



Dongdaemun Social Welfare Center.

Photo courtesy of Sahmyook Welfare Foundation.

## Sahmyook Welfare Foundation

---

### KUK HEON LEE

Kuk Heon Lee graduated from Sahmyook University (B.A.), Newbold College (M.A.), and Sahmyook University (Ph.D.). From 1990 to 2009, he served as a pastor at Korean Union Conference. In 2010, he joined Sahmyook University as a lecturer and professor at the Theology Department. His research and teaching interests are in Church History. He wrote several books and published several papers on the subject. Currently, he is also the Dean of Planning at Sahmyook University.

---

Sahmyook Welfare Foundation (SWF) is a foundation organized in 2001 by the Korean Union Conference (KUC) for social welfare projects. The president of the KUC is concurrently serving as the chairman of the foundation

(SWF), and the director of ADRA Korea serves as a full-time director of the foundation. As of 2021 there are 30 welfare institutions (4 senior medical welfare institutions, 4 senior leisure welfare institutions, 8 senior welfare facilities, 3 senior job support institutions, 3 social welfare centers, and 1 local self-support facility) and 29 child-welfare facilities.<sup>1</sup>

## Organization

It was shortly after the outbreak of the Korean War in the 1950s that the Korean Adventist Church began to promote social-welfare projects. At that time the Korean Union Mission organized the “Social Rescue Committee” and organized the “KSDA Welfare Service Society” in 1958.<sup>2</sup> After ADRA was organized at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (GC) in 1983, the KSDA Welfare Service served as the ADRA Korea. In 1995 the “Sahmyook International Development and Relief Organization” was organized to carry out the full-fledged ADRA Korea project.<sup>3</sup>

It was in 1993 that the Korean Union Conference joined the government to systematically participate in social-welfare projects in Korea. On March 25, 1993, the Southwest Korean Conference was entrusted with the operating authority of the Duam General Social Welfare Center from the local government. Duam Social Welfare Center is a comprehensive social welfare facility built by Gwangju Metropolitan City, Jeollanam-do, and the Southwest Korean Conference opened this center on September 23 of that year and participated in the welfare center operation project in earnest.<sup>4</sup>

The Korean Union Conference, which confirmed its vision for social welfare projects through the operation of the Duam Social Welfare Center, entrusted and operated the following three additional social welfare centers in 2000; Donghae Senior Welfare Center (May 8), Dongdaemun Social Welfare Center (July 26), and Eden Senior Sanitarium Center (August 17). In particular, the Korean Union Conference organized the Department of Social Welfare at the 31st General Meeting of the KUC held in May 2000 and promoted the establishment of a Social Welfare Foundation.<sup>5</sup>

## History of the Foundation

In order to operate social welfare institutions professionally, the Korean Union Conference applied for the establishment of a social welfare foundation with the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 2001, obtained approval for the establishment of the foundation on August 14, 2001, and established the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation. The first chairman of the foundation was Pastor Gye-hoon Shin, president of the KUC.<sup>6</sup>

Since the establishment of the foundation, the Korean Union Conference has operated additional social-welfare institutions in cooperation with the local governments. On August 1, 2003, the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation opened the Samcheok Regional Self-Support Center and carried out social-welfare projects in Samcheok,

Gangwon-do. In 2004 the Senior Welfare Center, established in Jeongeup-si, Jeollabuk-do, was also entrusted with the right to operate by the Sahmyook Foundation.<sup>7</sup>

On July 28, 2005, the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation established and operated the Hope Family Violence Counseling Center in Dongdaemun-gu, Seoul, where the KUC is located, to save youth from Family violence. It was in 1995 that the KUC established the Youth Counseling Office (Phone of Hope) in connection with the Department of Counseling Psychology at Sahmyook University. Ten years later the KUC opened the Hope Family Violence Counseling Center to actively develop youth counseling and family welfare counseling. This institution was renamed the "Family Welfare Counseling Center" in 2013.<sup>8</sup>

In 2007 the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation's social-welfare project was expanded to Namyangju-si, Dangjin-gun, and Pocheon-si. Social-welfare centers established during this period included Namyangju Hope Care Center (March 16), Dangjin-gun Health and Family Support Center (May 1), and Pocheon Social Welfare Center (September 21).<sup>9</sup> By this time the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation's social-welfare projects were expanded to Hope Care Center and Family Support Center along with the General Social Welfare Institute and the Senior Welfare Center.

The Sahmyook Welfare Foundation's social welfare institutions continued to expand nationwide. In 2008 the Yangji Senior Welfare Center was opened in Jeonju, Jeollabuk-do.<sup>10</sup> In 2009 Dangjin-gun Happiness Sharing Welfare Center (March 31) and Multicultural Family Support Center (July 24) began to operate, and in September of that year, Icheon Sahmyook Nursing Home and Nowon-gu Health Family Support Center were newly opened.<sup>11</sup> The Sahmyook Welfare Foundation also opened the Multicultural Family Support Center in Nowon-gu in 2010 and the Infinite Care Center in Pocheon-si.<sup>12</sup> As such, various social-welfare institutions were operated under the SWF of the KUC.

2011 marks the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation of the KUC. From September 23 to 25 of this year, a spiritual training and workshop was held at the Anmyeondo Training Center for employees belonging to the welfare foundation. This training and workshop was the second of its kind following the event held in Yangpyeong English Village in June 2010. The workshop was attended by 189 employees from 22 institutions. Through this workshop, the Health and Welfare Department of the KUC had a time of harmony, information exchange, and spiritual sharing among employees working at social-welfare institutions.<sup>13</sup>

For five years from 2011 to 2015, the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation operated additional social welfare facilities in Jindo-gun, Hwaseong-si, Dongdaemun-gu, and central areas of Pocheon-si. In Jindo-gun a Senior Sanitarium Center was opened on February 17, 2011. Hyosim Day Care Center (January 5, 2012), Food Bank Market (January 18, 2013), and Education and Welfare Center (April 1, 2014) were opened in Dongdaemun-gu, Seoul, and became welfare institutions belonging to the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation. On October 14, 2012, the Infinite Care Network was established in Hwaseong-si, and the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation operated this facility. In

2015, according to the report of the 35th General Meeting of the KUC, the SWF operates 83 welfare institutions, and the number of people using them is 13,720 per day (about 4 million per year).<sup>14</sup>

In 2016 the Dangjin Southern Social Welfare Center was opened, and in March 2017 the Pocheon Local Self-Support Center was operated, and the Sahmyook Welfare Foundation continued to entrust new welfare institutions. However, as social conditions changed, welfare institutions gradually decreased. Due to the closure of eight social-welfare centers (2 in 2017, 2 in 2018, and 4 in 2019), the number of social-welfare facilities under the SWF was reduced to 75 at the end of 2020. However, 10,800 people per day (more than 2.5 million people) received welfare benefits at these institutions.<sup>15</sup>

## Role and Position in the Country

The Sahmyook Welfare Foundation is a specially organized foundation to support the professional operation of all social-welfare institutions belonging to the KUC and to expand this welfare project nationwide. After the foundation was organized, the KUC made rapid progress in social-welfare projects and developed into a religious organization operating up to eighty social-welfare institutions. Due to this specialized social welfare project, the Korean Adventist Church is serving as a good neighbor who directly meets the needs of society. Currently more than ten thousand people receive welfare benefits every day from social-welfare institutions belonging to the SWF. By promoting such dedicated welfare programs, many institutions received awards from the central government and local governments. The Korean Adventist Church is recognized as a reliable religious organization due to such social-welfare projects.

The SWF faithfully plays a role in supporting the missionary mission of the Korean Adventist Church. By being entrusted and operating welfare institutions throughout the country, it provides opportunities for Adventists to participate in social-welfare projects. In particular, the Adventists working at this welfare institution are doing their best to carry out the spirit of the Adventist Church while practicing God's love. By working based on this missionary spirit, missionary work is being developed in which many people return to God.

Sahmyook Welfare Foundation operates 19 community-welfare centers, 14 senior-welfare centers, and 33 child-welfare centers, including nine general social-welfare institutes, to provide community service, as well as exemplary social-welfare services in the field of senior welfare and child welfare.

## List of Chairmen

Kye Hoon Shin (2001-2004); Chung Kwon Cheon (2004 to 2005); Myung Kwan Hong (2005-2009); Dae Sung Kim (2010-2015); Chun Kwang Hwang (2016-2020); Sun Ki Kang (2021-Present).

*Address Book of Korean Union Conference 2021*. Seoul: Korean Union Conference, 2021.

*Church Compass*, April 1958.

*Korean Adventist News Center*. February 12, 2004; April 5, 2007; May 4, 2007; October 18, 2007; February 19, 2008; April 6, 2009; August 25, 2009; September 10, 2009; March 17, 2010; April 7, 2010; June 28, 2016.

Lee, Kuk Heon. *A History of Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church*. Seoul: Sahmyook University Press, 2020.

Minutes of the General Sessions of the Korean Union Conference. Seoul: Korean Union Conference, 1995, 2004, 2011, 2015, and 2020.

---

## NOTES

1. *Address Book of the Korean Union Conference 2021* (Seoul: Korean Union conference, 2021), 26.
2. *Church Compass*, April 1958, 36.
3. Minutes of the 30th General Meeting of KUC (Seoul: Korean Union Conference, 1995), 153.
4. Kuk Heon Lee, *A History of Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Seoul: Sahmyook University Press, 2020), 344.
5. "A Report of Social Welfare Department," Minutes of the 32nd General Meeting of KUC (Seoul: Korean Union Conference, 2004).
6. Permission number: Ministry of Health and Welfare No. 833.
7. *Korean Adventist News Center*, February 12, 2004.
8. *Korean Adventist News Center*, June 28, 2016.
9. *Korean Adventist News Center*, April 5, 2007; May 4, 2007; October 18, 2007.
10. *Korean Adventist News Center*, February 19, 2008.
11. *Korean Adventist News Center*, April 6, 2009; August 25, 2009; September 10, 2009.
12. *Korean Adventist News Center*, March 17, 2010; April 7, 2010.
13. Minutes of the 34th General Meeting of KUC (Seoul: Korean Union Conference, 2011), 66.
14. Minutes of the 35th General Meeting of KUC (Seoul: Korean Union Conference, 2015), 10.

15. Minutes of the 36th General Meeting of KUC (Seoul: Korean Union Conference, 2020), 7-7.

---

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000