

## Clifton, NJ Family Church celebrated their Ninth Annual Golden Age Club dinner

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The New Jersey community celebrated their 9th Annual Golden Age Club dinner on the evening of December 9 in the fellowship hall of the Clifton Family Church. The senior community welcomed seven new members who had turned 60 this year during this much-anticipated full-house event attended by nearly 100 seniors.

A young Unificationist-born couple, Branch and Naria Gaarder, acted as emcees, moving the program along smoothly and leading games and raffles. Upon invitation, community pillar Steve Edwards raised his glass and offered a toast in appreciation of the brotherhood and sisterhood during the many years the New Jersey community spent together in service to Heavenly Parent and True Parents.



Volunteers had prepared bulgogi, salmon and baked striped bass, generously giving their time to make the event a success. There was also a splendid spread of sushi and sashimi, provided by the nearby Sakura-Bana restaurant and served by Santa Claus and his helpers.

What would the annual dinner be without a testimony? This year Ryuju and Cynthia Nakai entertained the crowd with a meaningful yet humorous testimony about meeting the Unification Movement. In appreciation for their heartfelt sharing, Ryuju and his wife received a gift certificate for a weekend stay at the Wyndham New Yorker Hotel.

The evening's festivities included two games of Bingo, for which prizes were awarded. There was also a raffle, with the prizes including ginseng tea, crystal, gift cards from Sakura-Bana, Coach bags and flower centerpieces.



This year a youth serving staff donned "Peace Starts With Me" aprons and moved graciously around the tables, filling water glasses and later clearing away plates. However, their service did not end there. Midway through the program they took off their aprons and performed a dance number for the celebratory crowd.

Entertainment was also provided by Albert Insinnia, a church associate and Broadway professional, whose three songs roused the audience to shouts, laughter and applause. The Golden Age Dancers made a second appearance following last year's debut. This year, wearing obi-like belts, they moved in graceful coordination to the music of "Ku Nome Sarang," winning smiles and laughter from their adoring fans.

The evening concluded with a sing-along to "Winter Wonderland." In closing, Irene Sasao prayed that everyone might fulfill yet another year of service to Heavenly Parent and True Parents. Finally, a group photo was taken, followed by three cheers of Eog Mansei!

### **Reflections**

"It seems that time flies by faster and faster as we get older. The fellowship was heartwarming, especially seeing brothers and sisters that I had not seen for a long while. It was an unforgettable evening filled with joy, laughter and a warm, embracing spirit. If you aren't 60 yet, it is an event you can look forward to. If you are already 60, you can continue to be appreciated, loved and served by brothers and sisters who value you for being an elder, and treasure your contribution to God's Providence and True Parents. Thank you to all the staff, who invested their time and heart to prepare such a wonderful event." –Kathaleen Sato