

She's free to think again after 2 years in a cult

By MARGARET MILLER

[Denelle is tiny, barely five feet and scarcely 100 pounds.]

Her voice is soft, her manner shy. She seems young, but takes a few minutes of conversation to accept the fact that she's passed her 21st birthday. And for all these reasons, it's hard to find her selling flowers and candy at bar-closing time in the tough area of San Diego.

That's what she was doing, to help sell the coffers of the Unification Church of the Korean known as Rev. Sun Myung Moon when her parents received a telephone call from San Diego police during the pre-dawn hours of a cold February morning this year.

"The officer asked if we knew where our daughter was," Denelle's mother remembers, "and I said we knew only that she was somewhere in California with the Unification Church, and we wanted we knew more."

"The officer was worried about her being in a neighborhood where a shooting had just occurred, and he wanted to put her on a plane and send her home. But she refused, just stating she was doing the Lord's work."

BUT NOW Denelle is back with her family in Westland. She's undergone "deprogramming," a term used by those who fight cult groups. She says she now understands how mind-control techniques were used on her, and she is sure she won't again be drawn into the Unification Church.

She's even thinking about getting back to working with horses, the activity she loved before a summer encounter two years ago when a chance encounter in a Minnesota town began a life detour for her.

Denelle and her family want to tell her story because they know it's one that has been lived by thousands of young people

They hope that by telling it they may bring new understanding of cult groups to the area's young people and their parents. They've asked that their family name be kept confidential, but they also have promised they may help them get to persons who contact them through the Citizens' Freedom Foundation, an anti-cult organization in the metropolitan area.

DENELLE'S STORY began just as she finished high school in Minnesota. Her family was moving to Westland, and she had elected to stay behind, living with her grandmother, working in a restaurant and caring for her three horses.

Kathy Buttery, Plymouth resident active in the Citizens' Freedom Foundation, pointed out that Denelle's position—being on her own for the first time—made her typical of the kind of young person recruited by the Unification Church and other groups like it.

"Many freshmen are recruited on college campuses," Miss Buttery said. For Denelle, that first contact was a young woman with a big box of flower arrangements. They met as Denelle was leaving work one afternoon.

"She said she was selling them for the Unification Church, a Christian youth organization," Denelle said. "I was pretty relaxed at the time, so I bought one for my grandmother."

Her new acquaintance invited Denelle to a meeting the next day, she remembers, and then there was a weekend five-state seminar in Minnesota that she was urged to attend.

From there, it was a short step to taking off work for a weekend to go in a convoy of vans to New York's Madison Square Garden for a special session at which Moon was to be the speaker.

SOME OF THE REACTIONS Denelle reported show how she was brought into the cult.

'When I joined I felt it was what God wanted me to do. But after I saw the patterns, and how they were used on me, I felt kind of disgusted, disappointed. I'm still a religious person.'

At the beginning, she said, "they asked if I was religious and showed me a picture of Rev. Moon, and I thought he looked like a nice man."

Then, at the first meeting, "they went into their whole doctrine. Not much really presented, because it was just, coming and there were a lot of lectures and a lot of singing."

Denelle decided to go to hear Moon. "I thought the only way to find out was to go it from the leader," she explained. "He said he came to bring a new truth and other religions were man-made and he had a lot of biblical things to back up what he was saying."

It was in New York, she said, that "there was more talking and singing, and I was convinced this was what I wanted to do."

BACK IN MINNESOTA, Denelle said, she sold her horses and closed out a couple of bank accounts, giving the money to the Unification Church. She was then sent to a center in Iowa to learn to "win and teach."

Before then, there was announced a general reorganization, and she became a member of a Mobile Fundraising Team (MFT).

MFT members, she said, put in 16-hour days selling things like flower arrangements, candy and candles.

"We'd get up at 7 a.m.," Denelle explained, "and go to businesses and homes and make street sales and go into the industry

all areas. We'd work weekdays until about 1 a.m. and weekends until after the bars closed."

"Weekdays, we didn't go out mornings because the shopping centers didn't open until noon, so we'd hear lectures and listen to tapes in the morning and then go to centers and door to door for the rest of the day."

She said daily quotas expected varied according to "talents." "But hardly anyone brought in less than \$100 a day," she remembered, "was about \$120."

DENELLE LEFT without informing her team leader, without returning for her clothes, without even retrieving her glasses from the van in which the fund-raisers were traveling.

"I was confused," she remembers. "I wanted to search out the meaning, find out if what I had been taught was the truth." But it was several weeks—a time of planning to return, then deciding to stay just a bit longer with her family—before she agreed to talk to people about her beliefs.

The "deprogramming," reported Denelle's mother and Kathy Buttery, followed the methods used by the controversial Ted Patrick, a Californian who has become well known for getting young people out of the clutches of cult groups.

Denelle said she was doing, "Denelle said later 'The Unification Church had had problems with Ted Patrick, and some who had come back knew about him."

spirits were in it. I didn't believe that, but I had it cut away."

IN RETROSPECT, Denelle thinks it was doubt about the Unification Church and its teachings that were cropping into her consciousness when she started having personal problems with members of her team.

"I was having feelings and getting my own feelings hurt," was the way she put it. These problems, one April day while she was fund-raising in California, led her to enter a telephone booth and place a call to her family in Westland.

Her mother described that call to a meeting of the Citizens' Freedom Foundation, the first to be held in this area.

"She said she wanted to come home," the mother told the group gathered in Holy Cross Lutheran Church of Livonia, "and we told her to stay right there in the telephone booth."

"We made a couple of telephone calls to American Airlines and explained the situation, and they arranged for her to get the flight to Detroit the next day."

DENELLE LEFT without informing her team leader, without returning for her clothes, without even retrieving her glasses from the van in which the fund-raisers were traveling.

"I was confused," she remembers. "I wanted to search out the meaning, find out if what I had been taught was the truth."

But it was several weeks—a time of planning to return, then deciding to stay just a bit longer with her family—before she agreed to talk to people about her beliefs.

The "deprogramming," reported Denelle's mother and Kathy Buttery, followed the methods used by the controversial Ted Patrick, a Californian who has become well known for getting young people out of the clutches of cult groups.

Denelle said she was doing, "Denelle said later 'The Unification Church had had problems with Ted Patrick, and some who had come back knew about him."

THE PROCESS went on for a day and a night, and it was all talk, often biblical talk, Denelle's mother said.

"There was no violence," she added. "Either my husband or I was with her all the time, and quite a bit of the time our family pastor was there too, because he wanted to know more about cults."

"We sat with Bible in our hands, discussing the teaching of the Unification Church, looking for proofs in the Bible, discussing what that book actually does say."

The talk went on a long time, added Miss Buttery, one of the deprogrammers, because "when you get something going, you can't stop."

"Deprogramming," she said, "is like breaking a record that has been playing—asking questions for which no answers have been programmed into the member's brain."

A DEPROGRAMMED Denelle is still sorting out feelings about the last two years.

She says she can "see where Moon got some of his ideas" and still thinks some of them are right. But she also can see how cult methods were used on her—the cutting off from family, the repetition, the aura of love, the overwork and resultant fatigue designed to prevent questioning.

"Towards the end of the deprogramming," she said, "I felt kind of disgusted, disappointed."

She still considers herself a religious person, she added, but if any of her younger brothers or sisters talked of joining any cult group, "I'd show them they were wrong—tell them about the patterns of cults and how they are used," she said.

She also said parents should be more aware of the mode of operation of groups like the Unification Church, Children of God, The Way, and others.

"Those who have questions about groups that may be involving members of their family can get in touch with CFF by writing Box 224, Uica, 48077," Kathy Buttery said.

She also recommended a new book by Ted Patrick, "Let our Children Go," for information on the entire subject of cults.

For Church Directory Information Please Call 644-1100 Ext. 224

Your Invitation to Worship

For Church Directory Information Please Call 644-1100 Ext. 224

First Baptist Church
Riverside and W. 1st St., Birmingham, Mo.
Rev. J. M. Miller, Minister
The J.W. Smith
Gifts H. Smith Jr.
Box 22, Armstrong, Emeritus
Church School 9:00 A.M.
Worship Service 10:00 A.M.

FIRST CHURCH OF GOD
Farmington Hills
2115 Powers Road
W. 13 Mile & W. 1st St.
Farmington Hills 474-5419
Church School 9:15
Morning Worship 10:00
Evening Service 7:00
Worship Service 10:00 A.M.
Worship Service 7:00 P.M.

St. John American Lutheran Church
23225 Gile Road Farmington
Pastor Charles Fox 474-0544 or 474-4399
Worship Service 9:00 A.M.
Nursery Provided

ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
143 E. Square Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills
2 1/2 miles east of Woodward 336-2233
Worship Service 10:00 A.M.
SUMMER SCHEDULE
Worship Service 10 A.M.

UNIVERSITY HILLS CHURCH
Christian Reformed
Worship with Us at 11:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M.
26711 Farmington Rd. at I-496
477-1450 Dr. J. H. Ellis 474-0111

Beverly Hills United Methodist Church
20000 W. 13 Mile at Evergreen 646-9777
Worship 10:00 A.M.
Church School 10:00 A.M.
Nursery through High School
Minister William Verheul

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church
A.L.C.
5631 North Adams Road
1/2 Mile North of E. Long Lake Rd.
SUNDAY 9:00 A.M. Family Worship Service
9:30 A.M. Sunday School
MONDAY 10:00 P.M. Weeknight Service
Fred W. MacLean, Pastor
Dorcas F. Schuler, Pastor
MI 6-0941 MI 6-0124

Salem United Church of Christ
33000 Eight Mile Road
Farmington Hills
Eino M. Toivola, Pastor 474-2579
WORSHIP AND SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 A.M.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
33000 Eight Mile Road
Farmington Hills
Eino M. Toivola, Pastor 474-2579
WORSHIP AND SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 A.M.

ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH
26335 W. Chicago Rd.
Redford Twp. 937-2120 46239
Rev. Michael E. Baras, Pastor
Divine Liturgy - Sunday 10:00 A.M.
Divine Liturgy - Holidays 10:00 A.M.
Saturday Vespers 6:00 P.M.
Sunday School - Sunday 9:45 A.M.
Come and worship with us!

NORTHBROOK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
14 Mile and Lahser Roads
SUMMER SCHEDULE
Morning Worship and Church School 10:00 A.M.
Pastor L. J. Ferguson, E. W. Dunn
W. W. Gibson
Phone: 612-0700

FIRST APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH
26325 Haintred Road Farmington Hills
474-9709
Raymond H. Toivola, Minister 474-6554
SUMMER SCHEDULE
Morning Worship 10:00 A.M.
Evening Service 7:00 P.M.

St. Andrew Lutheran Church
LCA
6255 Telegraph Road
Birmingham North of Maple
WORSHIP SERVICE
Sunday Church School 10:30 A.M.
Thursday Church School 4:45 P.M.
Charles William Richter 646-3207

St. Martin's EPISCOPAL CHURCH
The Rev. Robert L. Miller, Pastor
24697 Grand River Avenue
No. Seven Mile Road Corner
Services: Sundays - 8 and 10 a.m.
Nursery at 10:00 a.m.
For further information 525-3000

Bloomfield Hills Christian Church
The Community House
380 South Bates, Birmingham
Sunday 10:00 A.M. Bible School
11:00 A.M. Worship
7:00 P.M. Prayer Service
Wednesday 7:15 P.M. Bible Study
Joseph P. Lukowski, Pastor
851-8516

Franklin Community Church
United Methodist on Franklin's Village Green
SUMMER SCHEDULE
Service of Worship 10 A.M.
Nursery Care
Senior Minister, Frank B. Cowick
Associate Minister, J. Chester Stubbs

Community Congregational Church
27800 Southfield Road
11 Mile Lathrup Village
Jackson E. Turner, Minister
10:00 A.M. Service
"Are you really Christian?"

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH
335 W. Maple
Birmingham
SUMMER SCHEDULE
SUNDAYS 9:00 A.M. Holy Communion
10:00 A.M. Morning Prayer
H.C. for Sunday of Month
WEDNESDAYS 7:00 and 10:00 A.M. Holy Communion

St. Andrew Lutheran Church
LCA
6255 Telegraph Road
Birmingham North of Maple
WORSHIP SERVICE
Sunday Church School 10:30 A.M.
Thursday Church School 4:45 P.M.
Charles William Richter 646-3207

Christ Church Cranbrook
Pastor
1 Cranbrook at Long River Road
Bloomfield Hills
7:45 a.m. Holy Communion
(St. Dunstan's Chapel)
8:30-9:45 a.m. Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer and Service
(Nursery and Church School through 1st grade)
Wednesday, 7 a.m.: Holy Communion
Phone: 644-3216

The Congregational Church of Birmingham, U.C.C.
Woodward at Cranbrook
Bloomfield Hills MI 6-4511
SUMMER HOURS
Worship Service 9:30 A.M.
Minister: Rev. Charles O. Erickson
Minister of Education: Rev. Verne E. Arnes, Jr.

Kirk in the Hills
1540 W. Long Lake Rd.
Dr. James F. Anderson, pastor
Guest Minister
Rev. Dr. Conrad H. Mason
Pastor, Third Presbyterian Church, Rochester, New York
Worship Service, 9:30 and 11:30 a.m.

Community Congregational Church
27800 Southfield Road
11 Mile Lathrup Village
Jackson E. Turner, Minister
10:00 A.M. Service
"Are you really Christian?"

FARMINGTON HILLS BAPTIST
On Middlebelt Road Between 12 & 13 Mile Rds.
Worship 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
Bible School 9:45 a.m.
Family Night - Wed 7:30 p.m.
Rev. Fred G. Ferris - Pastor 451-0310
A CONSERVATIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1509 West Maple at Pleasant
Ministers: James W. Wright, G. Bryn Evans
John H. Bunce, Thomas H. Beaven
Worship Service 8:30 and 10:00 A.M.
Church School 10:00 A.M.
Nursery Care provided

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
1669 WEST MAPLE at CHESTERFIELD (611-2010)
BIRMINGHAM
The Reverend F. Morgan Roberts, Pastor
Associates: Charles A. Sommers, Edward E. Craxton, Gerald S. Crawford
SUMMER SCHEDULE
Worship and Church School 10:00 A.M.

Christian Science Churches
FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST
BIRMINGHAM
191 Chester at Willis
SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 A.M.
WEDNESDAY TESTIMONY MEETING 8:15 P.M.
CHILD CARE ROOM Sunday 10:15 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.
READING ROOM 355 East Maple 441-7915
Open Mon. & Tues. 9:30 - 5:30 & 7:00 - 9:00 Wed. & Sat. 9:30 - 5:30
Thurs. & Fri. 9:30 - 4:00
except Sunday and holidays

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FARMINGTON
Richard Duncan, Pastor - Phone 474-0350
33406 SHILAWASSEE
FARMINGTON ROAD
SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 A.M.
MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 A.M.
EVENING SERVICE 7:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY 7:30 P.M.

Covenant Baptist
NOW IN TWO LOCATIONS
West Maple Junior High
Lahser Road - North of Maple
West Bloomfield
Church School 9:45 A.M.
Morning Worship 11 A.M.
18790 Jas. Cassano Service D
Duluth
Morning Worship 9:30 a.m.
Church School 11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening 6:30 P.M.
Wed. Evening 7:30 P.M.
Dr. Wm. F. Kessler - Pastor Edward A. Libby
Call UN 4-7878

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST
FRANKLIN-MEADOWLAKE
Maple at Inlander
SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 A.M.
WEDNESDAY TESTIMONY MEETING 8:15 P.M.
CHILD CARE ROOM Sunday 10:15 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.
READING ROOM 355 East Maple 441-7915
Open Mon. & Tues. 9:30 - 5:30 & 7:00 - 9:00 Wed. & Sat. 9:30 - 5:30
Thurs. & Fri. 9:30 - 4:00
except Sunday and holidays
All are welcome at our Church Services and the Reading Rooms