



He did so by joining the Schmalkald League against Emperor Charles V and subscribing to the Augsburg Confession. For his stance, he was banished by the Emperor in 1545. However, upon his return from exile, he actively promoted Lutheranism in the Palatinate, issuing court directives in support of Lutheranism. He also conducted visitations the way Luther had done in Saxony to ensure that the pastors knew and acknowledged the new faith. And he encouraged the fathers in his realm to follow Luther's admonition to teach the Small Catechism to members of their household. To the extent that this occurred, we can be confident that the doctrine and practice of Lutheranism filtered down to the entire population of the Palatinate. Thus, the people of the Palatinate were brought into the Lutheran fold.

But a challenge to Lutheranism in the Palatinate occurred when Otto Henry died in 1559. Frederick III, who succeeded him as Elector, leaned toward Reformed theology and commissioned his theologians to publish the Heidelberg Catechism to rival and replace Luther's Small Catechism. He also tried unsuccessfully to replace Lutheran preachers with those who espoused Calvinist theology. His efforts to replace Lutheranism with Reformed theology were only partially successful because they were resisted by a strong popular movement, one led by his own son, Ludwig VI, who eventually succeeded his father as Elector in 1576.

The period following the Schmalkald War was a time of religious controversy within Lutheranism in Germany generally. It ended with the adoption of the Formula of Concord in 1577 and when the Formula, together with other Lutheran Confessional documents, were gathered together in the Book of Concord, Ludwig was one of those who subscribed to it. Whether our ancestors, living in their scattered villages and working on their small farms were aware of the high level theological discussions of the period is doubtful. While some of them may have followed the Heidelberg Catechism, most continued to identify with Luther's Small Catechism which was included among the Confessions in the Book of Concord. Acceptance of this document was considered to be sufficient to identify them as Lutherans.

The constant warfare and persecution, as well as the limited opportunities facing people in the Palatinate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, led people to seek a better life in the New World. From these migrations, Lutheran churches were established in New York and North Carolina. And when the American Revolution disrupted British shipping to America, Lutherans and others

from the Palatinate looked to new territories available for settlement in Eastern Europe. Thus, many people from the Palatinate and other south German territories moved to Galicia, the most eastern province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Among the earliest of the German colonies in Galicia were the twin Lutheran villages of Landestreu and Ugartsthal located in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains. Since no pastors accompanied the colonists, they sustained themselves spiritually by Luther's Bible and Small Catechism, gathered on Sundays for public worship under the leadership of their lay leaders, and, in their homes, the fathers taught the faith to members of their family using Luther's Small Catechism.

In time, as land became scarce in the mother colonies, Lutheran daughter colonies were organized elsewhere. Included among the new colonies was Katharinendorf in nearly Bukovina, founded in 1867, the year that the Dominion of Canada came into existence. From this village and others nearby, the first movement of Palatine Lutherans would come to Western Canada twenty-five years later.

Meanwhile, German immigrants, many of them having their roots in the Palatinate, were arriving in eastern Canada. In Pennsylvania, where they had been part of mixed Lutheran and Reformed communities, they had formed religiously mixed congregations. They continued to do so in Southern Ontario. Among them was St. Paul's congregation in

Kitchener. In its early history, the congregation rejected ministers who had no use for Luther or Lutheran practices and, in 1867, it called on Adam Ernst, a pastor of the Missouri Synod, to serve them. Ernst agreed if they would accept him as a Lutheran minister and if they would exclusively use Luther's Small Catechism. Thus, a Lutheran congregation developed which still exists today.

Not everyone reading this article had ancestors who originated in the Palatinate area of Germany. Some of you may not even have originated in Germany. Yet, for all of us, the story of the Lutheran Reformation intersected with the story of our family at some point in time, whether early in our family's story or within our own lifetime. And for this we thank God.

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