

The First Holy Marriage Blessing in the USA - 13 American Couples

February 28, 1969



True Parents after officiating the 13 Couple Holy Marriage Blessing at Upshur House in Washington, DC

On February 28, 1969, at the historic Upshur House in Washington, D.C., True Parents blessed 13 American couples, who according to some interpretations represented the 13 founding colonies: six previously married and seven new couples. This was the first Holy Marriage Blessing outside Korea and the first of three that together came to be known as the 43 Couple Blessing.

Those blessed were Edwin and Marie Ang, Philip and Vivian Burley, George and Diane Fernsler, George and Sylvia Norton, Robert and Vivian Oswald, Vernon and Maxine Pearson, Carl and Linna Rapkins, Ken and Orah Pope, Galen and Patty Pumphrey, Wesley and Gladys Samuels, John and Marie Schmidli, Jon and Sandra Schuhart, and Fred and Jacque Stock.



Thirteen couples, representing the thirteen founding colonies, await True Parents' entrance



Brides preparing for the Blessing Ceremony at Upshur House

True Parents held a Marriage Blessing of 8 couples in Essen, Germany, on March 28, 1969, and a Marriage Blessing of 22 couples in Tokyo, Japan, on May 1, 1969. The 43 Couple Blessing was conducted on the foundation of the 430 Couple Holy Blessing conducted by True Parents in Korea the previous year and was intended to signify expansion to the worldwide level. True Parents celebrated the Blessing on the 20th day of their visit to the United States as part of their 1969 World Tour. Miss Young Oon Kim, who directed HSA-UWC America, stated that the Blessing of 13 couples (26 people) "was probably the largest wedding ever celebrated in America." Those numbers would be eclipsed many times over in subsequent years.