



REMEMBERING Bernie Koop

November 23, 1923 - March 8, 2018



Bernie Koop was born November 23, 1923 in St. Anne, MB as the sixth surviving child of Peter & Katherine Koop. When he was one year old his mother passed away and his father married Margaret Martens. The family grew to include six brothers and seven sisters. He was raised in what he called a normal Mennonite home. Bernie received Christ as his personal Saviour at the age of eighteen and joined a Mennonite Church. At about this same time he entered selective service and worked for four years in lumber camps in northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan until the war ended in 1945. In the fall of 1946 he began studies at Winnipeg Bible Institute and graduated in 1950. He took the 1948/49 school year off because of what he termed a lack of faith for finances. His parents and younger siblings had relocated to Mission BC and Bernie joined them there for that year and worked at raising funds to go back to Bible School. It was also at this time through Church connections that Bernie was introduced to Clara Pankratz who eventually became the lifelong love of his life. In the fall of 1949 Bernie went back to Bible College in Winnipeg where he also made an attempt to get his private pilot's license. He found balancing flying and studies too demanding so he dropped his dream of flying but he always had an interest in what was happening in the aviation industry. After graduating from WBI in 1950 Bernie returned to BC and married Clara on August 31, 1950. They spent one winter working at Ferncliff Bulb Gardens in Hatzic. Following this time they were accepted by Northern Canada Evangelical Mission to minister to Canada's First Peoples in northern Ontario. Their time with NCEM was cut short due to health issues for Clara and so they transitioned back to the Fraser Valley where they reconnected with Grace Church and became actively involved in Sunday School outreach ministries of the church in the communities of Kilgaard, Steelhead and Cedar Valley. After a few years, mom and dad moved to Mission where they were able to become more involved in the Cedar Valley Sunday School. Bernie was part of the lay leadership group. In this role Bernie was able to

take a regular turn at preaching and teaching adult Sunday school and bible studies which would continue to be a priority until near the end of his life. Bernie's work life included nine years as carpenter with Hub Construction, twenty one years in the food processing industry at Clearbrook Frozen Foods and Abbotsford Growers . To round out his working career he also spent two years with Friesen Electric and two years running his own roofing business. Bernie retired in 1989 which afforded him and Clara the opportunity to travel throughout Canada and the US to explore new areas, connect with family, and volunteer some time in practical service with NCEM in places like Fort Nelson, Lac La Biche and Buffalo Narrows. Bernie was a faithful and loving caregiver to Clara in her later years when her mobility was limited. Bernie's long life has been a beautiful journey of faith that has reached out and touched the generations to follow. He passed peacefully into the presence of his Lord and Savior surrounded by his family. Bernie was predeceased by his wife Clara and infant son Randall. He is survived by his children Dwayne (Marilyn), Darlene Gingerich (Glen), Denise Timm (Steve) and Marv. Bernie is also survived by five grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. Bernie will be remembered by many for his love for God, family, friends, associates and his church.

