



# Roots and Branches

Periodical of the Mennonite Historical Society of BC

*"What we have heard and known  
we will tell the next generation."*

Psalm 78

## Table of Contents

Editorial .....	2
Letter to the Editors.....	2
Future Events.....	3
Perspectives on Peacebuilding from Laos.....	4
Laos Christian Church Celebrates 30 years .....	5
Vietnamese Christian Church: an interview with Ken (Canh) Ha ..	6
A Talk with Yoshio Fujii .....	8
Addendum on David and Mary Balzer .....	10
Mennonites and Japanese in the Fraser Valley During World War II .....	10
Postscript: the Pacific Co-op .....	12
Book Review .....	13
Martin Luther's Der Kleine Katechismus .....	15



*Vietnamese refugees fleeing  
Vietnam, 1984. Photo:  
U.S. Navy, Public Domain.  
Source: Wikipedia*



# Editorial

By Robert Martens

This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the fall of Saigon to the armed forces of North Vietnam. The disastrous American incursion into the civil war in Vietnam is only one example of Western misunderstandings of Asian culture and politics. British Columbia has a long history of racism against Asian newcomers, and in the early days of Chinese immigration, race riots against the “Yellow Peril” took place in Vancouver. The Chilliwack Chinatown twice burned down under suspicious circumstances. Punjabi immigrants lived under constant threat. The story of the internment of Japanese-Canadians during World War II is well-known.

Today the BC Mennonite conferences are fortunate to have Asian congregations in their midst. Mennonites themselves have historically suffered discrimination; perhaps their own experiences have made them more welcoming of new Canadians. Still, Asian Mennonite congregations, distinguished by cultural differences and often hampered by lack of facility in English, sometimes fit uneasily into the larger framework of Mennonite conferences. Hopefully these differences can be matters of celebration rather than alienation.

This issue is focusing on Mennonites and Asians, as well as Mennonite Asians. Within the few pages of this magazine, we can only touch upon a few Asian groups. And it is necessary to apologize right off the top for lumping such a vast plethora of cultures and peoples into a single term, “Asians.” Mennonites themselves are hugely diverse. Asian populations comprise well over one quarter of the world’s population and are diverse beyond imagining. Just one small example of Asian diversity is apparent in the following historical synopsis by Ken Wong of the Richmond Peace Chinese Mennonite Church. Like “ethnic” Mennonites in previous decades, Chinese Mennonite congregations have felt the impact of language differences:

Richmond Peace Chinese Mennonite Church (RPCMC) was planted by the English-speaking congregation of Peace Mennonite Church (PMC) on September 1 of 1987 under the leadership of Pastor Palmer Becker. The ministry was started in response to the growing need to serve the increasing number of Cantonese-speaking immigrants who were arriving in the city of Richmond at that time. Pastor Jack To was the first full-time staff member of this ministry, serving alongside his wife, Rose, during the church’s first few years.

Over the next decade, Peace Chinese Church grew

slowly but steadily. Today, the church is comprised of roughly one hundred regular attendees and largely operates independently of PMC, though RPCMC still enjoys a close relationship with its mother church. While the congregation experimented with serving the broader Chinese congregation by introducing Mandarin into its services, it has largely remained focused on serving the Cantonese-speaking population of the city. Since 1999, Richmond Peace Chinese Mennonite Church has been served by Pastor Joseph Huen, his wife, Wendy, and his two lovely daughters. At the time of writing, the church is focusing on growing its young families and children ministry.

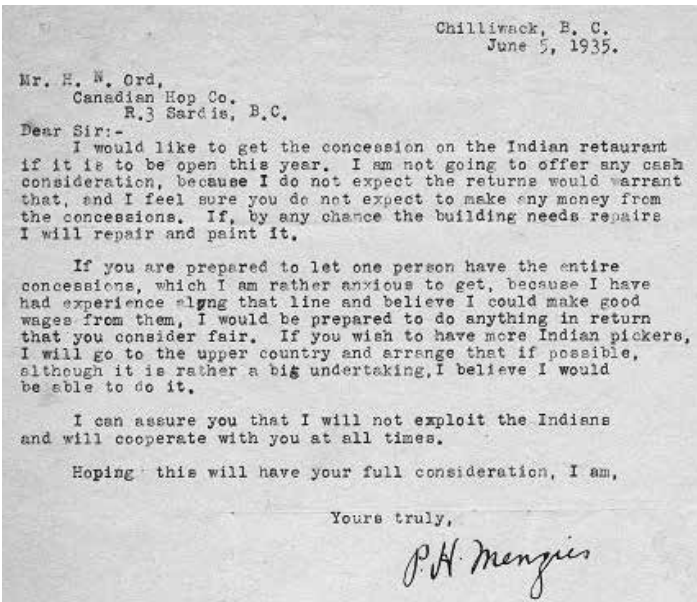
*Ken Wong is an active member of RPCMC and is serving as the current chair. He has been a member of the congregation since 2002.*

## Letter to the editors

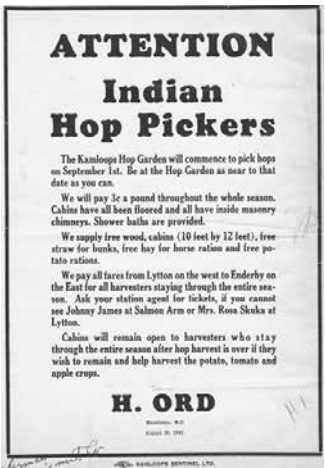
Larry Nightingale’s “Letter to the editors” (R&B June 2015) and Robert Martens’ article, “Hop yards and the Mennonite Village of Yarrow” (R&B Nov. 2014), mention Aboriginals and Mennonites working in the hop fields in the Chilliwack area. Both authors emphasize the important role of Henry and Helen Ord, summer residents on Majuba Hill overlooking Yarrow and Sumas Prairie, in the hop industry during the second quarter of the twentieth century.

Recently, at the invitation of John Neels, I examined several stacks of documents that had been left in the Ord house. I was intrigued by two documents relating to Aboriginal hop yard workers.

The first document (1935) is a letter from P. H. Menzies to Henry Ord requesting the concession for the



*cont'd next page*



“Indian restaurant” in his Fuggle Hop Garden fields. Evidently Henry Ord was a considerate employer of Aboriginal workers, given Mr. Menzies’ assurance that he would “not exploit the Indians.” The second document (1942) is an advertisement for “Indian Hop Pickers” for the Ord hop yards in the Kamloops area, where many Mennonite youth worked during the fall months. I would conjecture that during the 1930s the Aboriginal picker cabins in the Chilliwack area were more basic than the Kamloops cabins as advertised, possibly without wooden floors.

*Elmer G. Wiens  
Vancouver*

## Future Events

1. Stephanie Stobbe will be guest lecturer at the MHSBC fundraising banquet, 3 October 2015, 6:00 pm, at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 3471 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford, BC. In addition to Stobbe’s lecture, Mabel Paetkau and Henry Neufeld will speak on their experiences in refugee assistance. Don’t miss what will surely be a fascinating evening. Tickets can be purchased at the MHSBC office for \$25. Online option: the [www.mhsbc.com](http://www.mhsbc.com) website is now set up to simultaneously handle banquet tickets and memberships using PayPal’s shopping cart on the web page.
2. Rosedale Mennonite Church, a member of the

- “traditionalist” Eastern Pennsylvania Mennonite Conference, will present their church and faith at an event November 13, 2015 at 7 pm. Venue: Clearbrook MB church, 2719 Clearbrook Road. Admission is free and light refreshments will be provided.
3. The annual MHS genealogy workshop will be held November 21. Watch the MHSBC website for further details.
  4. The MHS office and archives will be moving to new quarters in the Mennonite Museum, 1818 Clearbrook Road, just off Highway 1. Watch for announcements in the media on the Museum’s grand opening.

*At the October 3 banquet, Stephanie Stobbe will speak on the following:*

## From Refugee to Citizen: The Mennonite Role in the Resettlement of Indochinese Refugees in Canada

According to UNHCR’s (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) 2014 report, there are 59.5 million forcibly displaced migrants worldwide, including 19.5 million refugees. Canada is regarded as a humanitarian and compassionate country that has a long tradition of resettling refugees and other forced migrants. In 1979 and 1980, Canada settled over 60,000 Indochinese refugees, more refugees per capita than any other nation. During this first wave of Southeast Asian refugees, Canadians responded in extraordinary ways, opening their communities, developing organizations, and creating legislation to welcome these forced migrants. In March 1979, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a global, non-profit organiza-

tion, signed the first “umbrella agreement” with the federal government to allow constituent churches to sponsor refugees under MCC, thereby expediting the process.

Stobbe’s presentation will focus on MCC’s role in resettling Indochinese refugees, including the “boat people,” and the experiences of Mennonite sponsors and refugees during the late 1970s and early 1980s. She will also be sharing personal stories of her family’s traumatic escape, resettlement, and integration in Canada; and discussing the current response to the “boat people” crises on the Mediterranean Sea and the Bay of Bengal that is reminiscent of what occurred forty years ago.





# Perspectives on Peacebuilding from Laos

By Maureen Epp

Most scholars feel a strong identification with the subject matter they research and teach. For Dr. Stephanie Stobbe, Associate Professor of Conflict Resolution Studies at Menno Simons College, the connection is also a deeply personal one.

Born in Laos, Stobbe was a child while the Vietnam War (or the American War, as it is called in Southeast Asia) and its aftermath were ravaging the region. Her immediate family emigrated to Canada in 1979, arriving in Winnipeg in December to the surprising new phenomena of snow and sub-zero temperatures. Because of her childhood experience of war's violence and disruption (she recalls moving from place to place for safety, and hiding in holes dug beneath houses), Stephanie always thought "there must be a better way" to deal with conflict. While studying at the University of British Columbia, she heard about courses in mediation and conflict resolution. Her interest was sparked, and she went on to complete graduate degrees in peace and conflict resolution through Antioch University and the University of Manitoba.

Stobbe's research, which will be published later this year as *Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding in Laos: Perspective for Today's World* (Routledge), examines grassroots approaches to conflict resolution traditionally practised in her birth country. Laos offers an ideal setting for studying peacebuilding, and not only because of its long history of surviving conflicts imposed by foreign powers. Laos is also a remarkably multi-ethnic country, with 49 officially recognized ethnic groups – each with its own language, food, dress, and other customs – that peaceably co-exist in a country less than half the size of Manitoba.

While Western Models of mediation often assume an "objective" professional is the best person to help solve a dispute, the Lao Conflict Resolution Spectrum identified by Stephanie rests on a strong cultural value of respect for parents and other community leaders. Someone seeking to resolve a conflict will first go to parents or other senior relatives for counsel, then meet with a community elder or Buddhist monk if a solution is not found, and finally – if necessary – take the issue to a special village mediation committee.

An important Lao custom is to use certain rituals to mark the end of a dispute and the restoration of broken relationships. Both the public *soukhoun* and the private *soumma* ceremonies involve sharing food and exchanging gifts, a way of bringing people together and resuming

relationships and lines of communication within family and community. While the Conflict Resolution Spectrum and ceremonies like the *soukhoun* and *soumma* are indigenous to Lao cultures, Stephanie suggests that their underlying principles can be found in other models of conflict resolution and other cultures. First Nations sweat lodge ceremonies and smudging, for example, or the Christian practice of communion can be seen as rituals that strengthen and restore relationships within a community.

Earlier this year, at the first-ever international conference on mediation practices in Asian countries, Stobbe was pleased to see a growing interest among academics, mediation practitioners, and lawyers in traditional grassroots or community mediation. Her hope for countries like Laos is that even as formal legal systems become established, the traditional mediation methods that have been effective for so long will also continue to be practised.

This article originally appeared in the Spring 2015 issue of *The Blazer*, the alumni publication of Canadian Mennonite University. Maureen Epp works with faculty to secure funding for their research and assists with other aspects of research administration. She holds degrees in historical musicology, piano, and church music.

Notice of special general meeting: At some point during the banquet evening, a few minutes will be spent dealing with an MHSBC bylaw change. Present bylaw 2.5 reads: "Donations to the Society shall be deemed to be applications for membership unless the donor signifies otherwise. Therefore an amount equal to the annual membership fee shall be deducted from the first donation received in each calendar year and a donation receipt shall be issued for the balance." Proposed change: eliminate bylaw 2.5 and replace with "Bylaw 2.5 rescinded." With the removal of the bylaw, the Society will be able to implement a process which separates donations and membership dues, providing greater clarity.



Dr. Stephanie Phetsamay Stobbe

# Lao Christian Church celebrates 30 years

By Louise Bergen Price

At the Lao Christian Church's thirtieth anniversary celebration on December 10, 2014 in the Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church gym, Pastor Sylang Kaneboodtra described a typical experience of many South Asian refugees upon their arrival in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s. Most had only a smattering of English. After greetings from coordinators and sponsors amid a jumble of names and strange words, there was a long drive through unfamiliar landscapes until they finally arrived at a house or apartment. The table was heaped with food, and their hosts motioned it was time to eat. After the meal, the hosts made a point of showing them around, opening the well-stocked fridge and the cupboards filled with dishes. Showing them the beds made, the towels and soap in the bathroom. They explained, in mime, how to use the stove and washing machine.

The refugees smiled and admired everything. When, they wondered, would their hosts take them to their new quarters in a Canadian refugee camp? Finally, when the Canadians made motions to leave, the refugees gathered up their belongings.

Their hosts were astonished. No, they exclaimed. This is your home now. This is where you will live.

This scenario, Sylang said, was repeated many times and had occurred to him personally as well.

Most of Eben-Ezer's sponsoring families understood the refugee experience first-hand, having themselves arrived in Canada as displaced persons in 1948. As reports hit the news of thousands of South Asians fleeing Communist regimes and ending up in camps in Thailand, they wished to help. When the call came from MCC for families to sponsor boat people to Canada, they sprang

into action. In short order, ten groups of ten families each declared themselves willing to sponsor a family for a year. Eventually, thirteen Laotian families were sponsored in this way. Helping to bridge the culture gap were long-time missionaries Jake and Dorothy Giesbrecht (Olivet Mennonite) and Eben-Ezer members Peter and Helen Sawatzky.

In 1980, Sylang Kaneboodtra, a Laotian refugee living on Vancouver Island, heard about the Eben-Ezer group of Laotian newcomers and moved to the Fraser Valley to become their spiritual leader. In 1983, the group formed the Lao Christian Church with thirteen members; five years later, it became affiliated with the Conference of Mennonites in BC.

Most of the refugees came as families with young children. Many kids had never held scissors or crayons, and of course had no knowledge of English games and nursery stories. Pastor Sylang asked for volunteers to help prepare the children for kindergarten; the apartment building on Countess where many of the families lived gave access to their activity room. Before long, a group of up to twenty children, along with many of their mothers, participated. Eben-Ezer also ran English as a Second Language classes for the new arrivals.

Cultural sharing went both ways. Sponsoring families learned to eat delicious foods such as sticky rice dipped in spicy sauces. At special celebrations, Laotians took pride in wearing traditional dress and sharing their culture through song and dance. More than thirty years later, the Lao-Canadian community still hosts twice-yearly gatherings where former sponsors and former refugees meet as fellow Canadians and friends. This was the case at the thirtieth anniversary celebration, a joyous time of fellowship with good food, singing, storytelling, and music. Peter Sawatzky reminded everyone of the responsibilities we all have as Canadian citizens; Pastor Sylang delivered a brief sermon; and congratulatory messages were presented from Eben-Ezer, Mennonite Church BC, and Abbotsford



Lao Church 30th anniversary celebration. (L. Price photo)



physician Dr. John Chan.

As of 2015, the Lao Christian Church has forty-two official members, and meets Sunday afternoons for Bible study at Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church. Yet although it is a small group, its influence extends far beyond its numbers, and it plays a vital role in keeping alive the Lao culture and language in the Fraser Valley, as well as in reaching out to other South Asian Canadians.

Few of the Laotian Canadians have any desire to return to Laos, Pastor Sylang remarked in a recent interview. Canada is home; young people are leaving behind their language and traditions. He, along with his Laotian

friends, are still immensely grateful to Canada and to those who sponsored them. “We so appreciate the love shown to us. We call this the ‘big miracle,’ a big gift. We lose our home, our future. It’s as if we’re so thirsty we almost died, and someone gave us a drink of cold water.”

*Reference: Pilgrimage Project at <http://www.pilgrimage-project.com/lao-christian-church/>  
Sylang Kaneboodtra was interviewed by Louise Bergen  
Price 25 July 2015.*



*Early baptism, Lao Church. (Sylang Kaneboodtra, photo)*



*Preschool story time. (L. Price photo)*

## Vietnamese Christian Church: an interview with Ken (Canh) Ha

By Robert Martens

It has been a long journey for Kenneth Ha: from war-torn Vietnam to a ministry of peace in Abbotsford, BC. Canh Ha – Kenneth, or Ken, is his “English name” – was born into a middle-class Catholic family in Vietnam, where warfare had been the norm for many years. His Catholicism, though, was a religion not of choice but of birth. In 1974, while serving in the South Vietnamese military, Canh attended an evangelical service and made the commitment to consciously live as a Christian. Even so, it was not until police ordered the evacuation of the area in which he was residing that he prayed the first prayer he now considers authentic.

In an interview (22 Apr. 2015) at an Abbotsford coffee shop, Ken Ha expresses his opinion that, “in good times, people don’t really care.” It is the times of suffering, he says, that drive people to God, mercy, and compassion.

As South Vietnam was crumbling before the advances of North Vietnamese Communist forces led by Ho Chi Minh, Canh Ha made a prayerful pledge to Christian service. For a time he lived in the huge and dangerous city of Saigon, using his ability “to nurture good relationships with people” to remain anonymous. God, says Ken, “protected me in a special way”: his Communist neighbours never uncovered his past.

On April 30, 1975, Saigon fell to the armed forces of North Vietnam, and Americans evacuated in panic and disbelief. Canh Ha ended up living in a refugee camp for seven and a half months. Being multilingual – he speaks three languages – Ha was asked to work with UNICEF (United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund) to help facilitate the processing of refugees in the camp. Ha dealt with up to 1,500 cases per day. For years after-

wards, he would be greeted by people with long memories, grateful for the services he had performed for them in the camp.

Ken Ha was finally able to emerge from the refugee camps and in 1982 was living in Red Deer, Alberta. The culture shock – and weather shock – must have been great. As the first Vietnamese Christian in the area, Ken joined the local Alliance Church. He realized the need for education, however, and when a minister suggested study at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, Ken readily agreed. He graduated in 1988 and also studied one year at the MB Biblical Seminary. Ken Ha then served with a Vietnamese congregation which met at Bakerview MB Church in Abbotsford. It was “a good group,” he says, but it eventually failed. In 1999 Ha left for Worcestershire, Massachusetts, where he pastored a Vietnamese General Baptist congregation.

Kenneth Ha believes in the necessity and power of deed and action; he is dedicated to the healing of “brokenness,” as he puts it. So it was that, while he was living in the United States, back in Canada his name was being mentioned as a possible pastor for a new Vietnamese congregation in Abbotsford. His deeds of kindness were again being remembered. In 2013, he was urged to return to Canada to help start up and then pastor the Vietnamese Christian Church.

The membership was small, he says, but he contended at the time to Mennonite Church Canada that “we should focus not on numbers but on people.”

In 2014 the Vietnamese Christian Church began meeting in Emmanuel Mennonite in Abbotsford. Currently attendance totals approximately thirty-five, and of those, fourteen are children. In our interview, Ken Ha insists repeatedly on the importance of future generations. “The first step of immigrants’ life, they can’t do much,” he says, “not until the second generation.” Consequently the Vietnamese Christian Church services have a strong educational component, and sermons, displays, and so on are bilingual – Vietnamese and English. We have been called on to “teach the gospel,” says Ha. Children can learn to read, for example, by studying Scripture; the discipline of Bible study is transferable to work in the arts, sciences and medicine.

“Worship services become a learning centre,” says Ken. He adds that at the services “the children sit in the first two rows, and the pastor’s in the back row. That way the ministry will last.” Ken’s own children are well educated, studying in some of the best universities in North America. Tragically, he lost one of his sons a few years ago.

Bilingualism in church services is not only a function of practicality. Ha’s ideal of the church is that of an inclusive and serving community. Bilingualism means, “You belong to us. We do not use language to exclude you.” Each individual is meant to be treasured: “We don’t underestimate anyone,” says Ken. “We don’t focus on the speaker but on the message.” The church should be a com-



*Easter service at Vietnamese Christian Church. (Ken Ha photo)*

munity, he says. “We shouldn’t depend on one man.”

Neither should churches, Ken argues, focus too much on financing. “Sometimes we’re talking about money too much.” The church should be about personal relationships, he contends, and about groups of people working together for the common good. “We can’t tell people salvation by grace,” says Ken, “until we do something for them. That’s the key.” And the family, says Ken Ha, is at the heart of community. Families often need healing. “We are happy when they say ‘we are a broken family’ rather than ‘we are a perfect family,’” he says; in other words, the focus of the church is on the wounded rather than on the successful. “If we understand brokenness in the world,” says Ken, “we have a large church.”



# A Talk with Yoshio Fujii

By Robert Martens

In terms of numbers, the small Mennonite Brethren (MB) Church in Japan might not be considered a “success.” Its story begins in 1949, when Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) sent Henry and Tina Thielman to pioneer relief work in areas of Osaka devastated by American bombing during the Second World War. Ruth and Rhoda Ressler travelled to Japan that same year to assist in the work of reconstruction. Between 1950 to 1953, twelve MB missionaries, with Ruth Wiens playing a key role, arrived in Japan, and the church planting that ensued was sustained but slow. The first three baptisms took place in 1951. In light of the slow growth, the Mennonite Brethren Board of Foreign Missions (as it was then known) decided early on to consolidate church planting in the Osaka area. The Japanese Mennonite Conference (Nihon Menonaito Burezaren Kyodan) was established in 1958.

The MB mission in Japan was resolved from the first that local church work become indigenous and independent, and that national leaders be trained. To that end, the Japanese Mennonite Brethren Bible Institute was founded, located in the former MCC centre. Within four years, three pastors had been ordained and licenced. The school was renamed Osaka Biblical Seminary when, in the mid-sixties, it entered into a cooperative relationship with two Baptist groups. This arrangement, however, did not last long, and in 1971 the Japanese MB Church took over full control of the school and renamed it once again, this time as the Evangelical Bible Seminary.

Other wings of the Mennonite church were simultaneously at work in Japan. In fact the MBs arrived a year later than the Mennonite Church, which sent Carl and Esther Beck and Ralph and Genevieve Buckwalter to do Japanese mission work in 1949. In 1950 the General Conference assigned Lenore Friesen to language study in Japan in preparation for the work of church planting; and the Brethren in Christ began Japanese mission outreach in 1953 with its own representatives, Peter and Mary Willems. Interestingly, the four Mennonite denominations “co-operated” by carrying out their work in different locations. The Mennonite Church concentrated its mission outreach on the northern island of Hokkaido; the General Conference, on the southern island of Kyushu; the Brethren in Christ, on the main island of Honshu; and the Mennonite Brethren, in and around Osaka, Japan’s third largest city.

Since 1986, the Japan Mennonite Brethren Conference has grown steadily, but still numbers have remained small, with twenty-eight congregations and 1,810 members in 2009. Why has the growth of Mennonite churches, and indeed of Christianity in general, been so slow in Japan? In 1549, Christianity had blossomed in Japan after the



Yoshio Fujii. ([www.mennonitebrethren.ca](http://www.mennonitebrethren.ca))

arrival of Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier; by the next century, there were 300,000 Christians in the country. The shogunate and imperial government of Japan had calculated, initially, that the establishment of a Catholic Church in the country would counter the power of Buddhist monks. Eventually, however, it was observed how the Spanish Empire had seized control of the Philippines after the people there had been converted to Catholicism. This was too threatening to the Japanese feudal government: Japan was closed to foreign traders, and Christianity was banned outright. Those who clung to their Christian beliefs were executed. In the best-known incident of that brutal clampdown, twenty-six Christians, including six European missionaries, three indigenous Jesuits, and seventeen lay believers – three boys among them – were crucified in Nagasaki in 1597. For many years afterwards, Japan remained stubbornly isolationist.

The regime was forced by U.S. military forces to reopen its doors to trade with the West in 1853. In the ensuing years, it was only natural that strong currents of anti-colonialism and mistrust of foreigners persisted. Japanese felt that Christianity was an integral part of the encroachments of Western colonialism, and was a threat to their ancient religions of Shintoism and Buddhism. And although Western technology was welcomed, it was also believed that the individualistic spirit of Christianity and the West was a menace to the Japanese traditions of community and working in units. Under these conditions, Christian missionaries found their work difficult.

Then the Japanese world was changed forever by the Second World War. Most Christian churches in Japan ceded to the spirit of the time and gave themselves up to the glorification of war and empire. By the time the War ended – after the dropping of atom bombs by American

forces on Hiroshima and Nagasaki forced the Japanese surrender to the Allies – the reputation of these churches had been severely tarnished. In recent years, military expenditures by the Japanese government have increased, and in some ways a destructive nationalism continues to be nurtured: the Yasakuni Shrine remains a place of honour, even though there are war criminals among those enshrined at the site. Protestant and Catholic churches in Japan generally have little or no peace theology.

And the culture of materialism, as in the rest of the First World, is extraordinarily tenacious in Japan. In this context, with what difficulty will Anabaptist-Mennonite values of peace and community survive in this rapidly changing nation?

\*

In 2014, Yoshio Fujii was named as the recipient of the Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission’s archival internship. He was chosen from “a strong field of candidates from various universities and colleges in the U.S. and Canada” (Isaak). During May and June of 2014, Yoshio toured the four MB archival centres in North America: Fresno, Hillsboro, Winnipeg, and Abbotsford. I interviewed Yoshio at the Abbotsford office on June 17, 2014.

He is waiting for me at a table stacked with documents he is studying. Soft-spoken and gracious, Yoshio seems more than willing to tell his story. He greets me, bows, and motions me over to a quiet corner of the room.

Yoshio Fujii was born in Osaka but grew up near Tokyo. He was not born into a Christian – let alone Mennonite – family, but in his youth found a new life as a Christian. His boss was stricken with illness, and Yoshio went to visit him in a hospital. It happened that the boss was a Christian, and during the visit pressured Yoshio to give his church a try the following day, Sunday. As an employee, Yoshio says, “I could not resist the idea.” But the rituals at the church service, the “standing up and sitting down,” were bewilderingly new to him. Nevertheless, Yoshio began studying the Bible on his own, eventually concluding that “the words and deeds of Jesus are beyond human ideas or creation.” He “accepted Jesus as my Saviour,” and was baptized into an independent church at the age of 25. (The “independent church movement” in Japan began in 1901, and was an attempt to establish a Japanese Christianity independent of the West and Western principles.)

In 1995, Yoshio started attending the Hiroshima Mennonite Brethren Church, which, he says, had a similar theology to the independent church that had baptized him. The Hiroshima congregation was a small group of about forty people and had been founded by missionaries from Dinuba, California. Yoshio had earned an undergraduate degree in pharmacy, and was working in that profession when he experienced an overwhelming feeling that he needed a life change. He was making a good wage: “I was

happy with my success,” he says. But his work often took him into hospitals, and when he met a father who had just lost his son, Yoshio “felt a gap between me and him.” The suffering of the father in losing a son – “the worst thing that can happen,” says Yoshio – convinced him to enter a profession where he could help individuals who were dealing with loss, “people in grief and disappointment.” And so it was that Yoshio Fujii enrolled at the Evangelical Biblical Seminary in Osaka and, after graduation, became a minister in the Japanese MB Church.

Between 2002 and 2008, Yoshio served as minister at Hiroshima MB, and between 2008 and 2012 at Semboku Christ Church. The latter was also founded, he says, by Mennonite missionaries from Dinuba. In 2011, however, Yoshio faced two severe crises: the first was personal, when his father died at age 69; the second, national, the devastation of the tsunami following an earthquake. It was, he says, a time of “personal misery.” He found that he had “no idea how to respond to crisis.” Yoshio felt that he could perhaps find some answers to his distress in the “rich heritage” of Anabaptist-Mennonite theology, and he applied to the Fresno Pacific Biblical Seminary (formerly MB Biblical Seminary), where he graduated with a Masters of Divinity degree in 2014.

Mennonite theology, Yoshio remarks, is as varied as the groups it represents, but as he sees it, there are two basic principles within it that are relatively universal: community-based discipleship, and a peace witness. With regard to the idea of community, Yoshio says, pastors in Japan tend to be individuals of power, and the congregation are mere “guests.” Anabaptist theology, he points out, emphasizes equality and sharing. As for the peace witness, Yoshio says, “in Japan we say we are pacifists, but it is on a theoretical level.” He wants to articulate the cause of peacemaking as “holistic,” something practised “in daily life.” His archival work is an attempt to discover, or rediscover, these Anabaptist-Mennonite values, and take them back with him to Japan.

Yoshio and his wife, Megumi, who stayed with him during his two years of study in Fresno, have no children. He is returning to Japan with the offer of a half-time position in ministry at Nagase Christ Church, founded by David and Mary Balzer. Yoshio was deeply moved, he says, when he visited the graves of the Balzers in the Yarrow Cemetery. He is deeply grateful for the sacrifices that missionaries to Japan endured, and for their willingness to suffer for the cause.

“How do you think,” I ask Yoshio, “with your head or your heart?” It is a strange question, perhaps, and a spontaneous one. Yoshio is a cerebral man, and clearly quite brilliant, and yet he radiates warmth. Yoshio smiles. Perhaps, he says, he is constrained too much by his head but, he continues, “I want to be transformed by the Holy Spirit.”



# Addendum on David and Mary Balzer

By Roland Balzer

David and Mary Balzer served under the MB Mission Board from 1953-59. While there had been some early post-war receptivity to the preaching of the Gospel, by the time that David and Mary began their church-planting work ten years after the end of World War II, the Japanese had overcome what David called “their earlier fatalism following their defeat by Christian forces,” and church attendance had fallen off sharply. After two years of intensive language study, they moved to Nagase, a suburb of Osaka, and poured themselves into developing relationships with Japanese people. David taught an English Bible Study at nearby Kinko University to reach out to Japanese students. A church was soon birthed, with some folks even burning their family “idols” (Buddhist or Shinto statuettes from domestic shrines) in public. Within three years, converts had been disciplined and national leaders were effectively leading the church. When David contracted tuberculosis in 1959, necessitating the family’s return to Canada, the Balzers left behind a well-established congregation able to carry on without direct missionary involvement.

It was a highlight of David and Mary’s later years, when two of the Japanese couples, the Kadotas and the Satos, early leaders in the church, travelled to Canada from Japan in 1994 to thank them for their sacrifice and service in bringing the Good News to Nagase. It was deeply mov-

ing for David and Mary to be acknowledged so personally.

*Roland Balzer is the chaplain at Tabor Village in Abbotsford. Prior to joining the care team at Tabor, Roland served as pastor of Highland Community Church in Abbotsford for 18 years, following several years of pastoral leadership, public school teaching and administration in Fort McMurray, Alberta. Roland holds a B.A. in English, a teaching certificate in Elementary Education, an M.A. in Theology, and a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education. Roland is the son of Mary and David Balzer. (www.tabor-home.org)*

Sources:

Beck, Carl C. and Takanobu Tojo. “Japan.” 2010. *GAMEO*. [www.gameo.org](http://www.gameo.org)

“Christianity in Japan.” Last modified 2014. *Wikipedia*. [www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org)

Friesen, Harry. “Nihon Menonaito Burezaren Kyodan (Japan Mennonite Brethren Conference).” 2010. *GAMEO*. [www.gameo.org](http://www.gameo.org)

Isaak, Jon. “Summer 2014 archival intern announced.” 2014. *Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission*. [www.mbhistory.org](http://www.mbhistory.org)

“Japan Mennonite Brethren Conference.” Last modified 2011. *Global Anabaptist Wiki*. [www.anabaptist.org](http://www.anabaptist.org)

## Mennonites and Japanese in the Fraser Valley During World War II

By Brian Froese

*This an excerpt, subtitled “World War Two,” from a paper written several years ago with the title “A Piece of the Valley. Mennonite Settlement in British Columbia, 1928-1948.” There is a copy of the entire paper in the MHSBC library. The excerpt has been slightly edited for clarity.*

In an irony of history, one of the greatest influences on Mennonite economic expansion was World War Two. [Though Mennonites were] pacifist in theology and conviction, the war eventually proved beneficial to their economic vitality. Although there was heavy borrowing during the eight years prior to the Second World War, their marketing problems were solved with the decision by the Canadian government to buy all the berries grown in order to ship them to Great Britain for the war effort. T. D. Regehr argues that the basic hypothesis concerning

[the values of] Mennonites in Canada during the 1940s is loyalty to the adopted homeland and accommodation to the government, so long as basic principles are not violated – and this can be seen through the use of war contracts concerning berries. This assimilation through the breakdown of the traditional rural economy as a result of World War Two preceded other aspects of assimilation to come.

Prior to the Japanese evacuation in 1942, the Japanese formed the Pacific Co-operative Union which searched for markets while limiting production. With the development of the Mennonite Yarrow Growers’ Co-operative, the two groups sought markets and found the war contracts with the British Government most profitable. The lucrative British market, enhanced by the removal of Japanese competition in 1942, increased the Mennonite fortune. In the time following the Japanese eviction, [the

Mennonites] held almost seventy percent of the berry market in the Lower Fraser Valley. With the odd hand wave to “brotherhood economics,” this organization [the Yarrow Co-op] remained essentially secular in its function and application.



*Japanese-Canadian boat being confiscated by Royal Canadian Navy officer, 1941. Public Domain from Wikipedia*

In 1942 the land belonging to the Japanese was confiscated, giving a virtual monopoly to the Mennonites. At the time, the Japanese-Canadian population made up three percent of British Columbia’s workforce, having concentrated on fishing and agriculture. They had turned marginal lands in the Fraser Valley into productive farms, so that by 1942 they produced eighty-three percent of the province’s strawberries and forty-seven percent of its raspberries. After Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, Prime Minister King declared war on Japan; [he was] aware of what might happen to the Japanese living in Canada. Initially he saw no reason for evacuating the Japanese. However, by February 1942 the rising anti-Japanese sentiment on the Pacific Coast pushed the Canadian government to concede, and [it ordered] the evacuation of 22,000 Japanese aliens and citizens on February 27, 1942.

The racial divide which split West Coast society was not new to World War Two. It went back to at least the 1850s when the European culture in the province felt threatened economically by the Japanese, a people they feared through such stereotypes as their economic competitiveness, high birth rate, loyalty to Japan, and their unassimilableness. This combined with the regional sense of isolation from the rest of the country to fan the flames of anger and fear. Investigations by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) concluded in 1940: “This office does not consider that the Japanese of British Columbia

constitute a menace to the state” (Ward 290-1). A year later, on December 7, 1942, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, King described the Japanese in a radio address as “correct and loyal” in their behaviour (Ward 296-7). This did little to comfort the province.

Still, the orders to evacuate the Japanese were passed and carried out. On March 4, 1942 the British Columbia Security Commission, formed to carry out the uprooting and removal of the Japanese-Canadian population, was operational. All adult Japanese males were ordered to report to the RCMP for the date of their removal to the work camps, and on March 16, the long stream of Japanese families began to file through the Livestock Building at Hastings Park in Vancouver. From there they were dispersed eastward, having signed over their property to the Custodian of Enemy Property.

However, with the evacuated population responsible for the majority of the berry production in the province, the government could hardly afford a collapse in those areas. On January 23, 1943, an Order-in-Council was passed under the War Measures Act which granted the Custodian of Enemy Property the power to dispose of the land taken, without permission of the Japanese owners. This sudden economic vacuum was quickly filled, and in the Fraser Valley, primarily by Mennonites. [The Department of] Veterans Affairs thought, and felt quite strongly, that the land should be reserved for war veterans upon their return from the war, and were upset by the Mennonite purchases.

Land not sold was leased through the Custodian of Enemy Property and this proved to be a disaster. The leases were only granted for one-year terms (in case the government wanted to use [the land]), giving little incentive for the leasee to improve buildings or replant berries which, in any event, needed two to three years to mature and bear fruit. As these lands went to ruin, the Mennonites came to control the majority of the berry production, and when price ceilings were raised in 1943 their fortunes turned around, but only after they took land not under the control of the Veterans Land Administration. What had happened with the Japanese evacuation was the opening up of opportunities for the Mennonites to lease land. They established themselves as berry farmers, and when the ceiling on berries was raised, that combined with [the lucrative] British war contracts so that – when life outside the Veterans Land Administration was achieved – they were able to exploit this for a profit.

Local agitation against the Mennonites came with this increase in [ownership of] land. While Mennonite sons had survived the war on farms and in alternative service, many sons of many [non-Mennonite] families had died in World War Two. It was reported in *The Vancouver Sun*

*cont’d next page*



on March 20, 1943 that protests against the Mennonites in the Fraser Valley had been lodged. At the annual meeting of Associated Boards of Trade of Fraser Valley [that took place] in New Westminster, there was protest against Mennonites as President Gordon Towers declared: “If it took a Pearl Harbor to get the Japanese out of the coast area, it will take a similar disaster to influence Ottawa to remove the Mennonites” (“Mennonites Protested as Valley Evil”, *Sun*, 16). If, according to Towers, the Mennonite “menace” were not curbed, it would overrun the Fraser Valley just as the Japanese had. He went on to say, “It was the stupidity of the Ottawa government which brought them into the country in the first instance. The government played into the hands of land speculators on the Prairies.” [Also at the meeting,] A. E. Campbell of Sumas charged the Mennonites of buying all the best land in the Sumas region after the Mennonites had arranged to buy one hundred acres at \$100 per acre. The executive committee was told to draft a resolution protesting the Mennonite settlements and send it to Ottawa (*Sun*, 20 Mar. 1943, 16).

Events like this, and others like the “Kill all Germans” slogan painted on a Mennonite church in Vancouver, caused the Mennonites to turn inward. This impulse was, however, abated as they focused their energy on war relief work, mostly under MCC. The net result of this activity was to slowly draw the Mennonites into the larger community.

*Brian Froese specializes in the twentieth-century North American West with particular interests in evangelical religion, conservative politics and Mennonites in a trans-national context involving Canada and the United States. Brian studied history at the University of Winnipeg (BA),*

*Regent College (MCS), and the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California (Ph.D). He taught at Providence College (now Providence University College) in Otterburne, MB (2003-2005) before joining Canadian Mennonite University in 2006.*

Some of the sources used:  
Adachi, Ken. *The Enemy that Never Was: A History of the Japanese Canadians*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1976.  
Cohn, Werner. “The Persecution of Japanese Canadians and the Political Left in British Columbia, December 1941-March 1942.” *BC Studies* 68 (Winter 1985): 3-22.  
Epp, Frank H. “The Struggle for Recognition.” in *Call to Faithfulness: Essays in Canadian Mennonite Studies*, Henry Poettker and Rudy A. Regehr, eds. Winnipeg: Canadian Mennonite Bible College, 1972.  
Lehn, Cornelia. *Frontier Challenge: A Story of the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia*. Clearbrook: Conference of Mennonites in BC, 1990.  
Regehr, Ted. “Canadian Mennonites and the Japanese Berry Farmers in British Columbia after the Evacuation of 1942.” *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 10 (1992): 87-100.  
Regehr, T.D. “The Economic Transformation of Canadian Mennonite Brethren.” in *Bridging Troubled Waters: Mennonite Brethren at Mid-Twentieth Century*. Paul Toews, ed. Winnipeg: Kindred Productions, 1995.  
Sunahara, Ann. *The Politics of Racism: The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians During the Second World War*. Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 1981.  
Sunahara, Ann. “Report of the Department of Labour on the Administration of Japanese Affairs in Canada, 1942-1944.” in *Two Reports on Japanese Canadians in World War II*, Department of Labour of Canada. New York: Arno Press, 1978.  
Ward, W. Peter. “British Columbia and the Japanese Evacuation.” *The Canadian Historical Review* 3 (Sep 1996): 289-308.

## Postscript: the Pacific Co-op

By Robert Martens

Some years ago, while researching the story of the Yarrow Co-op (officially, the Yarrow Growers’ Association), I interviewed a former Co-op employee who told me the following story. Just before the Japanese internment took place in 1942, he had travelled over the Fraser River to Mission, where he met a Japanese-Canadian farmer, still working his land. Are you not aware, said the Co-op man, that you have been given a deadline to clear out, or the government will do it for you. It will never happen, responded the farmer, my family has been living in Canada for generations.

In a day or two, the farmer had lost his entire property.

Ten years previous, in 1932, one hundred growers had gathered at the Japanese Hall in Mission in order to create the Pacific Co-operative Union (popularly known as the Pacific Co-op). The Great Depression was well underway, and times were tough. Cooperative action could help eliminate the middlemen, who were squeezing every last penny from farmers working on their own. The membership of the Pacific Co-op was mostly Japanese-Canadian, but the directorate – presumably for public relations and

business reasons – was of half Asian, half European origin. The business manager was a likeable man named J. B. Shimek.

Shimek had a good working relationship with Mennonite farmers, and later with the Yarrow Co-op. It is to the credit of area Mennonites that they worked so well with Japanese-Canadians; perhaps they felt some kind of kinship as mutual “outsiders” to the mainstream population. In the early years of the Pacific Co-op, Mennonite growers shipped much of their produce through this Japanese-Canadian controlled organization. The Pacific Co-op eventually became a model for the Yarrow Growers Association, founded in 1936.

And then, amid the racist hysteria of World War II – and of course the nation of Japan did pose a genuine threat – the internment of west coast Japanese-Canadians was ordered in 1942. The Pacific Co-op did linger on until 1973, when its property was sold to Westvale Frozen Foods; later it was formally dissolved as a legal association. Before the final dissolution, however, as many of the original Japanese-Canadian members as possible were tracked down and paid out by the Co-op – a small compensation for the 1942 injustice.



*Japanese-Canadian internment camp.  
Photo public domain from: [www.data2.collectionscanada.gc.ca](http://www.data2.collectionscanada.gc.ca)*

Mennonite farmers did profit from the expropriation of Japanese-Canadian lands, and in those hard economic times did so with little hesitation. Before 1942, however, the relationship between the two ethnic groups was a healthy one. In the interviews I conducted, Shimek and the Pacific Co-op were invariably spoken of with affection.

Martens, Robert. “Bill Schellenberg: A Common Cause.” In *Windows to a Village: Life Studies of Yarrow Pioneers*. Robert Martens, Maryann Tjart Janzen, & Harvey Neufeldt, eds. Kitchener: Pandora Press, 2007.

## Broken Lights

Book review by Ron Dart

Harry Loewen. *Ink Against the Devil: Luther and His Opponents*. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2015. 332 pp.

*Our little systems have their day;  
They have their day and cease to be:  
They are but broken lights of Thee,  
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.*  
- Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892, Poet Laureate 1850-1892)  
from *In Memoriam*

There are moments in history in which seismic shifts take place in the landscape of thought and public life, and one such was the multi-faceted Reformation of the sixteenth century. There are many significant thinkers and activists in the early decades of the 1500s but there can be no doubt that Martin Luther towers above many of the theologians, exegetes, ecclesial activists and public intellectuals of his time. Luther is often seen as the prime mover and shaker of the Protestant Reformation, and the multiple fragments

*cont’d next page*



of Christianity that emerge post-Luther are part of his line and lineage. There is much to ponder in the complex life and writings of Luther, but stepping inside the head of Luther – and particularly how he dealt with opposition – is more than worth the meditation for a variety of reasons. *Ink Against the Devil: Luther and His Opponents* is a must-read tome by Harry Loewen, especially as we inch ever closer to 2017, the 500th anniversary of Luther’s 1517 launch of the Reformation.

There are thinkers and activists who are ironical, are aware of life’s complexity, and lean towards unity and concord – such individuals tend to perceive themselves as finite and fallible, seeing through a glass darkly, holding but a broken light of that which is far beyond their ken. There are other thinkers who tend to see their read of ultimate and penultimate reality as the fittest, finest and best – purism of the highest kind – and those who differ with them are viewed as compromisers and deniers of the truth. Bearers of broken lights or holders of the true light? Luther certainly stood within the latter tribe.

*Ink Against the Devil: Luther and His Opponents*, as the graphic title suggests, brings together the way Luther used ink to oppose those he thought were of the devil. There can be no doubt that Luther’s way of seeing and interpreting the Bible, faith journey, and public life had a way of divisively clashing with those who dared to differ with him. *Luther and His Opponents* is divided into sixteen chapters, and in each chapter Loewen carefully examines why and how Luther came out punching with both fists. Many of the main actors in the early decades of the sixteenth century are brought onto front stage as Luther lunges at them: Andreas Karlstadt, the Zwickau Prophets, Augustinian monks, Thomas Müntzer, peasants, Erasmus, Anabaptists (a few chapters are devoted to them, given Loewen’s Mennonite roots), Michael Servetus, Jews, Muslims – and, of course, the major thorn of the Roman Catholic Church and the Papacy. Few are spared Luther’s ink-throwing pen and those who question him are of the devil. Such a dualistic sensibility, the “pure remnant” way of interpreting life, does have consequences. Many are the Luthers who are still with us in church and society.

The strength of *Luther and His Opponents* is the way Harry Loewen has carefully and meticulously clarified for the interested reader, in each chapter, the history and reasons for Luther’s assault on those who dared to differ with him. However, there is a deeper motivation for the writings of this informative book. There was, obviously, a desperate need for reform of the Church in the sixteenth century, but the reactionary nature of the reform as embodied in Luther (and those who followed him) created

as many divisive problems as did the inept nature of the Roman Catholic Church in the late Middle Ages. It is to these deeper and more far-reaching issues that Loewen points and of which Luther is but a portal. What are these issues? Briefly put, there are two that are the most prominent and Luther embodies them to a heightened degree. First, Luther was convinced that he saw truer and better than most and that those who differed with him simply did not see the truth. He had no sense of holding only an imperfect broken light and of others holding the same. The “I’m right, you are wrong” mentality creates discord and engenders separatist thinking and a warlike attitude (crude and subtle) at the level of thought and action. Certainly Luther was not a unifier or peacemaker and Loewen knows him well.

Second, it was Luther’s rather crude and bombastic intellectual approach (both in content and method) that led, as expected, to the multiple schisms of the sixteenth century and beyond. There is a correlation between a way of reducing reality to a tidy purist formula (from which those of a lesser or no light must be separated) and forming communities that cluck and cluster around perverted broken lights (so sadly and tragically absolutizing them).

We live in an age that, in many ways, continues the fragmentation that Luther began: postmodernism is a sort of Luther on steroids. We also live at a period of time in which there is a greater longing for unity and concord. The deeper purpose in the compiling, in many ways, of the various opponents in *Luther and His Opponents* is to highlight the dire consequences of trekking down Luther’s path. The much maligned and irenic Erasmus, as well as some of the dovish first generation Anabaptists, might be better models for us as we move into the future than the ink-throwing Luther. Much depends upon how we carry our broken lights.

*Postscript:* It would have been valuable if Loewen had touched on Luther and the English Reformation. The Anglican tradition/Anglican theologians did not seem to merit a chapter in this book. Luther was quite engaged, in his predictable and animated way, with many Anglican archbishops, bishops and theologians of the sixteenth century. Loewen missed this gold-packed motherlode.

*Ron Dart, an active Anglican, teaches in the Department of Philosophy and Politics at the University of the Fraser Valley.*

# Roots and Branches

is a publication of the Mennonite Historical Society of BC and is mailed four times per year to all members. An annual membership is \$35.00.

*Your contributions are needed to further this work! All donations will be receipted for tax purposes.*

**Directors:** Jim Baerg, Vi Chappell, Don Fehr, Cheryl Isaac, Arnold Klassen, Robert Martens, Wilf Penner, Richard Thiessen, Maryann Tjart Jantzen, Laura Unger, John VanDyck Elmer G. Wiens

**Editor this issue:** Robert Martens

**Associate editors:** Louise Bergen Price, Maryann Tjart Jantzen

**Editorial Committee:** Anne Andres, Louise Bergen Price, Vi Chappell, Robert Martens, Heather Pauls Murray, Wilf Penner, Maryann Tjart Jantzen

**Design:** Globe Printers

**Staff:** Elisabeth Klassen, Mary Ann Quiring

**Mennonite Historical Society of BC**  
211-2825 Clearbrook Rd.  
Abbotsford, BC V2T 6S3  
Phone: 604-853-6177  
Fax: 604-853-6246  
Email: archives@mhsbc.com  
Website: www.mhsbc.com  
Hours: 9am-4pm Monday-Friday

# Martin Luther’s Der Kleine Katechismus

Sections from Luther’s *The Small Catechism*

*How the head of the family should teach his household to pray morning and evening:*

## Morning Prayer.

- 1] In the morning, when you rise, you shall bless yourself with the holy cross and say:  
  
In the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.
- 2] Then, kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer. If you choose, you may, in addition, say this little prayer:  
  
I thank Thee, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray Thee to keep me this day also from sin and all evil, that all my doings and life may please Thee. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the Wicked Foe may have no power over me. Amen.
- 3] Then go to your work with joy, singing a hymn, as the Ten Commandments, or what your devotion may suggest.

## Evening Prayer.

- 4] In the evening, when you go to bed, you shall bless yourself with the holy cross and say:  
  
In the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.
- 5] Then, kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer. If you choose, you may, in addition, say this little prayer:  
  
I thank Thee, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast graciously kept me this day, and I pray Thee to forgive me all my sins, where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the Wicked Foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go to sleep promptly and cheerfully.



- 6] *How the head of the family should teach his household to ask a blessing and return thanks:*

**Asking a Blessing.**

The children and servants shall go to the table with folded hands and reverently, and say:

The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord; and Thou givest them their meat in due season; Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

*Note*

To satisfy the desire means that all animals receive so much to eat that they are on this account joyful and of good cheer; for care and avarice hinder such satisfaction.

Then the Lord's Prayer, and the prayer here following:

Lord God, Heavenly Father, bless us and these Thy gifts, which we take from Thy bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Returning Thanks.**

Likewise also after the meal they shall reverently and with folded hands say:

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. He giveth food to all flesh; He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse; He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy.

Then the Lord's Prayer and the prayer here following:

We thank Thee, Lord God, Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for all Thy benefits, who livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen.

Source: (slightly edited)

*The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Lutheran Church.* [www.bookofconcord.org](http://www.bookofconcord.org)



*Martin Luther stained glass window at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Charleston, SC.*

*Source: Wikipedia*