



**REMEMBERING**  
**Herbert Franz Klassen**

March 1, 1929 - December 28, 2018

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Herbert Klassen was born on March 1, 1929 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. His family had just arrived in Canada from Russia for Christmas 1928. Herbert was welcomed into the world by his parents, CF and Mary, and his brothers, Harold and Walfried, and was later joined by twin sisters, Irmgard and Justina. Herb lived in Winnipeg until he finished high school. Soon after, during a season while his father travelled extensively for work with the Mennonite Central Committee, the family moved west to the Fraser Valley in British Columbia. After attending University of British Columbia (BA, MA in History), Herb went on to study under Karl Barth at University of Basel in Switzerland, Goshen Biblical Seminary (MDiv), and University of Chicago Divinity School (MA in Historical Theology). More important to him than his degrees was the desire to be "a humble learner in the school of Christ."

In late 1958, at a Christian community in Chicago, Herb met Maureen Harvey, a fellow seminary student from England who quickly became the love of his life. They were married there in August 1959. After another year of study in Chicago, they moved to England, where they lived and worked among Quakers and experienced a significant renewal in the Holy Spirit. There, they also had their first three children: Tanya (1960), Matthew (1962), and Steve (1964). In 1965, the family of five moved to Abbotsford, B.C., Canada, where two more children were born: Mark (1967) and Becky (1970).

After several years as a History Professor at Trinity Junior College (later Trinity Western University), Herb found his true vocation as a Prison Chaplain at Matsqui Institution. His work at the prison also led to a vibrant ministry that provided refuge for ex-inmates and various people in need, which was based at the Bread of Life community and farm on McKenzie Road in Abbotsford, where the Klassen family lived for many years.

In 1988, after their children had grown up, Herb and Maureen attended a Crossroads Discipleship Training School with Youth With A Mission in Richmond, Virginia. Following that, they served for five years with Mennonite Central Committee in Moscow, Russia, and then for another year with the Mennonite Center in Molochansk, Ukraine. Upon returning to Canada, Herb and Maureen served for ten years as the Executive Secretaries of Logos Canada. During this time, they sold the property at 31603 Old Yale Road to the Mark Centre and bought a house on Pender Island, where they lived for several months of the year, splitting time between there and their basement suite in the home of their daughter Becky and her family in Abbotsford. Herb wrote three books, the first two with his wife Maureen: *Ambassador to His People: CF Klassen and the Russian Mennonite Refugees* (1990) and *The Story of Logos Canada: Celebrating Twenty-Five Years of Ministry in the Former Soviet Union* (2014). The third book was a culmination of a lifetime of devotion and study entitled *Obedient Love: Engaging the Commands of Jesus in the Gospels* (2016). In December 2016, Herb suffered a stroke that left him with limitations. Two years later, on December 14, 2018, Herb was admitted to the hospital with pneumonia. On Friday evening, December 28, he breathed his last in this life.

Herb is survived by his wife of fifty-nine years, Maureen, and their children: Tanya (and Howie) Thiessen, Matthew (and Cathlyn) Klassen, Steve (and Evy) Klassen, Mark (and Amy) Klassen, Becky (and Greg) Ouellette. Herb has twenty beloved grandchildren: Max, Josiah (and Meagan), Jackson, Phillip, Mia, Lavender, Eric, Caleb, Ellarie, Emma, Bethany, Jadon, Alexis, Erica, Luke, Dania, Silas, Sophia, and Malakai. He also has two beautiful great grandchildren: Kalia and Nina.

A memorial service will be held at Bakerview Church in Abbotsford, B.C., on January 4, 2019 at 11:00 AM. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be given to a Youth With A Mission (YWAM) ministry in India among Rohingya refugees. Donations can be made online at <http://www.ywamcanada.org/donations.html> Please reference account #WG02. This ministry is being facilitated by Greg Watt, a close friend of the Klassen family who has made it possible for many of these refugees to receive teaching about the commands of Jesus from the writings of Herb Klassen.

