wife Mary a standing ovation for several minutes. What a wonderful and spiritually uplifting service we shared together.



The weather was warm and families enjoyed their picnic lunches on the lawn or food from the BBQ prepared by Chris Frith.







The children had so much fun playing on the bouncy castle and slide. The older children and adults enjoyed volleyball and target shooting and the interactive game, *Just Dance*. In the main house serious table tennis competitions were taking place as well as board games such as *Seven Wonders* and *Ticket to Ride*.



Later in the afternoon Chris Moloney opened a 'live lounge' music session in the marquee where brothers and sisters of all ages shared their love of music and dance.

The day ended with closing prayer in the marquee led by David Earle.

Click [here](#) see more of the photos taken by Christophe Murphy.