

Gertrude Martens

AUGUST 27, 2018

Gertrude (Esau) Martens was born in 1926 in Langham Saskatchewan and passed away to be with the Lord on August 27, 2018. She was the 14th child of Johann Esau and the first child to be born and to survive of his second wife, Maria Reimer Esau. The Esau family moved to BC in 1928 and settled in Yarrow, BC, where the family were among the early Mennonite pioneers.



Gertrude grew up in Yarrow surrounded by her loving and large extended family and many friends. Much of the family's social life surrounded the Yarrow MB church, where she also taught Vacation Bible School and Sunday School.

She also went to elementary school in Yarrow and high school in Chilliwack, but her high school career was put on hold so that she could care for her ailing parents. She lost both her Mother in 1946 and her Father in 1947 to cancer. While caring for her parents, Gertrude took the opportunity to go to Elam Bible School in Yarrow.

After her parents died, Gertrude moved to Vancouver and worked as a housekeeper to support herself, while completing Grades 11 and 12 in one year at Magee Secondary School in 1948. Soon after she met John Martens in Yarrow and they were married in 1950, a marriage that lasted over 68 years. They lived in Vancouver, Richmond, Chilliwack, Yarrow, and Abbotsford.

Gertrude and John had five children, Marian (Eb), Jim (Nena), Tilly (Aubrey), John (Tabitha), and Trudy. Among the great loves of Gertrude's life were her children, her seventeen grandchildren, and her fourteen greatgrandchildren. She is survived by her husband John, all five of her children, her grandchildren, and thirteen of her greatgrandchildren.

Gertrude was a great cook and baker and among her specialties were numerous Russian Mennonite delicacies such as piroshki, zweibach, vereniki, borscht, Summa borscht, halapsie, and platz. She also loved to garden, both flowers and vegetables, and canned numerous sorts of pickles and fruit. She also worked professionally as a cook and baker, at the Airport Inn in Richmond, at Columbia Bible Camp for four years and at the Cedars for twelve years. Gertrude was also one of the first people to be trained in Early Childhood Education in BC in the 1970's, running a day care center at Richmond Bethel MB Church. She was always a hard worker, getting up before anyone else and going to bed after everyone else. In her retirement Gertrude continued to enjoy travelling, to Israel, Russia, and on a number of cruises, to see the world. She also travelled to see her children, who lived spread out over much of North America, and cooking for them when she arrived in their homes.

What drove Gertrude was her passionate religious faith as a disciple of Jesus Christ. She was involved from an early age with the Mennonite Brethren Church in Yarrow and was baptized in her mid-teens, joining the choir at age 17 in 1943. She continued to attend MB churches throughout the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley all her life, including Clearbrook MB church for the last 22 years of her life. Her discipleship was made wholly manifest in simply living out the greatest commands: the love of God and the love of neighbor. She accepted people where they were and helped them. She loved God and never ceased supporting ministries near and far, including praying for all those near and dear to her. From the beginning of her life to the end, on August 27, 2018, she was a woman of steadfast

hope and faith and love.

Though we do grieve for our great loss, her family does not grieve for our beloved wife, sister-in-law, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother as others do who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14), because we know that now she is in the presence of eternal love, reunited with her parents, all fourteen of her siblings who predeceased her, and her many other friends and relatives who have welcomed her into her eternal home.

You are invited to leave a personal message of condolence for the family.

Messages of Condolence

Dear Uncle John

On behalf of my Dad, Hans Dahl, I would like to extend our deepest sympathies on the passing of your beloved wife Gertrude. I noticed that you & Gertrude were married the same year as Mom & Dad and while 68 years seems like a long time Dad keeps saying it was too short (in German, of course) Maybe you feel the same way. I know that Mom & Dad loved spending time with you and. I remember Tante Gertrude as a lovely woman with a good sense of humor. I have good memories of the times our families were together whether in BC or Winnipeg. I know you have many, many good memories to comfort you. May God be with you in the days, weeks and months to come.

Gisela Wiebe (Dahl)

— **Gisela Wiebe**

Our deepest sympathies from the extended Henry family, on behalf of my mother, Margaret (Reimer) Henry who is not only in Heaven with many relatives as well, but is now joined by her cousin Gertrude. My mother had a keen friendship with Gertrude, even though much of their lives were seperated by many miles. I was privileged to eat at Gertrude and John's table a time or two and enjoy the delicious vereniki and platz that was served. I will be keeping John in my prayers as, I am sure after 68 years, he will miss her dearly.

Pauline Cregar

— Pauline Cregar



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