

Baptist Pastor Hopes For Unity In Strife-Torn Korea

By JIM PHARR
Staff Writer

The recently ordained minister of the Korean Baptist Mission here has voiced hope "for unity some day" in his strife-torn native land.

He is the Rev. Yoo-Bai Kim, 34, a native of Seoul, South Korea and a second year student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest.

Kim comes to Fayetteville each weekend to minister to the average attendance of 55 members of the mission sponsored by Snyder Memorial Baptist Church.

Although refraining from discussing Korean politics, Kim voiced his thankfulness that the U.S. Army remains in Korea to enforce the peace.

"Many Christians are still praying for unity (between South and North Korea and most Koreans hope not to have war," Kim said.

Kim was ordained at Snyder by a friend, Dr. Chang W. Choi, associate pastor of the United Korean Church in Washington, D.C.

The mission pastor since its beginning here in June 1975, Kim leads a Bible study at 1 p.m. and a worship service at 2 p.m. each Sunday at the Baptist church.

A highlight of the mission was a planned baptism of 10 church members on April 23.

During his Saturday visits to Fayetteville, Kim spends the time visiting congregational members, studying for his seminary classes and preparing his Sunday messages.

The mission, meeting in the church parlor, is in the Korean language and uses a Korean Bible translated from the Greek text.

"I emphasize the saving Jesus Christ and preach the basics of the Bible," Kim said.

Many in his congregation "have not had much Christian experience," he said.

Asked about his future plans, the minister said, "I feel I am a servant of Jesus Christ and I will follow the directions of my Lord."

Continuing, Kim said, "I believe my life is a gift from God. I want to share my life with the people who don't know Jesus Christ.

"God gave me today. I will do my best today for God."

The minister said his congregation has the problems of communication and frustration because of English-Korean language differences.

An English class is held on Saturday for the Korean people to reduce this difficulty.

Kim's parents still live in Seoul where he was involved with the large Kong-duk Church.

He formerly served as Lifeline Center (similar to Contact) in Seoul and attended the Korean Seminary.

Kim and his wife, Hae-sook, live on the Southeastern seminary campus.

The minister said he and his wife like Americans "very much." He said he has no problem with the seminary lectures but "I don't have time to talk with American people" because of his many duties.

Kim said his developing congregation here is helped each last Saturday night of the month in meeting together to share their meal and prayer and fellowship.

The minister said, "I hope to encourage the faith of my people."



Pastor's Ordination

Yoo Bai Kim, right, recently ordained pastor of the Fayetteville area's Korean congregation, stands with Dr. Chang W. Choi of Washington, D.C., who conducted the ordination ceremony. Kim has been pastor of the Korean Baptist Mission here since June 1975. (Staff photo — Dick Blount)