

Dr. Edwin Ang Celebrates His 90th Birthday

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Edwin Ang and his wife, Marie

Dr. Edwin Ang is the former Executive Vice-President of UTS, serving from 1977-1994. His 90th birthday party was held at the Chinese Palace, a restaurant in New Jersey, near where Dr. and Mrs. Ang currently live with their second son, Dohi and his family.

An intimate group of 60 friends and family gathered to celebrate with Dr. Ang. This included the second and third generations of Dr. Ang's family: Joni, her husband and four children; Dohi, his wife and three children; and Jenny, her husband and three children. The presence of all three generations of Dr. and Mrs. Ang's family presented an edifying image of an ideal family. Jenny and her family had traveled all the way from Hong Kong for the celebration to complete the picture.

The dining room was carefully prepared with the utmost consideration. At the main table, seated with Dr. and Mrs. Ang, were representatives of UTS accompanied by their wives, Michael Balcomb, Hugh Spurgin, Michael Mickler, and Andrew Wilson; each was accompanied by their wives. Also there was Dr. Ang's long time fellow administrator at the seminary, Dr. Therese Stewart.



Dohi, after welcoming the guests, invited Dr. Spurgin to make a toast. Dr Spurgin recognized Dr. Ang as the "rock" of the American Unification movement. For me, that toast had special meaning, as I could only be impressed with his health and vigor. It is hardly an exaggeration that his appearance has hardly changed in the last 30 years since I first met him at UTS.

We all enjoyed a sumptuous feast of Chinese delights. It was a joy to see Dr. Ang's children tending to their parents as well as tending to the needs of their own little ones. His older daughter, Joni, shared some of her best memories with her father. At university, she had encountered many religions and new age groups. Her father, rather than cautioning her, encouraged her to be open, and study other teachings to help her evaluate the strength of her own religious tradition.

When I was a student at UTS, my wife, Robyn, worked with Dr. Ang as his secretary. Robyn mentions that it was Dr. Ang who planted the seed in her mind to pursue her own post high school education. It has meant a lot to her to finally achieve that goal with a degree earned at the University of Bridgeport. She also mentioned observing Marie's diligent effort to follow the doctors' advice to keep Dr. Ang on a low cholesterol diet. Indeed this may have contributed to his longevity.



Throughout the afternoon several people shared about their experiences with Dr. Ang. We also watched a video from Farley Jones, and his wife Betsy, from Hawaii. They gave warm and sincere words of appreciation and gratitude for their time spent with Dr. and Mrs. Ang and the wisdom and heart that they had shared. We heard a new song that Dan Fefferman had composed for Dr. Ang, then Prof. Wayne Miller also expressed his gratitude to Dr. Ang, and noted that the middle name of Godfrey, his oldest son, is Edwin in honor of Dr. Ang. It was pointed out that the UTS Founder had recognized similarity between Dr. Ang and the tortoise in the story, "The Tortoise and the Hare". Therese Stewart realized that she may have been in the role of the hare as her zodiac sign is indeed the rabbit.

His children prepared a video of some of the highlights from Dr. Ang's life. Originally from Eastern Java, Indonesia, it was clear that he had had a sense of his own destiny in America and anticipated a God-given pursuit in his life. Following that video, we were then treated to a classical music recital by a string trio of the grandchildren, including a "Happy Birthday" serenade.

The afternoon concluded with Dr. and Marie Ang sharing some thoughts with us. Marie spoke briefly and gave thanks and appreciation to the many friends and colleagues. Then Dr. Ang spoke, pointing out that he had not had too many opportunities to speak in public in recent years. He shared that he had asked God for three things. The first was to live until the year 2000. God granted him that. The next request was to continue to live until the year 2013. God granted him that. Finally his wish is to live until the year 2020.

Dr. Ang feels that the reason he has been granted such a long life is that he may continue to be "a cheerleader for Unification." It was clear that he was becoming more comfortable with speaking in public and went on to share some of his current academic pursuits. He has always been interested in the relationship of science and religion and the topic of, "The Unity of the Sciences".

Finally everyone in the room gathered for a large group photo as the restaurant staff quickly cleared the tables for their next event. It seemed throughout the event that they did not fail to notice that this was a gathering that was celebrating the life of a man from the East attended by friends from the West, and that the children were clearly the embodiment of the unity of the two worlds.

A big Thank You to all for your birthday wishes and kind comments to Edwin. He is deeply grateful to each of you for the part you have played in his life. God bless you all! - Marie Ang