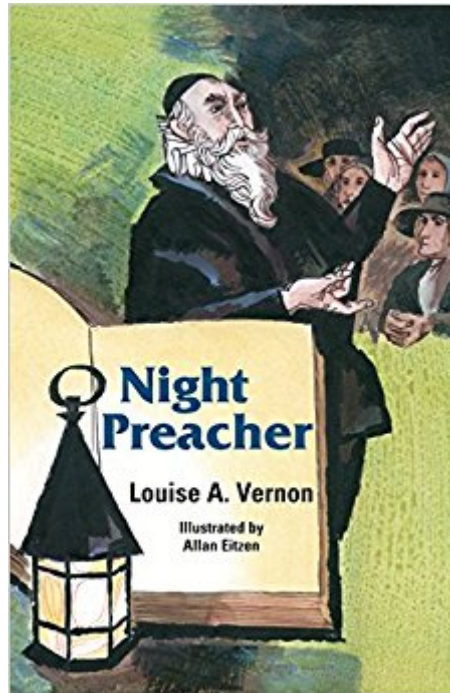




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# Night Preacher (Louise A. Vernon)



## Synopsis

This story is told through the eyes of Bettje and Jan, children of Menno Simons, who lived almost 500 years ago. Menno Simons was first a Catholic priest. As he read and studied the Bible, Menno began to understand the Christian life in a different way. Eventually he became an Anabaptist preacher. It was against the laws of that time for him to preach so Menno's preaching was done in secret at night to small groups. Soon, Menno Simons became the leader of the Anabaptists, now known as Mennonites. For 9-to-14-year-olds.

## Book Information

Series: Louise A. Vernon

Paperback: 134 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #910,036 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #139 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Christian > Historical](#) #283 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Religious](#) #5308 in [Books > Children's Books > Religions > Christianity](#)

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## Customer Reviews

The story of all that happened as Menno went about preaching is seen through the eyes of Bettje and Jan. They too suffered hardships because their father was a night preacher. One Mennonite historian who read the story said that it was a "lively, accurate, highly readable" story of Menno Simons. The author was careful in adding details to see that they were in keeping with the way people lived and thought in those days.

Louise A. Vernon was born in Coquille, Oregon. As children, her grandparents crossed the Great Plains in covered wagons. After graduating from Willamette University, she studied music and

creative writing, which she taught in the San Jose public schools.

Good story of the sacrifices of the Night Preacher and his family. Persecution was very high and people were dying for their faith. Menno was the preacher and the new faith became the Mennonites. Great story presented in a language understood by young people and adults as well.

"Night Preacher" tells the story of Menno Simmons and his family in 16th century Holland, and his labors to teach the Scripture during a time of intense persecution from the Roman Catholic church. Simmons is considered one of the leaders of the Anabaptist movement, and the followers of his teachings today commonly referred to as the Mennonites. This book offers some interesting insight into the earlier origins of the beliefs of this group, and the book is told in a historical-fiction narrative (primarily from the perspective of Menno Simmons's daughter) and gives the reader a window into the sadness and frustration of Menno not being allowed to teach and preach due to rampant persecution, and his constantly being forced to move to new lands because of the waves of Anabaptist persecution. Louise Vernon's writing includes moments of suspense, adventure and even some humor as well, as the story of Menno Simmons unfolds. It can be a humbling book in that we living in the West currently live in an age where it's easy to take for granted religious freedoms (even as persecutions continue to exist today in countries in other parts of the world), and as you read this narrative you can empathize with the plight of Menno and the Anabaptist, who experienced so much persecution for their faith and were frequently forced to flee their homes to the safety of other lands. This text includes some illustrations, and is an excellent Christian historical text to share with children during family worship time.

Night Preacher is the story of Menno Simon's life from the viewpoint of his oldest child, his daughter Bettje. In the beginning, Bettje cannot understand why her father has to continually move his family from town to town and why she isn't supposed to tell anyone her father's name or where she lives. As the Catholic Church steps up the pace in arresting Protestants and widespread persecution takes hold, Bettje begins to understand that her father does not even pretend to adhere to the doctrines of man that uphold the Catholic Church. His nightly meetings in which he faithfully tries to feed his Master's sheep are often jeopardized by spies and cohorts of both royalty and the Catholics. As Bettje becomes older, her life long dream of living in one place and having a milk cow of her own gradually morph into concern for her family and understanding of the constant need to flee from danger. The author has truly succeeded in telling this story through the eyes of a child. The

fear, innocence, bewilderment, and trust delivered by the writer for the shaping of her child character are believable and endearing. This is a book that will cause its young readers to be spurred on in the faith as they read of Bettje and her family's courage. The aspect that I enjoyed most about the book is the fact that whenever Bettje's father is speaking to her or her siblings, or a neighbor, or even a stranger, his dialogue is so richly intertwined with phrases and verses from Scripture. His love for his Lord is clearly outlined by his always making reference from the Word. The only criticism I had of Night Preacher was the fact that having been brought up in a Christian home, Bettje does not seem to understand certain foundational aspects of the Christian faith versus the doctrine of Catholicism, and doesn't think to consider being baptized herself until much later in the book. Despite this, I thought it was overall a very good book and quite worth the time it took to read. This exciting, lovable book would be a great addition to any child's library. Kids will love its fast-paced flow and will, most undoubtedly, be sitting on the edge of their seats to find out if Bettje and her family escape time and time again! \*Thanks to Herald Press for providing a complimentary copy in exchange for my honest review.

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