



# Lutherans on Yangtze: Volume II 1949-2013

*David G. Kohl*

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When four American missionaries in western China fled the advancing People's Liberation Army in a late night rescue, dropped at Kai Tak airstrip in December 1949, a new chapter in Hong Kong refugee work was about to begin that would have a world-wide influence. Three women, deaconesses in nursing and education, and a tuberculosis-stricken young pastor, took up temporary residence at the Basel Mission Home on Tai Po Road. When they realized that they spoke the mandarin language of many refugees encamped throughout the Colony, they determined to stay in Hong Kong because "there is work to be done here." Resisting re-assignment, they served without authorization for three months before reluctant approval came from the Missouri Synod Mission Board. Doing whatever needed to be done, the four began human care and Christian witnessing among groups of dislocated squatters on the grounds of the Tung Wah hospital, soon moved to a camp at the foot of Mt. Davis, and by June, 1950, to a Government-assigned camp overlooking Junk Bay. The Mission was to become a significant part of Hong Kong's refugee and resettlement epic. The account of their survival, of establishing a Bible Institute, congregations, primary schools, Mongkok Lutheran School for the Deaf, and Haven of Hope Sanitarium is a tale of faith and tenacity, of benevolent Government and determined Christians amidst a flotsam of displaced humanity. From Rennie's Mill, developments led to the establishment of schools and social services of the Lutheran Church-Hong Kong Synod, of Hong Kong International School in Repulse Bay, and of additional schools in Shanghai, ShenZhen, and Hanoi. Lutherans on the Yangtze, Volume Two, is the detailed story of evolution and work of the Missouri Synod and its sister Synod, the Lutheran Church-Hong Kong Synod from 1949 to 2013, the centennial of the Church's origins in Hankow. It is the work of former educational missionary Dave Kohl, and the result of 7 years of archival research, personal interviews, and exploratory travel in Hong Kong and China. The oral histories of missionaries and their families, of former refugees and Christian converts, and current church leaders makes this a vital and timely tale.

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