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THE MENNONITES AND THE AMISH

A critique of religious conservatism
with special reference to the
Old Order Amish in Pennsylvania

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**Dedicated to the memory of my parents
John and Caroline Morgan
who helped establish Calfaria Baptist Chapel
Dyffryn Cellwen, Neath, in 1913**

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS AND KEYWORDS

The Mennonites and the Amish

**A critique of religious conservatism
with special reference to the
Old Order Amish of Pennsylvania**

KEYWORDS

Anabaptists, Radical Reformation, Mennonites, Amish, Plain People, *Ordnung*, *Meidung*, *Gelassenheit*, Religious Conservatism.

**A critique of religious conservatism
with special reference to the
Old Order Amish of Pennsylvania**

The concept of religious conservatism is related to the faith of the Anabaptists in early 16th century Switzerland, Germany and Holland as developed by the Swiss Brethren, maintained and developed by the Mennonites and Amish in Europe and thence into the USA, especially in Pennsylvania.

Tenets of the faith are revealed in these peoples' actualised theology as they have long unyoked themselves from the outside world and formed a free church. The continuity of the faith is traced through a number of Confessions of Faith since 1527.

The purity of the redemptive community is ensured by the order or '*ordnung*' and its demands are known to those undergoing adult baptism. Different interpretations of the *ordnung* and the strictness of the ban on sinners have resulted in schisms since Menno Simons and Jacob Ammann. The faith has remained firm in spite of schisms also resulting from reactions to technological changes and pressures from the outside world.

Conservative attitudes are revealed in these groups' old-fashioned distinctive simple clothing, hair, beards, head covering and transport. Pacifism and '*gelassenheit*', the yielding to God's Will and that of the congregation, add to this distinctiveness and conservatism.

The great number of schisms among the Mennonites reveal differences in imposing the 'ban', shunning (or *meidung*) or excommunication and the degrees of rejection of contemporary material changes (e.g. automobiles, telephones, mains electricity). The most conservative are the 'Old Orders'.

The selection of ministers (by the 'lot') and their roles are examined and continuity is emphasised by the practice of feet washing (insisted by Ammann) and singing hymns from a mid-16th century hymnal, the *Ausbund*.

Numerous references from the New Testament are quoted in justification of their religious beliefs within an actualised theology and the relationship between congregations and baptised believers is also addressed in some detail.

Their possible future as religious groups may be conjectural in a world so inimical to so many of their beliefs. They remain a powerful witness to His word in spite of their small numbers. Observations of and conversations with many of these people over the past thirty years confirm their personal characteristics outlined in the thesis.

Through their religious beliefs, their actualised theology and steadfastness in living their beliefs, they can contribute an understanding of the contemporary world by offering their religious conservatism as exemplifying *their* belief in witnessing a corner of God's Kingdom. The underlying paradoxes in their lives must, however, be fully appreciated.

The thesis is that the nature of their long-held beliefs, discipline and *gelassenheit* brings fulfilment and a witness to the outside world. Their steadfastness makes acceptable the many paradoxes in their lives, reflecting a need to react constantly to outside pressures without undermining the faith.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION – THE MENNONITES AND THE AMISH

“For the Anabaptists, there is only one way, the way of the cross, for the church to become ‘salt, light and leaven’ in any society, and in every age.”

Estep, William R.

The Anabaptist Story p306

Eerdmans Pub. Co.

Cambridge UK (1996)

There are in Pennsylvania, and at least 23 other States of the USA, groups of people, the Mennonites and the Amish, who are conspicuously different from the wider community in their dress, dialect, forms of transport and ways of farming. In these respects their way of life is more akin to that of the 19th rather than the 20th century. Why is this so? Why do the ‘Plain People’ reject so many of the attributes and manifestations of contemporary society, especially its technology? Why do their religious beliefs differ so markedly from the beliefs of other neighbouring people such as to keep these minorities as separate groups in the communities where they have settled? Are these religious beliefs the bedrock of their convictions and can these groups maintain these convictions and way of life into the next century in spite of the many and continuous pressures on them? Do these ‘Plain’, religious and conservative peoples hold beliefs and live a way of life that may have any significance to the wider community?

The heart of the ‘problem’ of these minority religious groups is the constant pressures to which they are exposed viewed in the context of the demands of their faith. To what extent can a ‘bible centred’ life possibly continue into the next century without endangering the values on which their lives are predicated? How is this continuity

ensured by the younger members of the groups? How can the fundamental dilemma of the future of the groups which reject state influence yet depend on the toleration of them by the state be reconciled? Do these minorities have certain values and attributes which can be of significance to and be reacted to by the wider community?

The main aim of the study will be a critical appraisal of the establishment and development of the Mennonite and Amish peoples, especially in Pennsylvania. Special reference will be made to the most conservative or 'Old Order' groups in the context of religious beliefs and the reasons for and the outcomes of the differences within and between the groups.

To achieve the overall aim of the study, the objectives to be attained will be: an analysis of the impact of the Reformation in Switzerland which resulted in distinct groups of believers such as the Anabaptists; an examination of the earliest tenets of faith espoused by the Mennonites; a description of the early movements of the Mennonites and the emergence of the Amish as a distinct group; an examination of reasons for and the results of the move to the USA by both religious groups; an outline of the impact of State and Federal legislation on both groups' way of living; a close examination of religious conservatism resulting in varying degrees of social isolation and an analysis of the significance of both groups in Pennsylvania, especially on their neighbouring communities.

The main contention of the thesis will be that the origin, development and continuation of the Amish and Mennonites as they at present exist is due principally to the social discipline arising from their deeply held religious beliefs. The high percentage of their young people choosing to remain in their faith is a significant substantiation of this contention. This discipline, combined with the toleration shown by the wider community, the State and Federal authorities, will be claimed to be other reasons for the continuity of these groups. It will be further contended that even the most conservative Old Orders are open to changes that do not undermine their beliefs. Finally, it will be shown that these peoples, through their ways of living, equanimity, discipline and living faith, have something to offer the outside world.

The descriptive aspect of the study will be balanced by a critical, interpretative approach. Thus it will be heavily dependent on a wide bibliography, but this will be reinforced by discussions with individuals who have studied the Amish and Mennonites and further substantiated by personal observations of and some discussions with members of both minorities during a series of visits to Pennsylvania since the early 1970s.

It is not the intention of the study to explore in any great depth the causes and outcomes of the Reformation other than its links with the origin of the Anabaptist movement and that of the Mennonites. A further limitation is that particular emphasis is placed on the origins of the Amish group and the historical continuity of that group and groups of Mennonites in Pennsylvania. An additional delimitation is that special reference is made to the Old Orders of both groups, i.e. the most conservative. Although it is inevitable that theological matters form a thread throughout the study, consideration of these concerns and justifications will be limited to their equally inevitable relationship with the social discipline of these minority groups.

The study will commence with the historical background of religious changes in 16th century Europe and the consequent origins and early development of Anabaptism. The Confessions of Faith reflect the beliefs and early practices of Anabaptism and these are then related to the Amish ideas of faith and community. The next Chapter appraises the early developments among the Mennonites and Amish in 17th and 18th century Pennsylvania. These developments are linked, via the 19th century, to further changes and developments in the 20th century with emphasis placed on continuity of faith and conservatism. The particular problems arising from interaction between these groups (especially the conservative Old Orders) and the State and Federal Governments are examined and the study concludes with a further examination of continuity and change impacting on these groups and the possible future of these groups as they respond to the contemporary pressures of the wider community, yet, in retaining their living faith, can be considered exemplars of a particular way of believing and living to that wider community.

CHAPTER 2

RELIGIOUS CONSERVATISM

“Therefore, brethren stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”

II Thess. 2:15

The old and distinctive religious groups of Pennsylvania Amish and Mennonites maintain a way of life more in keeping with the 19th rather than the 21st century. This is in spite of the constant pressures of the surrounding society on these comparatively small and scattered communities. To understand this apparently unchanging way of life requires a consideration of the idea of religious conservatism.

Conservatism involves a form of preservation, maintenance or protection of some aspect of the human experience deemed worthy of and requiring this safeguarding attitude towards it. In the religious setting this would involve, at the very least, the integral and essential forms of its fundamental beliefs and practices. Consciousness of what is being or might be 'conserved' is sharpened when beliefs or practices are questioned or attacked, be they established tenets and behaviour or newly emerging ideas and their development into ritual. This was reflected in Luther's statement at Worms in 1521 'Hier stehe ich....', 'Here I stand, I can do no other' when he summed up both his opposition to the Roman Catholic Church and his vision of the basis of a new, reformed Church. The fundamentals of his re-interpretation of the role, doctrine and practices of the Church in contemporary society were soon recognised and defended by those who believed in and supported the newly emerging Reformed Church. In contrast there were others prepared to conserve or protect the 'old order', others who would wish to create a more radical Church than Luther's and be prepared to sacrifice their lives to ensure that *their* religious beliefs were safeguarded in sharp contrast to the general sweep of the Lutheran movement.

Over four centuries later the Amish and Mennonites reveal in their way of life, both in its religious and social settings, what has been conserved from the very beginning of their questioning Lutheran and Calvinist doctrines adduced in the 16th century. A cursory examination reveals material differences in their manner of dress, speech, forms of transport and denial of the use of many contemporary technological devices and facilities. Such differences are predicated on the religious beliefs and practices which these minority religious groups have conserved, with sometimes minimal changes, since their earliest acceptance. These convictions have developed into a

pattern of doctrine and practices which have ensured a continuity in belief throughout succeeding generations such that Amishmen in the twenty first century would readily recognise and confirm the religious convictions and way of life of their ancestors in 16th century medieval Europe. Nowhere would this continuity, this conservatism, be more evident in the use of the Bible, especially, in some groups, the German Bible. Theirs, as with the Mennonites, is a 'Bible based' faith.

The distinctive nature of Christian religious conservatism is reflected in basic or core beliefs in ideas generated by meanings attributed, for example, to God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Scriptures, the Church, the hereafter and the concomitant outcomes of these ideas in defining sin, communion, redemption, baptism, prayer and all that defines what being a Christian really is, irrespective of differences manifested in the interpretations of that overarching idea in thought, word and deed. Christian belief is reinforced (and continually conserved) by an organised Church whose hierarchy ensures that the Word of God in the Scriptures is interpreted and conveyed to believers in a manner that would sustain the understanding of the Word. Thus the Scriptures, forms of worship and, in particular, the sacraments, ensure a continuity which safeguards and conserves the essential aspects of the Christian faith. This conservation is further strengthened by the antiquity of so many places of Christian worship conveying a sense of the eternal to this worship.

Yet though the constant and orthodox is so evident, there can be pressures for change, for re-interpretation, of introducing new forms (especially in ritual), of fresh insights into old beliefs and words. A new voice can express an old, accepted truth in a new manner; a new practice might be introduced which can challenge accepted ways; a book can revitalise minds and thus change an outlook providing a more satisfactory response to pressures or demands for change both implicit and explicit in the Church. Reformers succeed because they so often challenge 'the spirit of the age' in questioning established forms or the interpretation of doctrine and maintaining what may prove to be acceptable alternatives. Other reformers may give tongue and credence to a popular desire by refining and guiding such a desire without militating against its spirit of reform. 'The voice in the wilderness' has not been without its importance throughout Church history in this regard and may contribute to the clash of ideas whose synthesis may indicate to the hierarchy, especially if the hierarchy is

sufficiently cognizant of the need for change and is capable of ordering such change, that change may be the means of strengthening the Church.

Is change in any human institution inevitable? Possibly so if the general expectancy of believers of the Church and the passing of significant Church persons is recognised but, as with all human institutions, it is the extent of suggested change, its rapidity and manner of implementation that will ensure the essential continuity of the core beliefs and practices of the Church.

Some reforms can lead to catastrophic changes as reinterpreted beliefs and practices are achieved, yet, in religious change, there has always been an understanding of a core of belief and practice which has been conserved. This is, in part, due to the convictions and reactions of those who have been determined to defend and maintain the 'old order' of the orthodox Church. Consequently, in a period of change, the 'conservatives' as opposed to the 'liberals' and the 'reformists' can be readily identified. Each group will have its own unique identity and characteristics and, simultaneously, will have an interdependence with other groups. Further reform will depend on the nature of this interdependence, especially the clarity of the divisions between the groups and the desire to maintain that clarity. Even within groups of reformers there can be differences (the zealots, once they achieve their goal, would wish to conserve this achievement) which underlines the need to recognise the complexity of religious attitudes in times of change. There is therefore a sometimes subtle overarching conservative posture within and between groups which results in a certain stability in relationships and outlook yet changes can and do arise in this neo-conservatism. The re-interpretation of doctrine and practice is then involved in a fresh cycle of questioning, change, consolidation and safeguarding, until, some time in the unknown future, a new phase of the cycle appears. The degree of radicalism which can be characteristic of this change reflects the strength of conviction of the reform and reformers, their ability to convince others of the rightfulness of their convictions set against the established or orthodox religion. In the religious context a movement for change may have the added force and complexity of being said or claimed to be 'the Will of God'; consequently any questioning of or resistance to reforms may be condemned as heretical. The same condemnation may be made of established beliefs in the battle of ideas.

Throughout history the interpretation of Christian beliefs has had its conservative as well as radical 'wings' with extremist proponents in each. What has emerged is a broad Church sufficiently flexible and understanding in its humility to contain change but ensuring a stability which lends credibility and strength to its doctrines and organisation. This does not ignore the Christian groups that have, because of their strongly held and differing convictions, emerged as separate organisations with different practices but all contain the core of those features previously identified as linking the whole Christian outlook and commitment. Thus minor groups such as sects, separated from the mainstream of Christian orthodoxy, can be identified as having their particular doctrines, practices and organisations yet are undeniably Christian in outlook, especially in their acceptance of Holy Scripture as the basis for their understanding of Christianity. This reflects the degrees of conservatism which exist between these groups and the mainstream Church.

It would, therefore, be an oversimplification to use 'conservatism' and 'liberalism' as quite distinct descriptions with a gray intervening area. Historically there has been an identifiable dynamic within each of these three divisions and between them. This is balanced by an enduring core or continuity, especially in the more extreme views of doctrinal tradition and change. Thus there emerges a more complex picture of differences between the identified groups in beliefs and practices which limits too sharp a distinction between many of the groups of believers, i.e. how conservative are the traditionalists? How reformist the liberals? This is particularly so of the Amish-Mennonite interpretations of their core beliefs as the history of both groups is characterised by differences in these interpretations. These differences have led to schisms and polarisation of practices under labels such as 'ultra conservatives', 'intermediate conservatives', 'moderate conservatives', 'fundamental conservatives' and 'theological conservatives' (Scott, 1996: 160). Those groups, especially the Amish, manifesting the greatest degree of conservatism, continue as 'Old Orders'.

All these groups, whatever the degree of conservatism each exhibits, would historically be and remain under the broad description of 'Anabaptist', having separated from the sweeping changes of the reformist Lutheran and Calvinist beliefs, especially on the matter of adult baptism. The Amish-Mennonites would establish and

conserve, in spite of harsh repression, their own forms of religious organisation and practice.

Religious reform has aroused great passion and for some groups has resulted in great suffering. Religious belief can be at the very heart of an individual or group's perception of the meaning of this world and the next. It is this search for meaning and of life that has produced and confirmed great theological truths and organisation thought necessary to sustain those beliefs. It has also created martyrs. This was clearly manifested in the struggle between the orthodox Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant/Reformed Churches. It was especially so in the history of the Radical Reformation which opposed both the orthodox and the emerging reformed churches.

Lutherism and Calvinism looked to the future through the reform of the contemporary Church; the radical reformers looked to the past, to the earliest primitive Church, wishing to reconstitute that Church and, in so doing, create a new society based on the faith found in the New Testament. The struggle to conserve what had been reconstituted was to continue throughout the history of Anabaptism.

Other groups of Christians would, in time and for a variety of reasons, form their own breakaway groups or sects as a result of the Reformation. Thus there came into being the Anglican Church, the Non-Conformist Churches of Baptists, Methodists, the Quakers, Presbyterians and Pentecostals. Each group seeks to conserve basic doctrine and practices whilst remaining quite clearly Christian.

The recent emphasis on the term 'fundamentalism' (Marty, 1989: 290-291) in the Christian and other faiths is an indication that churches are under pressure of the kind that can question their basic doctrines. Mass media can exert particular and constant pressure whose influences can clash with traditional doctrinal values, reminding people of the religious pluralism in contemporary society. This can cause confusion but can also be a stimulus to those of a faith to clarify and defend it. Traditionalists, the ultra-conservatives and the Old Orders may react by adopting a no compromise stance in defence of their beliefs and only time will reveal the success or not of such an attitude.

The non-Christian world has its own orthodox and liberal groups but, because it is religion that might inspire a defensive attitude, it is likely to have a continuing impact on the whole idea of religious conservatism.

It is said (Duncan, 2001: 29) that 'the shape and structure of the Church is temporary, but its faith is permanent. The primary concern of believers is with the content of faith, not the form of the church needed for a particular time'. Also that 'what is changeless is the validity and vitality of the things which we most surely believe....Our convictions about creation, incarnation and resurrection still provide excitement and encouragement.'

It is the impact of the contemporary world on the historic and present day settings of the Amish-Mennonite communities in Pennsylvania that will be critically appraised in what follows. In that appraisal it will be necessary to indicate the roots and development of Anabaptism, a faith that appears to have an unclouded permanency about it. In its core beliefs and practices it will be shown that much of what was suffered for in the 16th and 17th centuries plays a fundamentally active role in the doctrine and organisation of contemporary Amish-Mennonite commitment, belief and practice.

CHAPTER 3

ORIGINS AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF ANABAPTISM

The Historical Background of Religious Changes in 16th Century Europe

“..... all penitent believers .. be baptized with water in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost .. and thus become incorporated into the communion of saints.”

Dortrecht Confession of Faith, 1632

Article VII, p17

The Reformation encompasses the most significant religious changes in history but its broad and climactic progress during the 16th and later centuries can conceal other minor religious changes which, nonetheless, had and still have profound consequences for those believers whose beliefs were never part of the mainstream of the Reformation.

The initial intention of the 'Reformation' was to reform the abuses so evident in the Roman Catholic Church. The beginning of this movement is normally dated from October 31 1517, when Luther attached the document outlining his 95 Theses against the abuse of indulgences to the door of the Castle Church, Wittenberg. Luther was not the first critic of the orthodox church or the first to suggest how its abuses could be overcome yet his writings and his fortitude in meeting the attacks of his critics were to ensure his leadership of what became known as the Reformation.

Luther's outrage at the debauchery of the church of which he was a member crystallised around the idea that salvation could be purchased. The idea of salvation which was to prove a key in his new theology was based on Luther's interpretation of Romans 1:17, 'the just shall live by faith'. Thus righteousness was not to be based on man's achievements or 'works' but is a gift accepted by faith (Howse, 1999: 5). This questioned the Church's authority, and, with the printing of the Bible in the vernacular, this authority was further undermined as the laity read and interpreted the Scriptures. Such criticism was met with excommunication and commenced a period of dispute and harshness that was to continue into the next century yet the commitment for change was maintained even if there were disputes as to its rapidity and direction (MacKinnon, 1963: 491-8).

To comprehend more fully the impact of Luther's thinking and reactions to it, it is necessary to acknowledge not only the religious but the social and political milieu of the early part of the 16th century (MacKinnon, 1963: 491-8).

The Roman Catholic Church dominated so much of people's lives and apart from owning vast, untaxed territories which provided great wealth through tithes and

agricultural produce, it stood for what people believed to be a moral, religious universe. This protected people's souls and had the power of eternal salvation or damnation. The medieval world was structured into a hierarchy which some claimed reflected a heavenly hierarchy and any disturbance of the former would disturb the latter (Snyder, 1997: 16). Each individual, each family, had its proper place in this 'order' yet there was also a strong feeling of community, of stability and of what might be termed an ingrained fear of upsetting this order and stability.

Nonetheless there was a growing resentment against the Church centred on the decadence and illiteracy of so many clergy and the monastic Orders. The two Popes who reigned from 1452 to 1513, Alexander VI and Julius II, were 'the nadir of the Church's reputation' (Davies, 1997: 484). The former was the rebuilder of St. Marks, Rome, and this required so much money that a Dominican friar, Johann Teszel, undertook, in Luther's home area, the sale of indulgences (a warrant or certificate which guaranteed a reduction of or relief from the punishments of Purgatory) that inferred salvation was the result of 'good works' rather than faith. In emphasising this basic difference in the interpretation of salvation, Luther challenged the Catholic Church's means of gaining this financial support and the Church's understanding of a vitally important scriptural statement. The Church justified its traditional authority through a number of disputations with Luther, but he insisted on the veracity of his interpretation of the scriptures. These disputes reached a climax before the emperor Charles V, at the Diet of Worms in January 1521 when, faced by eminent Catholic theologians, Luther summed up his position:

'I am overcome by the Scriptures I have quoted:
my conscience is captive to God's Word. I cannot
and will not revoke anything, for to act against
conscience is neither safe nor honestHEIR
STEHE ICH. ICH KANN NICHT ANDERS (Here I
stand; I cannot do otherwise)' (Davies, 1997: 485).

His excommunication was inevitable but such was the impact Luther's criticisms made on a pletist population already suffering from poor harvests, high prices and the plague that he won protection for himself and thus his ideas by these people and many cities and local rulers. The Elector of Saxony kept Luther in safe keeping in Warburg Castle for almost a year and various local rulers (Landgraves and Margraves) also

ensured that the new ideas and organisation of a 'Lutheran' Church were conserved under their protection. This safeguarding of the new developments by rulers and cities is sometimes referred to as the 'Magisterial Revolution' (Williams, 1961: 89) in contrast to the 'Radical Reformation' of the Anabaptists, who did not accept the authority of the State in religious affairs. Parts of Germany were in open revolt and the peasants (trenchantly opposed and condemned by Luther) suffered greatly, but at least the princes gained an important liberty at the Diet of Speyer (1526) when the formula *Cuius regio, eius religio* (the ruler determines the religion of the ruled) was accepted. Apart from a few exceptions, communities of Anabaptists were not to benefit from this formula and continued to be persecuted.

One of the principal issues of the Reformation was the interpretation of Holy Scripture, traditionally the role of the Catholic Church. Luther, insisting that the Church should be reformed on the basis of 'Scripture alone', extended the consequences of that claim when he, in co-operation with Philip Melancthon, translated the Greek New Testament into the German vernacular. The implication of Luther's claim was that the interpretation of the Holy Word was not limited to priests, thus erasing the distinction between priests and the laity and creating a 'priesthood of all believers'. Thus the traditional authority of the orthodox Church was again undermined. These ideas of the authority of the Scriptures and the possibility of members of the congregation interpreting them became cornerstones of Anabaptist belief.

Where then did religious authority reside? Martin Bucer, although expressing some sympathy for the Anabaptist idea of baptism (that is, he was prepared to postpone infant baptism) believed in and wished to extend the idea of a priesthood of all believers to include doctrine and discipline as the responsibility of magistrates (Williams, 1961: 89). The Anabaptists opposed this, although some did accept a role for the Christian magistrate. The Swiss Brethren and the Anabaptists were united in recognising their newly emerging church as an alternative to existing society and could answer strongly in the affirmative the latter part of the question 'Does God work his progress in the world primarily through existing society and its structures or through the creation of a *new* society?' (Weaver, 1987: 21). Theirs was to be a new community akin to the earliest Christian groups.

Although some authorities claim that the roots of the Reformation reach back in history to the Waldenses of the 12th century, John Wyclif (1329-1384), ‘the morning star of the Reformation’, Jan Hus (?1372-1415), of whom Luther said ‘Without knowing it I both taught and held the teaching of Hus: in short, we are all Hussites without knowing it’ (Jones, 1985: 19) and Erasmus (Gerhard Gerhards c.1466-1536), of greater significance to the particular links with the many tenets of the Radical Reformation is the work of Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1526), Andreas Karlstadt (1480-1541) and Conrad Grebel (1498-1526). Their interpretations of doctrinal matters would profoundly influence the Swiss Brethren. It is claimed that ‘Karlstadt was the first proponent of the theological outlook given structure in the Anabaptist movement’ (Weaver, 1987: 28).

Karlstadt anticipated many of Luther’s ideas in October 1517 and, during Luther’s enforced absence at Wartburg, Karlstadt maintained the momentum and extended the scope of the developing Reformation. He conducted the first reformed communion (Christmas 1521) using the vernacular and wearing lay clothing; advocated the abandonment of celibacy; the removal of all church images; encouraged congregations to interrupt and discuss sermons; abandoned organ music and, of particular importance to the Anabaptist belief, abolished paedobaptism. These convictions and actions placed Karlstadt in the radical stream of Reformation ideas and it is significant that Luther, on his return to Willenburg from Wartburg, repudiated many of Karlstadt’s ideas and actions. This was in part reflective of Luther’s wish and need to maintain the support of his protectors, but his actions also illustrate how quickly a reformer can become a conservative. The Swiss Brethren also agreed with Karlstadt’s emphasis on the supremacy of the Scriptures and his questioning of accepted views on the Lord’s Supper, baptism and liturgy. He, too, emphasised the equality of believers with lay members being accorded rights traditionally reserved for clergy. Karlstadt accepted a church independent of the State or local magistrates and although his convictions were in so many ways in close accord with those of the Brethren, Karlstadt never became an Anabaptist, but his influence shows how close the Radical Reformation came, through the writings and actions of individuals like Karlstadt, to the mainstream of the Reformation.

Had he been allowed to continue his reforming work, Karlstadt may have satisfied those of the Brethren who, living in the turmoil of religious questioning and reform, wished to speed up the pace of change. The radicals became equally dissatisfied with Zwingli for similar reasons, but the break between the Brethren and Zwingli reflected differences regarding the payment of tithes and the reassertion of local authority rather than the scriptures as the vehicle for reform. These differences also indicate yet another strand in the complex tapestry of the Radical Reformation, the influence of rural communities. These were to assume a greater importance as oppression drove many Brethren from towns and cities to the countryside where it was safer to convene conventicles.

Paedobaptism remained a critical difference between the Brethren and individuals such as Zwingli. Those who refused to baptise their infants were threatened with exile, yet the Brethren continued in their refusal. Additionally, Conrad Grebel and Felix Mantz were forbidden to lead 'schools', evening gatherings at the homes of various Brethren when the Bible was read and discussed. It was probably at such a meeting (Williams, 1961: 120) that the first re-baptism took place when George Cajacob ('Blaurock') asked Grebel to baptise him. Although there was no ordained minister present, Grebel baptised Blaurock on January 21, 1535 in the house of Felix Mantz's mother and then baptised many other adults. The schools were reconvened and attracted believers from the surrounding areas. Baptisms continued and so did persecution, Felix Mantz becoming the first Anabaptist martyr of Protestant Zurich in January 1527.

Thus the decisive step was taken and 'Anabaptism' established. It was no sudden impulse, but the result of detailed discussions based on the scriptures. Traditionally, infants had been baptised ('paedobaptism') according to Zwingli 'as a mere sign' instituted by Jesus Christ with the words 'Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit' (Matthew 28:19). Any change in this, it was claimed, would undermine the words of Christ and their meaning, which was meant to be a pledge of oneself to God. This was understood to mean the faith the baptised had in the hope of re-birth and resurrection to a future life. There were Anabaptists who insisted on the essential conjunction between the inner and outer lives of believers. Anabaptists believed that this meaning had nothing to do

with infants and, consequently, paedobaptism was without reality. Baptism was a sign that the individual had consciously yielded inwardly to God. No infant could do this. The argument based on Matthew 19:14 and Mark 10:14, 'suffer little children to come unto me for such is the kingdom of God' is rejected in that this does not imply that heaven is 'of them'. Neither were the Anabaptists prepared to accept that paedobaptism was the equivalent to the Jewish ceremony of circumcision or that the faith of the parents sufficed in some mysterious manner for the child. Critically, the Anabaptists could find no scriptural warrant for infant baptism. The fundamental justification for re-baptism was related to the nature of the Church of which the baptised became a member. Baptism was considered a means of salvation, an acceptance of the Holy Spirit and entry into a believers' Church. This marked the beginning of a theology of regeneration and is defended and explained in the writings of early reformers such as Grebel, Schwenckfeld, Hubmaier, Denck and Marpeck. It was further elucidated in the colloquies when these and other reformers answered the criticisms and condemnations of those who represented the Magisterial Reformation and the orthodox church.

The strength of their convictions and their eagerness to be re-baptised led the earliest Anabaptists to accept this action from those who led their groups and who used water from local wells, fountains and rivers. Baptism took the forms of immersion or effusion, although there are instances when the sign of the cross was made on the foreheads of the baptised. Before the ceremony, those to be baptised had to receive some manner of instruction, to confess their faith and pledge their commitment to the faith and the church of which they became a member. This followed Christ's commission to 'Go forth and teach, baptise those who believe and ensure that they obey the commandments'. Grebel emphasised that the Spirit of God is at work in baptism, that faith comes from heaven as Acts 2:38 describes:

'Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be
baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus
Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall
receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'

This is surely one of the key Biblical passages as it so clearly links repentance, baptism, cleansing from sins and, as it is done in the name of Jesus, this 'ploughing of the soul' prepares the believer for the reception of the Holy Spirit. Of great

significance to the Anabaptists is that Peter was speaking to 'men and brethren', thus indicating *adult* baptism. This clear statement of the fundamental importance of baptism is further emphasised in Acts 9:17-19 and Acts 19:2-5.

There were differences regarding the meaning of 'inner' and 'outer' aspects of baptism and Hubmaier asserted a three-fold baptism of spirit, water and blood (i.e. martyrdom). That which was held in common was enshrined in the first of the Schleithem Articles: 'Baptism shall be given to all those who have been taught repentance and the amendment of life and to those who desire to walk in the resurrection of Jesus Christ ...'(Snyder, 1997: 115). It was this baptismal faith that strengthened believers' resolve and commitment to a 'believers' church', to separate themselves from the outside world, to be *in* the world but not *of* it, and thus establish an alternative society. The Anabaptists thus believed that they became a community of saints united in their love of God and of their fellow brethren.

This belief and practice roused the opposition of the civic authorities, the Roman Catholic Church and those reformers who were developing the Lutheran Church. The first Anabaptist martyr was Hippolyus Eberle, who was martyred as a 'Protestant' in the Catholic canton of Schwyz on May 29, 1525 as the authorities did not distinguish between Protestant and Anabaptist heresy (Dyck, 1993: 54). The first martyr at the hands of a Protestant government was Felix Mantz, who was drowned in the Limmat River, Zurich, on January 5, 1527 for sedition.

Anabaptists could either remain in their communities and suffer there or move to other areas sympathetic to their beliefs. Wolfgang Ulimann emigrated with a group to Moravia, only to be put to death by the Senescall of Walburg. Persecution for their faith and emigration in the hope of finding freedom to practise it are marked features of the history of the Anabaptists.

In spite of this opposition, Anabaptism spread through some of the cantons of Switzerland and gained an important adherent when Wilhelm Reublin baptised, in Easter 1525, Balthaser Hubmaier (1481-1528), a Doctor of Divinity, Co-Rector of the University of Ingolstadt and Chaplain of Regensburg Cathedral. He undoubtedly added, significantly, to the intellectual strength of the Anabaptists, especially in their

disputations with Zwingli, Johannes Eck and other eminent theologians of the Roman Catholic Church. Hubmaier does, however, indicate through his writings that the Radical Revolution was never a single, coherent movement, but reflected the strongly held convictions of small groups and outstanding individuals. Likewise there were readily distinguishable characteristics between the Swiss, South German/Moravian and Dutch reformers. Williams and Mergal (1957: 29) distinguish between the Spiritualist, Revolutionary, Rational and Evangelical strands within the Radical Reformation. Hubmaier, as one individual among the reformers, would support one of six baptismal theologies; accept the idea of a regenerate, evangelical magistrate; justify the use of the sword at Waldshut; recognise Mass as a symbolic, memorial sacrament and, in the face of fierce opposition, would argue for the postponement of baptism. In some of these convictions he would find strong support; in others marked opposition.

The radical reformation became inextricably linked with the uprising of peasants and it is significant that this intertwining was reflected in the Twelve Articles written by Sebastian Lotzer, a furrier, pamphleteer and lay preacher of Memmingen, Upper Swabia, in March 1525:

1. Every congregation to have the right to elect its own pastor
2. for the support of clergy ... limited to the 'great tithe' of grain produce. The 'small tithe' (on livestock and dairy produce) lapsed.
3. Serfdom abrogated because Jesus freed all men.
4. Thus all men have the right to hunt and fish
5. and gather wood from common forest.
6. Services not to be exacted above what God's word permits
7.or what is customary
8.and must be in proportion to land held.
9. Punishments not to exceed customary law.
10. Meadows and fields which have been common must be returned.
11. Lords not to exact death toll, depriving widows and orphans of their livelihood.
12. If any articles can be shown to be contrary to the Word of God it will be withdrawn (Williams 1961: 68).

The thinking that resulted in these Articles lost its influence when the peasants' struggles were crushed, but they may have influenced Michael Sattler when the Schleithem Confession was written in 1527. The impact of the peasants' wishes was not lost on Hubmaier and he maintained his links with them throughout his travels and is remembered for washing the feet of his parishioners, a sign of humility in a Doctor of Theology, and one keeping a good conscience with God. This ceremony is still continued among the more conservative Amish-Mennonite groups.

The social and theological ideas crossed again in the dispute between Grebel and Zwingli regarding the payment of tithes (a ten per cent tax on land produce which was passed to the church). Where was the Scriptural authority for the imposition of tithes? '*Sola scriptura*' was to be appealed to time and time again in justification of practices and the resolution of theological and social questions. The background of this problem in the cantons of Switzerland was the desire for greater independence for local (especially rural) communities leading to independence of their churches (of the new order) and the consequent selection and payment of their pastors by their own congregations. Zwingli's support for tithes and against local church authority was seen as perpetuating the Old Order rather than supporting reformed congregationalism (*Anfänge*). The reformers, led by Grebel, were opposed to this and also to Zwingli's meaning of the Mass as a Sacrament (Cameron, 1991: 163). Zwingli and Zurich were for Council control, conduct of the Mass (the reformers considered that had already been decided by the Spirit of God) and slow reform. This drove the reformers to seek support outside the Swiss cantons and the Radical Reformation moved across these cantons and into Southern Germany.

During this period, there were movements of reformers within the cantons of Switzerland and into Strasbourg and southern Germany (qv map, Appendix A). Some cantons were strongly supportive of the orthodox Church and reformers had to emigrate to escape punishment (e.g. Hubmaier), others to continue changes within the 'old order' and coming ever closer to the radical viewpoint (e.g. Karlstadt's movement from Orlamunde to Strasbourg to Basle). Consequently, ideas of reform were spread across these parts of Switzerland, Germany and France and a number of reformers met in Strasbourg, a centre of trade routes and a comparatively large city of 20,000 people.

One such contact was that of Grebel and Thomas Müntzer (?1488-1525), a pastor who was to become the principal spokesman of revolutionary spiritualism. He and Grebel agreed on many of the basic ideas of Anabaptism, but Grebel adamantly opposed the use of the sword to achieve the kind of reformed church envisaged by Müntzer. Müntzer was convinced that the Last Days were imminent, that God would purge the world and in anticipation of this he wished the peasants to purge the contemporary world. This eschatological conviction was a significant feature of South German Anabaptism and reappeared in the writings of the Swabian furrier Melchior Hoffman and the actions of Mathijs and Beukels in Munster in 1534. Müntzer also had an influence on the conduct of Anabaptist services (Williams, 1961: 50) in that the major portion of the service was sung and chants in German were retained. He had the Ten Commandments carved on the tablets and displayed in the church; the words of the Eucharist were said by the whole congregation and used whole chapters of the Scriptures. Müntzer also argued that baptism should be postponed until the action was understood. Otherwise he was remembered for his inflammatory language, his idea of personal suffering before the visitation of the Holy Spirit and his joining a peasants' uprising. He suffered martyrdom on May 27, 1525.

There are many instances of radicals who would make their contributions to the radical reformation and suffer for their faith (Hubmaier, Sattler and Mantz); those who would return to the old order (Karlstadt) and those who would be killed in battle (Zwingli at Kappel, 1531).

Unlike the Magisterial Reformation, the Radical Reformation had no political base and, with some minor exceptions, had no Princes, Counts, Electors, Margraves or Langraves to defend it. Consequently, it was constantly oppressed by the orthodox church, the Protestants – a term first used in 1529 (Cameron, 1991: 270) – the aristocracy and the civic authorities. One of the rare exceptions to this opposition was in Waldshut in 1525 where, under the influence of Reublin and Hubmaier, there was a development of 'civic Anabaptism', but this was soon crushed. Conrad Mantz, at Hallau, also created an Anabaptist community that was prepared to defend itself but had only a short existence.

Gradually, in spite of the difference in doctrinal detail and the scattering of oppressed believers, a new, radical church was created initially in Switzerland, thence in South Germany, Strasbourg, Austria, Moravia, along the Rhine Valley and into North Germany and northern areas of Holland (Snyder, 1997: 120). Often it continued to exist as a number of small gatherings, especially in rural settings where their detection by the authorities was more difficult. The background of their leadership changed from being priestly and academic to one where artisans and peasants were of greater significance, e.g. Conrad Huber was a lace maker, Diepold Peringer an illiterate peasant from Wöhrd, Clement Ziegler a gardener, Thomas Salzmann a sheath maker, Matthew Servass a linen weaver and Pilgrim Marpeck a teacher and engineer. Their strongly held convictions and unquenchable spirit in spite of many losses through martyrdoms (van Braght, 1960) both alarmed and dismayed their opponents, yet because of continued imprisonments and oppression the Anabaptists could only survive as a persecuted, underground movement that came to reject armed resistance and being part of the 'outside world'. This 'separation', a defining point in the history of Anabaptism is found in Romans 12:2:

'And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God.'

The whole attitude and convictions of the Anabaptists were crystallised on February 24, 1527 in Schleithem, where a group that included Michael Sattler produced a document 'The Schleithem Articles' (later to be known as the Schleithem Confession) which resulted from members of the group working through their differences and reaching a consensus of what they held in common in matters of faith. The Seven Articles concern baptism, the ban, the breaking of bread, separation from the abominations of the world, shepherds in the congregation, the sword and the oath.

On baptism (Article 1): 'Baptism shall be given to all those who have been taught repentance and the amendment of life ... and those who desire to walk in the resurrection of Jesus Christ' (Snyder, 1997: 115). Baptism therefore had to be a 'believers' baptism', leading to a renewal of the believer's life which followed the way of Christ. That is, the action of baptism was followed by an acceptance of this duty to

lead a godly life. If the believer then sinned, he or she could be 'banned' as in Matthew 18:15-17:

'Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee,
go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone;
if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or
two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses
every word may be established.

And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the
church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be
unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.'

The answer to this and other questions concerning the faith was to be found '*sola scriptura*', in this instance in Matthew's Gospel. Biblical justification was critical because a 'community of saints' was expected to show in its behaviour that it was leading (as a congregation and as individuals) an exemplary Christian life that separated them from non-Christians and non-Anabaptists. This separation is based, in part, on Romans 12:2 and I Corinthians 5:11.

It is said that '... three ideas, central to the Seven Articles of Schleithem, when taken together, define early Anabaptism: the nature of Christian obedience, the idea of the gathered people of God and the way of Christian love (Yoder, 1977: 5). The idea of obedience developed into the concept of '*Gelassenheit*', a quiet acceptance, a yieldedness to God's will in self surrender and a tranquillity which is the means of coming to God which is Christ himself. This is a spiritual not a physical condition. This is part of the Anabaptist vision that emphasises the idea of Christianity as 'discipleship', the church as a brotherhood and a new ethic of love and non-resistance. Again, these fundamental ideas of unity, brotherhood and community are as strongly affirmed today as witness and mission by Mennonites and Amish as they were in the 1520s.

Article V, the election of shepherds by congregations, represents the early growth of a democratic influence in Anabaptism where the priesthood of believers had to take the necessary actions of identifying teachers among the congregations. As shepherds were male members of congregations this served to limit the role of women, some of whom (e.g. the wives of Hubmaier and Sattler) brought considerable spiritual gifts to Anabaptism.

Oppression continued and increased under the pain of execution for those who had undergone re- or adult baptism and caused some Anabaptists to migrate into Moravia, to the Palatinate, north into the Rhine Valley and Hesse (qv map, Appendix A). Nonetheless, there were reformers who were committed to extending the faith in spite of all opposition and constant dangers. Hans Hut (1490-1527) was a bookbinder and bookseller who travelled extensively in south Germany, establishing congregations in at least eighteen major towns and cities as well as numerous rural areas and baptised many hundreds of people. Hut's baptism ideal was distinctly spiritual, which linked the work of the Holy Spirit with suffering on the progress to true faith but even more so was linked to the eschatological convictions that were fundamental to South German Anabaptism. This might well explain the urgency and the extent of his baptismal work. The sign of the cross on the forehead, Hut's preferred mode of baptism, would identify some of the 144,000 elect who would escape judgement and establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

Thomas Müntzer added to his mysticism and apocalypticism the idea of the inner birth of the Holy Spirit through suffering, a painful process of coming to faith that would lead to spiritual regeneration. This idea of the consequence of a spiritual rebirth rather than the process leading up to it was to be seen in later Anabaptism. Müntzer also accepted the authority of the Holy Spirit, irrespective of on whom it fell, reinforced the sense of equality among members of congregations and would influence the spiritualistic aspects of early Anabaptism. He was, however, vilified for stressing the need for the elect (to Müntzer this meant the common people) to remove the godless (especially the contemporary rulers). This could have influenced the peasants in their wars and led to Müntzer's capture and death after the battle of Frankenhausen in May 1525.

South German Anabaptism was different from that developed in Switzerland in its emphasis on mysticism and apocalyptic elements, yet there was a clear link between the groups in the idea of regeneration of believers through the acceptance and influence of the Holy Spirit. Both groups had a common bond in anticlericalism and were influenced by the discontent and protest arising from contemporary social and economic circumstances.

Salvation was considered by all Anabaptists to be a communal matter, with each individual playing a particular role. 'Individualism, particularly in the matter of eternal salvation and damnation, was madness, an instance of pride, which was considered the progenitor of all other vices. In the cosmic battle, one needed all the forces of the community of saints on one's side' (Snyder, 1997: 27). The sublimation of the self in deference to the congregation or community is clearly evinced in modern Amish-Mennonite practice and is one of many criticisms of the practices of these groups.

Hans Denck (?1500-1527) emphasised the importance of the Word which gave each individual direct access to God and did not require a literate clergy as an authority between the believer and God. The balance between the idea of a priesthood of believers and an individual's interpretation of the Scriptures made (and still makes) for a certain tension between groups and their leaders. In the absence of a satisfactory and Christian resolution of theological differences, it could lead to schisms.

Pilgrim Marpeck (1495-1556), from a wealthy Tyrolean background, counterbalanced the spiritualistic ideas of contemporaries such as Caspar Schwenckfeld (1489-1561) in denying that the inward, individual spiritual life cannot be neatly separated from the outer, social and physical life. This contrasts the love of God with the love of neighbour. Marpeck was concerned with the ethical life of believing people which he believed would be assisted by giving public prominence to baptism, discipline, preaching and the Lord's Supper. This 'visible church' created an external order through which believers are led from the visible to the invisible.

Schwenckfeld was one of the few aristocrats to embrace the Anabaptist faith and a leading proponent of the spiritualistic interpretation of the faith, emphasising the interaction of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. As with Marpeck,

Schwenckfeld encouraged public preaching (a sign of the outer Word) but this was best done by those who had been influenced by the Spirit. He agreed with Karlstadt and Müntzer that 'human beings are justified by *becoming* righteous by the power of God (not by human effort as such), freed and empowered to begin a process of sanctification' (Snyder, 1997: 61). Schwenckfeld strongly agreed with the idea of free will and against predestination (contrary to Luther). In terms of faith, this was a spiritual bond between Christ and the regenerate believer; on the Lord's Supper Christ was not physically present (he referred to John 6:32-35); and that water baptism should follow catechetical instruction but stressed inner baptism which was spiritual. He considered the divinity of Christ was due to the origin of His human flesh in God the Father and not a combination of God and the Virgin Mary, a conception of Christology of importance in North German and Dutch Anabaptism.

In spite of repression, Anabaptism continued to spread into the Tyrol, a region which came under the influence of Pilgrim Marpeck and Jacob Hutter. Peasant uprisings and religious reform were closely associated and the leadership given by the Anabaptists further separated the Radical from the Magisterial Reformation. Newer converts accepted the core beliefs of the Anabaptist faith to which were added the spiritual aspects of sharing, community discipline, moral accountability and the questioning of usury.

Anabaptists reached Moravia and it was there that Jacob Hutter established a number of strict rules of conduct ('*Ordnungen*') based on a pooling of resources, thus establishing communitarian Anabaptism. This marked the beginning of the Hutterite tradition of the community of goods which persists today in Hutterite communities in the USA and Canada. As with other commitments to a particular belief, there was believed to be a scriptural justification for the community of goods as found in Acts 2:44-5; Acts 4:32, 35 and 37; and Acts 5:1-7. The coercion exercised by Hutter to achieve his community was to cause a split with other Anabaptists who were prepared to share their livelihoods without this force. The Hutterites have remained a separate group from the main body of Anabaptists to this day. Although Hutter was to suffer martyrdom, his followers moved on to Russia before emigrating to the New World.

A further development of the faith centred on the writings and actions of Melchior Hoffman (c.1495-1543/4), the Swabian furrier, which some claim have unique characteristics independent of Swiss Baptism and only some links with the south German Anabaptism of Denck and Hut. Later Mennonite beliefs regarding separation, the sword and the oath are said to have developed directly from Hoffman and his teachings (Snyder, 1997: 282). His influence as an itinerant evangelist visiting Baltic lands emphasising his eschatological beliefs was widespread. His work with Karlstadt did not prevent Hoffman seeing himself as a new Enoch or Elijah (qv Revelation 11:3) and envisioning what he believed to be the prediction of the 'end days' (qv Daniel 12). He reflected Karlstadt's baptismal regeneration when the will is freed, but thereafter all sin is against faith, the gift of the Holy Spirit and therefore unforgivable. Hoffman stressed a symbolic view of the Lord's Supper and accepted a role for the Christian magistrate. He accepted re-baptism on his arrival in Strasbourg in 1529 and such was the excitement resulting from the gathering of so many significant reformers in the city (Schwenckfeld, Denck and Capito encountered Hoffman there) that he considered the city to be the New Jerusalem. He was happy to be arrested by the authorities and waited in prison for the realisation of his hope for the return of Christ to an earthly Paradise. Hoffman died in prison in 1543.

It was Hoffman's apocalyptic ideas and their influence on Dutch Anabaptists that have left the deepest and bloodiest mark on the faith. He was convinced that converted Christian rulers would prepare the way for Christ's return and Anabaptists holding this belief felt that this would lead to their people ruling with Christ in the New Jerusalem. New Jerusalem had to be governed and in his interpretation of this government Hoffman differed sharply from the mainstream of Anabaptism as revealed in Romans 13. Obedience to the authorities was essential provided they had been given their power by God and moreover the use of the political sword was fundamental to the events of the Last Days and the coming of Christ, a most volatile assumption.

Melchiorite Anabaptism gave rise to the events in Münster when two Dutch Anabaptists, Jan Matthijs and Jan Beukels ('Jan van Leiden') put the extreme view of Hoffman into practice. Anabaptism had spread along the Rhine Valley into Holland (Friesland, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Briel) and numbered among its new adherents Dirk and Obbe Philips. Dirk was ordained as an elder but it was Bernhard Rothmann

(?1495-1535?) and Jan Matthijs who introduced Anabaptism into Münster, which was to be declared the new New Jerusalem. Rothmann justified the use of the sword in the defence of the People of God; Matthijs declared that those who refused adult baptism would be executed by the sword of vengeance, so preparing the way for the appearance of Jesus. This was quite alien to the acceptance of pacifism by mainstream Anabaptism.

Münster was placed under siege by Bishop Waldich in January 1534, which served to heighten the expectations of the besieged who sent calls for others of their belief to join them. The Münsterians, cowed by the actions of Matthijs and van Leiden, were forced to accept polygamy (following Old Testament examples) and the community of goods. After the death of Matthijs (killed by the besieging army), Jan van Leiden instituted a messianic leadership ('King Jan of Jerusalem') and introduced capital punishment for crimes such as adultery, blasphemy, seditious language, scolding parents, gossiping, and any criticism of the new rule. The siege of Münster finally ended in massacre and the execution of its three leaders, Jan van Leiden, Bernhard Knipper and Bernard Kretching. Their bodies were hung in cages on the tower of St Lambert's Church as grim reminders to Anabaptists of the inevitable end of an Anabaptist Revolution and 'civic Anabaptism'.

The significant aftermath of Münster was that thereafter Anabaptists were considered by non-Anabaptists and the civic authorities to be revolutionaries prepared to resort to violence to achieve their desired heaven on earth. This increased the repression of the Anabaptists and their further scattering, but a remnant remained to maintain the faith. Obbe Philips, Dirk Philips and David Joris (c1501-1556) emerged as leaders of a pacifist body and would re-emphasise the piety so evident in the writings and actions of the evangelical realists, hoping still to establish conventicles in the New Testament pattern.

The second consequence of Münster was that it inspired Menno Simons (1496-1561) 'the greatest and most attractive of the Dutch Anabaptist leaders' (Jones, 1985: 197) to assume the role of shepherd to the remnant of the Anabaptist faith in Holland and North Germany that survived Münster and the severe oppression those of the faith faced in those areas. Simons, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, witnessed the

martyrdom of many Anabaptists but it was probably the stoicism of Sikke Freerks in facing his execution that led Menno to explore the tenets of the Anabaptist faith at a time when he was beginning to question his own faith and his role in the Catholic Church. Accepting the unique authority of the Bible, he began to question the rightness of infant baptism and adopted sacramentalism. It is claimed that he was intellectually influenced by Hoffman in adhering to the millenarian hope of Christ's second coming, but was implacably opposed to the militant Anabaptists.

The publication of *The Foundation of Christian Doctrine* in 1540 reveals Menno to be, as with the vast majority of Anabaptists, a Trinitarian who strongly asserted the sinlessness of Jesus. His Christology asserted that Jesus's body was a new creation by the Holy Spirit and therefore not derived from the Virgin Mary's humanity. In contradistinction to David Joris he believed in conformity to the world and other churches provided the Anabaptists were true to their faith. In 1536 he accepted believers' baptism and was ordained as an elder in 1537 by Obbe Philips. Thereafter he was accorded and assumed the leadership (in place of Obbe) of the Anabaptists and such was his outstanding influence that his followers became known as 'Mennonites'.

There were differences between Menno and Joris concerning the nature of faith and the church. Menno believed 'that faith in Christ necessarily exhibited itself in a church which emphasised discipline and followed the example of Jesus, including believers' baptism, non-resistance, non-swearing of oaths, and endurance of suffering to the point of martyrdom' (Weaver, 1987: 102). These were akin to the beliefs held by the Swiss Brethren and Anabaptists in parts of Germany and were further spread by Menno through the Dutch speaking part of Holland, along the north German coast to Prussia and south to Cologne, thus bringing leadership and uniformity to those scattered groups. The 'end time' mission was replaced by the idea of living in a period of grace that had commenced with Jesus.

Controversies based on different emphasis rather than principle continued to influence the faith, but that of church discipline, i.e. the 'ban' and excommunication, was to cause more disruption and pain than any other difference. It was also to lead to schisms. It was essential to establish a pure church, free of the consequences of Münster, with a discipline that really reflected a community of saints which did not

indulge in any questionable behaviour (some of Joris's views had led to sexual excesses).

Should there be restrictions on marriages to non-Anabaptists? Should a person who ignored the wishes of the faith regarding marriage be excommunicated or should this be limited to the spouse? Should excommunication be regarded in the strictest terms regarding social relationships with those excommunicated? How rigid should be the application of the 'ban'? The banning of a non-Anabaptist wife led, eventually, to a break between the Dutch and the south German Anabaptists. It appears that Menno was opposed to too strict an enforcement of the ban but was over-ruled by younger colleagues, Dirk Philips and Leenaert Bouwens. This harshness also resulted in the 'Waterlanders' coming into existence as a distinct group of Anabaptists who were no longer prepared to be known as Mennonites. Further divisions occurred between the Flemish and the Friesians for largely the same reason, although the personality and behaviour of Bouwens contributed to this schism. Although allegedly neglecting his congregation and indulging in drink (the Anabaptists never were a perfect or ideal community) he was forgiven and is said to have baptised over 13,000 people.

In spite of some theological differences and emphasises, there was a shared outlook regarding doctrine and groups could and did resume a new unity in the 17th century. They considered themselves to be, within the new church, 'a suffering community of adult believers which existed as an alternative minority society within the dominant society of the world. One entered this society voluntarily, which made it an adult act, testified to by adult baptism. The life and teaching of Jesus Christ and the example of the early church provided the norms for this new society. Thus the Bible, particularly the New Testament, became central to the life of the church, which considered itself a restoration of the church in the New Testament. After some initial equivocation, non-resistance came to belong virtually by definition to the Anabaptist understanding of the Jesus way. Discipline exercised by the brotherhood preserved the purity and integrity of the church's life. This new church rejected the authority of government in ecclesiological affairs and regarded government service by Christians with great suspicion' (Weaver, 1987: 111).

Mennonites and Anabaptists continued to be persecuted, with martyrdoms in Holland numbering thousands. The last in Bern was in 1571; in Leeworden in 1574; in Brussels in 1597 and in Zur in 1614. Thus, the believers moved either in their entirety or in small groups to areas that were more tolerant of them; from Switzerland, some families and individuals moved into the Palatinate and Alsace, others to Moravia, some from north Germany and Holland into Prussia, Poland and Russia. Their skills as farmers were widely recognised and they were encouraged by some Electors and Landgraves to remain in their original communities and occupy land abandoned or decimated by the Religious Wars. Resentment in some communities was aroused by the Anabaptists' rejection of military service and service as local guards, but some territories accepted payment of an extra tax in lieu of such services.

The Mennonites in Holland became less distinctive as a group because of their success in business and trade. Some became relatively rich but it was as farmers that the great majority of Mennonites and Anabaptists made their living and this is largely true of contemporary groups in the USA.

A further attempt was made at creating a new unity at Dortrecht, Holland, in 1632 when the brotherhood there and in many places 'deploring the existing divisions between congregations which did not differ from one another in faith and practice, decided to put forth efforts toward union' (Horsch, 1942). Bishop Adrain Cornelis drew up what has become known as the 'Dortrecht Confession of Faith' and this was supported by a large number (qv Border, 1981: 4) of Flemish and Friesian ministers, a small number from central and south Germany and, in 1660, by ministers from Alsace. It appears, therefore, in the longer term to have attracted general agreement from a wide area for its eighteen Articles that dealt with the sweep of scriptural concerns from the Creation to the Resurrection of the Dead and the Last Judgement. The coming of the Christ, the importance of the Gospel, repentance, holy baptism, the office of teachers and ministers (male and female), the Lord's Supper, matrimony, against defence by force, the swearing of oaths, ex-communication, banning are all explained and justified in some detail. There is also a specific mention of washing of feet, 'a sign of true humiliation'. The additional importance of the Dortrecht Confession is that it explicitly describes much of the content of the Schleithem Confession thus incorporating the act of Brotherly Union some hundred and five years after that earlier

Confession. This emphasises the continuity of the commitment to the basic affirmations of the Anabaptist faith.

The importance of the ban as one of the fundamental tenets of Anabaptist faith would re-emerge towards the end of the 17th century when contemporary conservatism was challenged by a movement for spiritual renewal. The decrease in oppression and the richness of some Mennonites created the idea that discipline and separation from the world that maintained the purity of Anabaptism was weakening. Again, as in the 1530s, the movement for renewal emanated from Switzerland and spread into the south Rhineland and Alsace. The movement was epitomised in the personality and work of a young Swiss elder, Jacob Ammann. Ammann wanted congregations to celebrate communion twice a year, partly to give believers an additional opportunity to question their discipline (*Ordnung*), and renew their acceptance of it. Additionally, this extra service provided an opportunity for married women to receive communion, as otherwise, because of frequent pregnancies, they might not be able to attend the traditional single service. Likewise, the relationships between those of the faith and those not of the faith, the Half Baptists (*Halbtauffer*) or True Hearted (*Freherzige*) People, could be rationalised (Nolt, 1992: 24).

After meetings between those who supported Ammann and those Mennonites like Elder Hans Reist who opposed Ammann's interpretation of church organisation, there was a schism that marked the emergence of the Amish as a distinct group of Anabaptists in 1693. Ammann was very liberal in using the power of ex-communication to re-establish old, traditional Anabaptist practices and create a new strand in the tapestry of the faith stretching back to the earliest Swiss Brethren.

The motive behind Ammann's conviction was to be found in his observation of congregations he had visited together with *his* interpretation of the Scriptures and the practice of the *Ordnung*. To Ammann some behaviour of 'the saints' did not accord with his strict interpretation of scriptural ideas or congregational practices but the strength of feeling manifested in discussions with those who did not accord with his views reflected a lack of piety or Christian charity. There could also have been a measure of dogmatism, self-righteousness and self-centredness tinged with pride.

‘This I believe and here I stand’ is an echo of earlier reformists, yet it was the ‘purity’ of congregations which was the chief concern.

The Amish soon developed a strict conservatism based on a no compromise attitude towards shunning the ex-communicated to the extent of not eating meals with such people. In addition, Ammann demanded that members of congregations, reflecting both humility and simplicity, wear distinctive dress and hats, the men adopt untrimmed beards and that hooks and eyes be used on clothes not buttons. Attempts to reconcile differences between the Amish and Mennonites ended in failure in spite of some Amish leaders ex-communicating themselves!

From the earliest days of forming conventicles as the basis for organising their particular form of worship, the Anabaptist and, later, Mennonite and Amish church services were characterised by their simplicity. Ministers would either emerge as natural leaders or be selected by ‘the lot’ and become responsible for conducting worship. Following the earliest days of Anabaptism, when services were held in fields or caves, specific buildings were used, although the Amish favoured worshipping in their homes or barns, a tradition that continues today.

Ministers were expected to deliver two sermons at each service and were chosen to do so immediately before the service. All ministers were expected to preach spontaneously relating the content of their sermons to the Holy Scriptures and the every day life of the congregation. Preaching the word of God and the testimony of the correctness of the words used was of primary importance, but singing was an integral part of the worship reflecting the words in Corinthians 3:16, ‘admonish one another.....in hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord’. Hymns were sung at the beginning and the end of services and the singing was *a cappella* as instruments were said to foster pride, display and ostentation. The ‘Ausbund’ was used as a hymn book as it contained a collection of hymns written during the period of imprisonment of Anabaptists in Passau, Bavaria. It continues to be used today and its hymns reflect the imprisoned believers’ sorrows, suffering, protest but never despair, because of the prisoners’ conviction of the ever-present influence of the Saviour.

All those attending services had to be in agreement with the Ordnung so that there was peace within the congregation. Those in disagreement could certainly not take communion when it was offered.

There was time devoted to the reception of any individuals who had been under the 'ban' but were able, publicly, to confess their faults and thus resume their full membership of the congregation.

Whereas peace was a cardinal requirement in Anabaptist services, the difficulties and dissatisfactions between the Mennonites and Amish were reinforced by the pressures of economic and political problems.

The difficulties and dissatisfactions arising from these differences were reinforced by the pressures of economic and political problems. Heavy taxes, rising rents and the War of Palatinate Succession placed burdens on all the population, but the Mennonites and Amish were also troubled by the civic authorities, especially that of the city of Bern, which was determined to rid itself of these religious groups (qv Furner, 2001: 429-470). Inevitably there were movements of groups northwards into the Rhine Valley and Alsace aided by the rewards given by some authorities to those people who betrayed the Anabaptists. Some groups moved into Lorraine because of landowners there who valued the farming expertise and hard work of the Amish-Mennonites, but overall there was a significant movement into Holland.

The Bern government was so determined to move the Anabaptists that arrangements were made with the East India Company to transport these people to islands in the Pacific. This plan failed, but Holland decided to accept the new arrivals as they finally reached that country in 1711. Thereafter these religious groups were caught up with the increasing desire to emigrate from the Old to the New World. William Penn, the Quaker from Pennsylvania, had travelled throughout Holland and the Rhine Valley, encouraging those who wished to gain religious freedom to travel to Pennsylvania. For those who lacked elementary civic rights and whose children were considered

illegitimate, this was doubly attractive even if they did not always receive the money promised when they sold their possessions before boarding ship.

The first émigrés were probably Mennonites who, in 1683, settled in Germantown, Pennsylvania (Nolt, 1992: 47). The Amish followed in 1736-7 when the 'Charming Nancy' transported 21 families to Pennsylvania. Thereafter, emigration increased and Amish settlements of approximately 500 people were established in Berks County, thence Northkill Creek, Lancaster County (near Cocalico and Cairns) and later groups settled in Berks County (the town of Cumru), along the Conestoga Creek (Morgantown), into the Lebanon Valley, Somerset County (1761) and Mifflin County (1791) (Holt, 1992: 56-7).

Likewise the Mennonites increased in numbers until, by 1824, there were some 4000 Swiss and South Germans in Eastern Pennsylvania. After the Napoleonic Wars, some 3000 Amish Mennonites emigrated from Alsace-Lorraine and South Germany to Pennsylvania. Thereafter there was movement further west to Ohio, Illinois and Indiana, thus establishing the main centres of population for these groups in the US (Dyck, 1993: 196). There were small and earlier groups in Manhattan, New York and Delaware.

The expense of sailing to the New World was found in part by the sale of possessions in Europe and by assistance afforded by other groups of Swiss, German and Dutch Amish and Mennonite groups. Some individuals exchanged a period of indentured labour for the cost of the passage but there is no evidence that either Amish or Mennonites employed slaves; on the contrary, there is evidence that they were among the first groups to protest about slavery.

Both the Amish and the Mennonites took with them to their earliest settlements in the New World a steadfast acceptance of a particular faith, a clear commitment to their community, a sense of shared discipline ('*Ordnung*'), a quiet acceptance of what life, through their belief, brought them ('*Gelassenheit*') and the consequences of failure in keeping to the rules of their belief ('*Meidung*'). Added to these teachings was the conviction that they should be different and separate from the 'outside world' which, being farmers and occupying scattered farms in rural areas, they strove successfully to

do. This outlook and these practices were based on strongly held religious beliefs which can be ignored by outsiders unless they are made explicit. These 'core teachings' are outlined by Snyder (1997: 142):

1. Anabaptist views shared with other Christian Confessions:
The Creed: The Twelve Articles of the Christian Faith
2. Views shared with Evangelical/Protestant groups:
Anti-Sacramentalism: Critique of Catholic Sacraments
Anti-Clericalism: Critique of Catholic clergy
Authority of Scripture: Critique of Papal Authority
Salvation by grace through faith: Critique of Catholic view
3. Anabaptist doctrinal emphases:
Holy Spirit: The active power of God
Spirit and letter: Scripture interpreted by Spirit
Salvation: Faith and works together (discipleship)
Human Person: Yieldedness to the Spirit: Free Will; Human Effort
Eschatology: Expectation of the Last Days
4. The Anabaptist doctrine of the Church (Ecclesiology)
Baptism of Adults: Teaching, Faith, then Water Baptism
The Ban: Fraternal Admonition and Discipline
Memorial Lord's Supper: Closed to non-baptised: a Remembrance
Mutual Aid: No ultimate claims to earthly goods
A visible Church willing to suffer: Perseverance to the End

The Amishman and the Mennonite of the earlier centuries would readily recognise these as *their* core teachings of their faith, as do their present day descendants. At the turn of the centuries these groups, like the population at large, had little idea of the changes the areas in which they settled were to witness. Changes of a social, political, economic and technological nature would, at times, challenge the breadth of human imagination but the Amish and Mennonites would face these changes with resolute faith and steadfastness in practices that would conserve their closely guarded beliefs.

The forerunners of the Mennonites and Amish, the Anabaptists, thus emerged as a distinctive religious group in the 16th century because of their basic beliefs; the bases of the 'Radical Reformation' were in some significant ways different from those of other religious groups who also broke with the orthodox Church and established reformed Churches. Believers' baptism, the membership of redemptive communities, discipleship, acceptance of the discipline of the congregation, separation from the outside world, acceptance of intolerance towards these 'communities of saints' and, in extreme, the possibility (in many cases the actuality) of martyrdom were distinguishing characteristics of early Anabaptism. Excluding the sacrifice of lives these characteristics are evident in the beliefs and lives of today's Mennonites and Amish.

Each tenet of Anabaptist belief finds justification in the Scriptures, yet although some authorities have described the faith as a 'theology of martyrdom' (Ethelbert Stauffer in 1933) or a 'theology of discipleship' (Harold S Bender in 1944), Friedmann (1998: 20) claims that Anabaptism does not have a conventional, explicit theology, a system or structure defined by its content i.e. man's ideas about God and His relationship to man, or man's grasp of his relationship to God. The implicit theology of Anabaptism was expressed in various Confessions of Faith, the proceedings at colloquies or trials and the records of their many debates all forming a mosaic of texts from the Scriptures. The absence of an explicit theology may have been due to a paucity of learned intellectuals who expounded and supported the bases of the Radical Reformation but the early movement was under constant pressure from church and civic authorities which left little settled time for believers to engage in theological tracts. The stress was on 'hearing the sermon' as faith, as Paul wrote 'comes by hearing', in contrast to the orthodox view that faith meant a trust in God's gracious promise, a reliance on the atoning merit of Christ's death and thus, by believing, all will be saved. The Anabaptists did not agree with the separation of faith and life and, although they never taught perfectionist doctrines, there was (and is) constant evidence of faith in their manner of living, a 'work righteousness' (Friedmann, *ibid*: 24). This could be condemned as *self*-righteousness or a perfectionist heresy, but equally the Anabaptists believed the Protestants to rely too heavily on God's grace without earnestly trying to be worthy of it, that the Protestant theology could be a

barrier to the concept of discipleship which was (and is) central to the Anabaptist vision.

Friedmann (ibid: 27) claims that 'Anabaptism is the only example in church history of 'existential Christianity' where there existed no basic split between faith and life, even though the struggle for the realisation or actualisation of this faith into practice remained a perennial task'. Was this basic belief a form of self-delusion? Who can claim this inner harmony or saintliness and with what justification? The Anabaptists and their successors today admit to facing temptations. Young people during the teenage period of '*Rumspringa*' (kicking up their heels) are known to yield to feelings and behaviour not acceptable under the *Ordnung*, the implicit rules or order governing the congregation or brotherhood. Once believers' baptism is accepted and undergone, there is a solemn vow to sin no more as they walk the narrow path of discipleship. According to John 3:3, only a spiritually transformed man (*metatonia*) was ready to join, through baptism in faith, a group such as the Anabaptists, or, it is assumed, their latter day successors, the Mennonites and Amish. Thus throughout their history, this transformation has inspired a resolution and a unique vision enabling believers to withstand trials, tribulations and, in the early days of Anabaptism, martyrdom. Was this a sign of fanaticism or that of an absolute certainty that theirs was the *true* path to the Kingdom of God, of being called and responding in body, mind and spirit to that call? Thus, again according to Friedmann (ibid: 30) 'this existential Christianity, a realised and practised 'Christianity of the Gospel', overcame all inner doubts (*anfechtung*), feelings of despair or anxiety even unto death. This sense of assurance of redemption overcame the need for speculation, to construct a theory which could prove inadequate to the subjectivity of the new birth'. This living faith (*lebendiger glaube*) was a concrete faith, a simple faith yet essentially God Fearing (*fromm*) and part of the 'theology of martyrdom' as it could be tested in suffering (qv I Peter 1:7 and 4:12; John 5:8 and Proverbs 17:3).

The Bible has remained the guide to this faith and continues to be read and discussed constantly in the search for divine guidance, more especially when an individual becomes a full member of the congregation or brotherhood through believers' baptism 'the answer of a good conscience to God' (I Peter 3:21). Likewise, the Mennonites and Amish today are fortified by the implications of I Peter 2:9 'ye are a royal

priesthood' and II Peter 3:13, 'Look for a new heaven and a new earth' although 'some things are hard to understand by the unlearned' (2 Peter 3:16). They are thus able to show a Christian set of values in a way of life which is, in many significant ways, in sharp contrast to the world in its corrupt state (qv Articles Three and Four of the Schleithem Confession which outline the dead works of darkness, of believing and unbelieving, of good and bad.) This is the world of sin from which the Anabaptists withdrew as did, in the 2nd century, the Essenes of Qumran. Romans 12:2 reminds believers to 'be not conformed to this world'; I Corinthians 5:9-11 not to keep company with sinners and the Anabaptists acted on these requirements but not, as the Essenes, becoming isolated from the world and developing an exclusivity that rejected the blind, the deaf and the dumb (qv Wright, 2000: 47). The Anabaptist communities have also had a contiguity in the physical sense with the outside world and thus remain a challenge to that world. The commitment of the congregation or brotherhood ensures that all members are equally treated and cared for irrespective of their disabilities.

This comparative isolation, a result of tension between the kingdom of God (of heaven) and the kingdom of princes (darkness) clearly indicated in Matthew 24 and 13 and Luke 21 and the belief that through this redeeming faith and the manner in which it is lived, the world can be overcome (qv I John 5:4). This requires the closest possible brotherhood of committed disciples and, in its earliest days, the Anabaptist expectation of the imminent return of the kingdom of God meant the 'children of God' would be worthy of this kingdom. In their quiet dedication today this remains a basic belief of the Mennonites and the Amish, but, again, is this a form of fanaticism or hypocrisy however quiet and plain their lives? What of 'original sin'? It must be assumed that this sin is overcome by the new birth following baptism, qv John 3:3, metanoia: a transformation that gains insight into the world of the Holy Spirit and its values.

One of the most concrete and significant ideas throughout the history of Anabaptism has been the brotherhood church (*gemeinde*) or congregation which attempts to translate the kingdom of God into everyday living. This represents a collective witnessing and is also a safeguard against temptation as the church can discipline those who sin. When God has revealed His way there is only one reaction of the

newborn and that is to obey. Only through an obedient, living, loving brotherhood could, as Hubmaier claimed, 'the faithful realise a bit of God's kingdom' (*nachfolge*). Friedmann (1998: 46) claims that 'the Anabaptists embarked on a great venture to seek first the kingdom and its righteousness, as regards the rest (aesthetic, scientific, philosophical and social) the brethren did not worry'. Yet they were and remain orthodox concerning the foundations of Christian faith such as the triune God and the Apostle's Creed.

Emphasis on the brotherhood or congregation, rather than the individual, sharply contrasts Anabaptism with Protestantism, as does the emphasis on suffering the 'bitter Christ' as it was, and is, the life of Christ and the meaning of his death that really mattered to the Anabaptists. Surrendering to God and adopting a childlike obedience, they became disciples of Christ, believing man's inborn sinfulness to be no unconquerable barrier to this task as there is something in man remaining unspoiled, the fallen soul can be remedied through the word of God (qv Psalms 19:7). Likewise the Anabaptists have a unique attitude, in their congregations, regarding the problem of good and evil. Jacob Hutter wrote 'We should not allow sin to dominate our mortal body' but if there was disobedience to God, when for example the believer asserted a self-righteousness, there was a need for this to be acknowledged and abandoned, to be replaced by a sense of yieldedness and resignation (*gelassenheit*) as the sinner opened his heart to a loving and even suffering attitude. Ministers and members of the congregation helped to bring about this change and the return of the sinner to full membership of the brotherhood by the manifestation of brotherly love towards the sinner. This made for peace within the redeemed spirit and quietness in the congregation. Matthew 18 describes this process yet if it was not successful, the sinner would be placed under the ban or, in extreme instances, excommunicated to ensure the purity of the brotherhood, but these actions are based on the Anabaptist idea of love and not regulated by the idea of sin. Pride, the manifestation of self-assertion or autonomy (qv warnings against pride contained in Proverbs 16:8 and II Peter 2:10) was and is considered an act against the *Ordnung* and could result in *meidung* excommunication and, maybe, shunning of the sinner. This appears to be a rare event.

The brotherhood of the Anabaptists is akin to the brotherhood said to be practised by the early churches of emerging 'Christianity' and, again, the believers do not theologise about this; they live it. Love as a dynamic force is a significant theme in Anabaptist writings and is often linked with references to the heart. It is also a common theme in Anabaptist hymns. This love reflects an obedience to God's commandments and, as there is a certainty and assurance of His grace, the Anabaptists do not worry about their salvation. Believers have both according to Friedmann (1998: 85) in the sense of horizontal and vertical relationships, the former with God, the latter with others in the brotherhood. Thus an individual cannot in good conscience relate to God other than with other believers. This is central to Anabaptist belief as is the idea of 'sharing' in the process of redemption. Consequently the way of discipleship is said to have precedence over the concern for salvation and this is, as always, reflective of the 're-born man's' knowledge of the spirit by which he is imbued. God's free and creative love, reflected in true repentance and a new life, is a typically Anabaptist view of faith which links this love with the re-birth of the newly baptised and the repentant sinner. Some writers have suggested that a 'theology of grace', which is used to describe this Anabaptist belief, should be replaced by a 'theology of creative love', which is the very essence of God.

Thus the re-born man is aware of himself as being a child of grace and, as Marpeck claimed, 'grace was an act whereby God renews the divine image in man and thus makes the believer a participant in the divine nature'. The regenerate believer's life becomes 'a walking in grace' and is never considered to be achieved by faith alone or as a 'favour' or 'mercy'. The claim by an individual to be saved was rejected as manifesting the sin of pride yet Anabaptists would still contend that although they are not perfect, they have no doubt concerning the glorious anointment of God's grace, which helps them to resist sin. Blaurock is quoted in the *Martyrs' Mirror of 1666* 'O Zion, thou holy church see that thou holdest fast unto the end and keep thyself unspotted from sin, and thou shalt through grace receive the eternal crown'.

This certainty of salvation (*heilgewissheit*) is as real today among the Mennonites and the Amish as it was in the early years of Anabaptism and although the early eschatological outlook is not explicit in their contemporary life, there is still a quiet certainty of the kingdom to come (*parousia*). This 'theology of the kingdom' is said

by Friedmann (1998: 110) 'to represent the very centre of Anabaptist thinking and believing' and is realised in the community of brotherly love where hatred and violence are, as far as is humanly possible, absent.

The influence of eschatological ideas pervaded the missionary zeal of the early Anabaptists and is still maintained by the Mennonites who have spread their faith, especially in the USA, Canada, South America, Africa and Europe. Organised brotherhood churches, with their emphasis on discipleship and separation from the outside world, contrast sharply with Protestant emphasis on personal salvation and, their critics would claim, compromises with the imperfections of the world. There are no spiritual compromises in the Anabaptist faith. Theirs is a visible church, the anteroom of Paradise, islands of peace and havens of certitude, 'lanterns of righteousness in which the light of grace is borne' (Hutterite Riedmann in 1541) where all of life was and is one great service to God and surrender to God. Consequently all aspects of life are, in principle, sanctified and transfigured within the church, a community of the spirit (qv I John 1:3) and a chosen holy nation (qv I Peter 2:9), yet one within which there is no distinction between lay members and preachers ('one priestly nation', I Peter 2, 5 and 9) and no distinction between secular and sacred work.

Coping with the weaknesses of its members with an accepted form of discipline, Bender (quoted in Friedmann, 1998: 126) describes the brotherhood as a 'church of order'. 'For in it the corporate body determines in principle the pattern of life for its members and assumes the final authority over their behaviour. The individual person, however, submits to this ruling freely at his baptismal pledge. The outward expression of such an 'order' is a document usually called 'Church Discipline'. Although Bender claims the 'suffering church' was the real cornerstone of the embryonic Anabaptist movement, even accepting baptism the believer's conscience remains the final authority, thus following the dictum 'faith is not to be compelled but is to be accepted as a free gift from God' as coercion would destroy the unity of the spirit. The influence of the spirit is respected by Anabaptists ('the wind bloweth where it listeth'); they have been and remain absolutists regarding their faith with toleration a word not found in their vocabulary.

In essence, whatever word is used to describe the 'theology' of Anabaptism, one principal belief binds all together, in commitment and behaviour, namely believers' baptism, which has resulted in some writers describing Anabaptism as 'a covenantal baptismal theology'. However, baptism is described for example as 'a good conscience towards God' (I Peter 3:21); 'a bath of regeneration' (Titus 3:5); 'a seal on the forehead' (Rev. 7:13), it is certainly a sign, a pledge, a decision for life (hence an existential aspect) which relates God to man, man to God and man to man. Accepting baptism means joining a brotherhood or congregation, sharing a spiritual quality with others and manifesting an external attestation for an internally experienced new birth. Surrendering oneself to the obedience of God is the foundation of *gelassenheit* and it is only this acceptance of God's will and the peace of the whole brotherhood that allows believers to partake of the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is the second great manifestation and demand of Anabaptist belief. Transubstantiation and consubstantiation had no meaning for the early Anabaptists who understood the Lord's Supper to be a memorial to Christ's supreme sacrifice whose celebration gave strength and encouragement to the brotherhood or congregation, especially in the days of oppression and martyrdom. It was also a sign of certitude of belonging to a company of redeemed souls and thus part of the body of Christ. This is said by Friedmann (1998: 139) 'to be a new rich symbolism, different from and beyond the Zwinglian interpretation, a symbolism which, one may safely say, goes back to apostolic and even pre-apostolic times'. This was a 'love feast', a unique fusion of like-minded people into one body and a covenant pregnant with meaning and expectation, particularly in Anabaptism's early years. Through its symbolism the Lord's Supper represented an ever renewing nucleus of the kingdom of God which has been perpetuated into modern times through the various confessions of faith and the continuance of separate congregations or brotherhoods.

The church has also been maintained by an inner discipline based on the ban and excommunication, so maintaining the purity of the group (qv Romans 12:2 and I Corinthians 5:11). Since discipline is voluntarily accepted by believers and the Lord's Supper is partaken only when inner brotherly love is assured (following the words of Christ in Matthew 18) not only is the purity of the group maintained, but also the *gelassenheit*. There is always the temptation of self righteousness which undermines

the spiritual aspect of yieldedness and this may have contributed to the divisions arising from the application of the ban, although however strict this application the rule of Christ is one of forgiveness. The *meidung* or shunning is never done out of hatred as the excommunicated one continues to be loved in the hope that the open sin is admitted and the abomination described in Galatians 5 is overcome. The door to re-admission is thus always open and, in modern congregations or brotherhoods, the number who do not return to God's love is said to be less than 1% (John Hostetler in Friedmann, 1998: 137).

The emergence or selection of leaders and their specific duties in the congregations has been described elsewhere but the *Diener des Wortes* (the minister of the Word) has always been of particular importance because of the vital contribution made by the interpretation of the Scriptures to the sustenance of the spiritual life of the congregations. The Bible has always been 'the exclusive intellectual habitat of the Anabaptists. In it they lived and with it they died' (Friedmann, 1998: 149). The Old Orders of the Mennonites and Amish continue to separate themselves from their surrounding communities and live very much as their ancestors did in the world of the Bible.

Anabaptism is thus said to be an existentialist, actualised theology which is lived through a particular form of witnessing rather than a tendency to theorise. Yet the faith is not another form of Protestantism plus a concept of ethics. It shares with Lutheranism opposition to priesthood and an emphasis on the righteousness of works, but would agree with Erasmus's emphasis on the ethics contained in the Sermon on the Mount but all this is subsumed in an idea of life and living akin to a primitive church which the earliest Anabaptists sought to re-create. In this re-creation, justification is replaced by discipleship and Christ accepted as 'the way' to the kingdom of God. There was and is the conflict between the kingdoms of darkness (the outside world and its sins) and light which the Anabaptists claim justifies the continued, spiritual separation from that outside world. Repentance, purification through baptism voluntarily undertaken and this spiritual separation makes for the 'walk in the resurrection', the suffering theology followed by the Mennonites and Amish today. The rest of the faith develops from these premises and, as Friedmann claims, 'there is no need for further questioning.'

CHAPTER 4

CONFESSIONS OF FAITH Beliefs and Practices of Early Anabaptism

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”

Romans 8:35

Rufus M. Jones (1909: 3) claims that ‘...the Anabaptist movement must be pronounced one of the most momentous and significant undertakings in man’s eventful religious struggle after the truth ... it is the spiritual soil out of which all non conformist sects have sprung ... it is a programme for a new type of Christian society ... an absolutely free and independent religious society, and a State in which every man counts as a man, and has his share in shaping both Church and State’. Thus it is also claimed that the basic freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and voluntarism in religion are rooted in 16th century Anabaptism. Bender (1944: 4) states, ‘The line of descent through the centuries since that time may not always be clear, and may have passed through other intermediate movements and groups, but the debt to original Anabaptism is unquestioned’.

The roots of Anabaptist thought are clearly evident in the ideas and actions of the Swiss Brethren in the early 16th century and constitute a fundamental part of what has been described as the Radical Reformation which sought to change the contemporary, orthodox church more radically and rapidly than the instigators of the Reformation wished or affirmed. The Anabaptists wanted to reconstitute the church in such a manner and degree that it would recapture the founding ideas and practices of the earliest, primitive Christian church.

The early history of Anabaptism is of a movement based on emerging religious beliefs but, even in its embryonic days, there were differences among its adherents in their interpretations of tenets basic to the understanding of what constituted Christianity, e.g. the nature of Christ, the sanctity of the Scriptures, the nature and consequences of baptism, the meaning of the Lord’s Supper, how a truly Christian life should be led, what it meant to be God’s ‘elected people’, the separation of believers from the outside world, the rejection of ‘the State’, the acceptance of pacifism, the importance of the discipline exerted by the congregation of believers and the manner in which the rules defining the behaviour of adult believers in a visible church should be safeguarded. Thus, from the beginning, there was to be no division between faith and practice; the former suffused all aspects of Anabaptist life.

Initially, Anabaptism was a movement without form and although its early days witnessed the emergence of a number of important leaders with strongly held religious beliefs, which, at times, led to sharp differences in interpretations of those beliefs, yet only two years after the first believers' baptisms there was sufficient agreement for a small group of leaders to produce an agreed Confession of Faith *viz* the Schleithem Confession in 1527.

The Confession originates from a meeting in Bern, Switzerland, when Swiss Brethren such as Höchrütinek and Hausmann and six others from Basel brought with them a copy of the first Anabaptist synodal confession and, after further discussion, sent a copy to Ulrich Zwingli for refutation, for it to be 'judged by the sword of the Spirit'. The document became the Schleithem Confession of Faith (Yoder, 1977) which Williams (1961: 181-2) states 'describes the organisation and self discipline of a free church which was having to cope with anti-nominism and spiritual excesses on its fringes'. Michael Sattler, an associate of the Zurich radicals, with his colleague Wilhelm Reublin, edited or at least influenced the writing of the Confession and sought to differentiate the literalistic, Biblical Swiss Brethren from the spiritualistic South German Brethren (such as Hans Denck and Hans Hut). One feature of the Confession is that 'it is marked by sobriety in contrast to the eschatological tension of disputation at Nicolsburg and the eschatological, missionary fervour of the Martyrs' Synod of Ausburg (May and August 1527)' (Williams, 1961: 182). The Brotherly Union which produced the Confession was against 'certain false brethren among us ... in the way they intend to practise and obscure the freedom of Spirit and of Christ'. Dyck (1993: 55) claims 'this meeting (which produced the Confession) ... fixed the identity and saved the life of the young movement ... (and) provided continuity with the legacy of Grebel, Mantz and Hubmaier.'

There are Seven Articles in the Confession that defined early Anabaptism, gave a sense of identity to this group of reformers and was a clear statement of an affirmation of faith and an implied mission. It gave the faith of the Brethren further substance and helped define early Anabaptism's central ideas of obedience, of a people dedicated to God and the manner in which Christian love was expressed through the all-pervading influence of and commitment to a believer's baptism.

What relevance have these Articles to the successors of the Swiss Brethren and early Anabaptists, the Mennonites and Amish, in the 21st century? Is there any sense of religious continuity between these groups separated by the greater part of five centuries? An examination of the original Articles will indicate if such a continuity exists, especially in the context of 'the three ideas central to the Seven Articles of Schleithem, when taken together, define early Anabaptism: the nature of Christian obedience, the idea of the gathered people of God, and the way of Christian love' (Goss, 1977: 5).

The first Article concerns baptism which 'shall be given to all those who have been taught repentance and amendment of life and (who) believe truly that their sins are taken away through Christ ... to all those who with such an understanding themselves desire and request it from us; hereby is excluded all infant baptism, the greatest and first abomination of the pope'.

The ban was the second Article. This was to be employed 'with all those who walk with the Lord ... who have been baptised ... (as) brothers and sisters and still somehow slip and fall into error and sin'. ... The same (shall) be warned twice and the third time shall be publicly admonished before the entire congregation according to the commandment of Christ (Matthew 18). This shall be done 'before the breaking of bread so that we may all in one spirit and in one love break and eat from one bread and drink from one cup'. This contrasted with Zwingli's idea that the saints or the elect are only known to God and that truth is invisible.

Article Three: 'all those who desire to break the one bread in remembrance of the broken body of Christ and who wish to drink of one drink in remembrance of the shed blood of Christ must be united in one body of Christ ... by baptism'.

Article Four concerned the separation from the wickedness of the world ... 'we have no fellowship with them'. ... 'He orders us to be and to become separated from the evil one ... to go out from Babylon and from the earthly Egypt that we may not be partakers in their torments and suffering, which the Lord will bring upon them'. '...all popish and re-popish works and idolatry, gatherings, church attendances, winehouses,

guarantees and commitments of unbelief, and other things ... which the world regards highly are considered abominations to be avoided'. Weapons of violence – the sword and armour – were rejected. Thus there was to be a differentiated baptismal community continuously purified by the ban forming a most visible aspect of the Anabaptist faith and a marked consequence of the contrast to the Magisterial Reformation.

Shepherds in the Church of God are described in Article Five indicating that an embryonic organisation was emerging and the office of shepherd or pastor identified. This shepherd must be a person of good report to fulfil his duties 'to read and exhort and teach, warn, admonish or ban in the congregation and properly preside among sisters and brothers in prayer and in the breaking of bread ... so the name of God might be praised and honoured through us'. The congregation is expected to support the shepherd but he can be reprimanded by the voice of two or three witnesses. 'If they sin they shall be publicly reprimanded so that others might fear'. If the shepherd is driven away 'or led to the Lord by the cross' (martyrdom), another shall be immediately ordained so the flock 'be preserved by warning and be consoled'.

Article Six concerns the sword (government) '... an ordering of God outside the perfection of Christ' (Matthew 5:48). 'Only the ban is to be used for admonition and exclusion of the one who has sinned without the death of flesh'. Sinning is to be met with mercy and forgiveness and a warning to sin no more. Christians are also warned against passing judgement (Luke 12:14) and not act as magistrates. 'He himself further forbids the violence of the sword'. 'The rule of the government is of the flesh, that of Christians according to the Spirit'. '... their citizenship is in this world, that of Christians in heaven ... their weapons ... are carnal and only against the flesh ... those of Christians are spiritual ... against the devil.'

The last Article, Seven, concerns the oath. 'Christ who teaches the perfection of the law, forbids His (followers) all swearing, whether true or false. 'We cannot perform what is promised in swearing, for we are not able to change the smallest part of ourselves'. 'Your speech shall be yea, yea, yea and nay, nay; for what is more than that comes of evil' (Matthew 6:33-37). The Anabaptists refused to acknowledge the

demand to uphold the constitutions of the city republics in the south west area of the Empire yet in 1528 were prevailed to take the oath in the city of Strasburg.

Williams's view (1961: 185) is that the Schleithem Confession 'far from being a balanced testimony of the faith and practice of the Swiss Brethren, it was like most synodal utterances, shaped by immediate concerns of the movement to disavow excesses and aberrations from within and to resist challenges from without.' The majority of Anabaptists strongly defended the essential tenets of their faith and the repressive measures of the civic authorities and their religious opponents continued. Michael Sattler was martyred on 27 May 1527 (his wife three days later) and his last words typify the reaction of so many Anabaptist martyrs: 'Almighty, eternal God, thou art the way and the truth; because I have not been shown to be in error, I will with thy help this day testify to the truth and seal it with my blood'.

In the early decades of the 16th century the series of colloquies (such as those in Zurich in 1525, St. Gall in 1525, Bern in 1531, Rastenberg in 1531, Tübingen in 1535 and Marburg in 1538) between representatives of the radical reformers (Grebel, Denck, Mainz, Reublin, Hubmaier, Brötli, Marpeck, Ebreli, Capito, Servetus, Schwenckfeld) and those who opposed their doctrine (Zwingli, Bucer, Jud, Hofmeister, Eck), reveal how the Anabaptists linked their beliefs to the Scriptures. This linked the faith with everyday living and the more profound religious concepts such as psycho-pannychism (the sleep of the soul). The link with the daily lives of members of the congregation inevitably involved the possible breach of the *Ordnung* and the implementation of the ban.

What then could be the behaviour that resulted in a believer coming under the ban and excommunication? The reformers could invoke Colossians 3:5, 8-9-10; 12-13-14:

5: 'You must put to death, then, the earthly desires at work in you; such as sexual immorality, indecency, lust, evil passions and greed (for greed is a form of idolatry).

8: But now you must get rid of all these things: anger, passion and hateful feelings. No insults or obscene talk must ever come from your lips.

9: Do not lie to one another, for you have taken off the old self with its habits and have put on the new self.

12: ...so then, you must clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Be tolerant with one another and forgive one another whenever any of you has a complaint against someone else.

14: And to these qualities add love, which binds all things in perfect unity. The peace that Christ gives us to guide you in the decisions you make, for it is this peace that God has called you together in one body.’ (Good News Bible, 1976: 251-252.)

or II Thessalonians 3:6, I Corinthians 5:11 and Romans 12:2 to find scriptural justification for keeping separate from the ‘outside world’:

3:6: ‘Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly’.

5:11: ‘... not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one know not to eat’.

12:2: ‘And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God’ (The New Testament, American Bible Society: 415, 341, 327).

Each Article of the Schleithem Confession is linked with a scriptural passage and all are subsumed under II Thessalonians 2:15:

‘Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or by our epistle.’

It is of great significance that adult baptism is accorded due prominence and importance as the first of the Seven Articles and marks the Anabaptists, the adult baptisers (or re-baptisers), quite sharply apart from the other reformers of the orthodox church. Once baptised, believers were expected to lead a righteous, sinless life but even from the earliest days when expectations were so great and demanding,

this perfection was known to be an ideal, an aspiration that members of the conventicle would fail to achieve or maintain. Therefore there was an acceptance of clearly stated 'rules' (or *Ordnung*) by which the baptised had to regulate their lives and thus maintain their individual purity and the purity of the conventicle. The 'ban' was the means of achieving this purity but, used with love and mercy, could lead a confessed sinner back into full membership of the conventicle. Purity was also maintained by separation from the outside world, but the Anabaptists, Mennonites and Amish did not form the separate and closed communities as did the Hutterites. The rejection of violence and oath taking further re-emphasised this concept of isolation.

The recognition of leaders from within the congregation or conventicle and the notion that they should be worthy of their spiritual leadership (even if lacking the formal education of priests) was another marked characteristic of, possibly, the majority of these early groups of Anabaptists. At a time of severe repression and the martyrdom of many leaders, their commitment to the doctrine and the congregation was a key to the future of the faith and the believers; consequently those who were lost to their congregations were quickly replaced by new leaders. Thus it is 'the repudiation of older ordination, prominence of 'laymen' and conversion of a whole believing fellowship into a new people of God, a royal priesthood, a lay apostate, that most clearly set all the Radical Reformers off from Magisterial Reformers' (Williams, 1961: 861).

Weaver (1987: 50) claims that 'Schleitheim made the first formal articulation of those elements within the Swiss Brethren which would later constitute the essence of the whole Anabaptist movement'. How comprehensive should this document be considering the difficulties leaders had in agreeing on its basic doctrinal principles? Among other omissions there is no mention of marriage and this might be linked with Weaver's comment (1987: 49) that 'Parallels with the monastic tradition appear in the articles' emphasis on discipline, holy living, separation, and imitation of the way of Jesus'. Yet, in spite of the general uncertainties faced by the faith, what had been agreed by a remnant was to buttress the Anabaptists in their struggles to maintain their beliefs throughout the 16th century and be reflected in later Confessions.

Williams (1961: Introduction, xxxi) claims that the Radical Reformation covers the period 1516, the year of Erasmus's edition of the Greek New Testament, to 1578-79 marking the death of the leader of the Hutterites (Peter Walpot), the death of the Transylvanian Unitarian (Francis David), the arrival of Facistus Socinus in Poland and the official toleration of Mennonism by William of Orange. The last Dutch Mennonite martyr died in 1574 but there was a continuation of a hostile attitude in an alienated environment and a continuation of differences between different groups of Mennonites especially regarding the ban. 'Yet the goal of restituting a primitive church was a constant, the awaiting in loving patience of a disciplined community the advent of Christ and His reordering of the world' (qv Williams, 1961: 337). Menno's deep seated opposition to any form of violence ensured that the tragedy of Münster would not be repeated in spite of the burnings, beheadings and drownings of thousands of Mennonites in Holland as a consequence of the dicta of the Duke of Alva (1567). The advent of the rule of William of Orange was to wrest power in the north Netherlands from the Spanish and, eventually, toleration of Mennonism.

During the 16th and later centuries the Anabaptists/Mennonites continued as a number of separate congregations scattered over Switzerland, South Germany, Austria, the Rhine Valley, Alsace, Holland and the north German coast. There were also congregations in Moravia, Poland and Russia. In many areas their civic rights were sharply limited regarding ownership of land and, in the least tolerant areas, their children were declared illegitimate. The army, teaching and government posts were denied to them or denied by them but, in Holland, Mennonites became engaged in business and trading and some became relatively wealthy (qv Smart, 1979: 92-93). The great majority who followed the faith continued as farmers and their farming skills, especially those of draining land and restituting land devastated by the Religious Wars during the first half of the 17th century, were in some demand and groups moved to Prussia and the lower Volga region of Russia.

Religious doctrine remained central to the Mennonites wherever they settled and the Emden Disputation of 1578 reveals, through the topics discussed, the links between the Schleithem Confession and the next major Confession, that of Dortrecht: the Doctrine of the Trinity; the Creation and Fall of Man; Original Sin and Freedom of Will; the Human Nature of Christ; Justification and Sanctification over against

Second Birth; Good Works; Church of God; Election and call of preachers; Proper and misuse of the ban and the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount with particular reference to divorce and resurrection of the flesh (qv Williams, 1961: 773). There were inevitable differences of interpretation of these basic tenets and practices counterbalanced by those who were united in their basic beliefs, but even differences in emphasis could lead to schisms, an almost constant feature of the development of Anabaptism/Mennonism.

The next significant Confession of the Mennonite faith was that drawn up by the Flemish Mennonite Bishop Adrian Cornellis and others in Dortrecht, Holland, in 1632. Congregations might not differ in faith and practice but some differences remained unresolved and efforts were made to unite congregations. This involved an agreement as to what was accepted as the most unifying definition of being 'a Mennonite'. Throughout the period between Schleithem and Dortrecht there were differences in the interpretation of the application of the ban. These were complicated by the influence of prophecy (the work of David Joris) and a tendency to unitarianism (the work of Adam Pastor). The basic question to be answered was 'How pure was the purity of belief?' This was coupled with the problem of the importance of religious agreement between congregations as against fellowship and support for those who needed this.

Although the influence of Menno Simons's views was generally accepted, there were personality clashes, leading to tensions and an ignoring of the act of forgiveness. Persecution of Mennonites continued throughout this period and, as a religious group whose members were prepared to die for their faith, there was little compromise from those who held such strong beliefs. Tolerance was, at times, like forgiveness, surprisingly absent from individuals and congregations that prized such virtues. Dyck (1993: 123) also emphasises the cultural differences that served to separate some groups, e.g. the Flemish and the Friesians, the Mennonites of Holland and those of north Germany and also the Waterlanders (near Amsterdam) who divided from the main Mennonite group because of the latter's insistence on a strictly enforced ban and excommunication. Thus this period witnessed a division between the traditionalists and the liberals and a loss of some Mennonites to the Calvinists. Nevertheless there was a constancy between and unity among the great majority of Mennonites,

especially regarding the pre-eminence of Jesus, the primacy of the Scriptures and, as Menno constantly reiterated, a linking of understanding to obedience.

The Mennonite movement needed and was greatly strengthened by the agreement expressed towards the Dortrecht Confession of Faith, initially by a number (51/52) of Flemish and Friesian ministers and later by ministers from Alsace (1660). Dyck, (1993: 128) warns that 'Mennonites were opposed to confessions lest they replace the Bible as the only authority, but nevertheless, many confessions did appear in the Dutch congregations during this period (late 16th century). They were not intended as measures of orthodoxy, but to explain interpretations on points under dispute; groups used them to discuss differences and find unity ... The primary test, however, continued to be a life of discipleship rather than assent to a set of propositions'. This Confession was to be a reference point for Mennonites in Europe throughout the next centuries and would be adopted by a number of ministers in south eastern Pennsylvania as their doctrinal standard in 1725.

'The Dortrecht Confession is doubtless the best written and most concise of the Mennonite Confessions' (Horsch, 1942: 246-7) and is important in that it repeats and expands upon the Seven Articles of the Schleithem Confession. Its wider perspective is seen in Articles I, II, III, IV, V, VI, XI, XII and XVIII with their numerous references to the Bible and also references to the ceremony of washing the feet and matrimony. The continuity between the two Confessions, spanning a period of over a hundred years, is significant of the durability of the doctrine on which both are based and that they have been sustained in the face of much oppression from the outside world. The Schleithem Confession was the epitome of the beliefs and practices that gave a common identity to the earliest groups or conventicles of Anabaptists, which ensured a sense of unity in opposition to those who persecuted the baptised believers. After more than a hundred years of continued persecution, the Dortrecht Confession reflects the constant resolution of the Mennonites as a religious group, the clarity of their interpretation of the Law of Christ and the sense of discipleship enshrined in its eighteen Articles.

Thus Article I 'Concerning God and the Creation of All Things' acknowledges the Holy Scripture as the basis of a belief in 'one eternal, almighty and incomprehensible

God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost ... For from Him, through Him, and in Him are all things' (qv Isa 46:9). Likewise Adam and Eve 'became disobedient to their Creator; through which disobedience 'sin entered into the world, and death by sin' (Article II 'The Fall of Man') (qv Romans 5:12-19). Yet man is restored through the promise of the Coming of Christ, i.e. God ... 'again called them unto Him, comforted them and showed them that there were yet means with Him for their reconciliation; namely ... the Son of God ... who was promised to them and all their descendants ... yea who was given to them thenceforward, through faith, as their own' (Article III 'The Restoration of Man Through the Promise of the Coming of Christ') (qv Genesis 3:15). Article IV ('The Advent of Christ into this World, and the Reason for His Coming') refers to 'the ... promised Messiah, Redeemer and Saviour ... came into the world, yea with the flesh, so that the Word itself became flesh and man; ... this is the same One who has 'neither beginning of days, nor end of life' ... who is God's only first and proper Son ... in whom exist all our hope, comfort, redemption and salvation ... (who) purchased redemption for the whole human race, and thus he became the source of eternal salvation to all who.....shall have believed Him and obeyed Him' (qv Matt. 1:21). Article V (The Law of Christ, which is the Holy Gospel, or the New Testament) stresses the importance of the New Testament which 'Christ.... established and instituted His New Testament and left it to His followers, to be and remain an everlasting testament.... To be proclaimed, in His name, through His beloved apostles, messengers and servants.... To all nations, peoples and tongues... preaching repentance and remission of sins... that all me... if they are obedient, through faith, follow and fulfil, and live according to the precepts of the same, are His children and rightful heirs' (qv Matt. 26:28). Article VI (Repentance and Amendment of Life) Thus 'the first doctrine of the precious New Testament of the Sun of God, is Repentance and Amendment of life....Therefore those ... who understand ... must amend their lives, believe the Gospel, "depart from evil and do good", desist from wrong and cease from sinning. For neither Baptism, Sacrament nor church fellowship ... can without faith, the new birth, and a change or renewal of life, help or qualify us, that we may please God... we must go to God "with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith", and believe in Jesus Christ, as the Scriptures speak and testify of Him' (qv John 7:38).

Holy Baptism is described and justified in Article VII... 'that all penitent believers be baptised with water in the ever adorable name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost... and thus become incorporated into the communion of saints' (qv Acts 10:47). Acts 8:12 is also quoted '...when they were baptised, both men and women'.

Article VIII indicates a belief (The Church of Christ) in 'a visible church of those who... have truly repented and rightly believed, who are rightly baptised, united with God in heaven... And these are a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation".. the 'bride' of Christ. This church of the living God... may be known by her evangelical faith, doctrine, love and godly conversation, also by her pure walk and practice, and her observance of the true ordinances of Christ....' (qv Matt. 16:18).

The Office of Teachers and Ministers – Male and Female – in the Church is described in detail in Article IX. As Jesus... 'left his church before his departure, provided with faithful ministers, apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers whom he had chosen by prayer and supplication through the Holy Spirit, so that they might govern the church, feed his flock, watch over, maintain and care for the same... the apostles were afterwards... to provide all the churches in the cities and circuits with bishops, pastors and leaders and to ordain to these offices such men as took "heed unto themselves and unto their doctrine"... (and) able to teach others, confirm them in the name of the Lord "with the laying on of hands". All circuits should be well provided with almoners, who should have the care and oversight of the poor, and who were to receive gifts and alms... and faithfully to distribute them amongst the poor saints... Also that honorable old widows should be chosen as servants... who... are to visit, comfort and take care of the poor, the weak, the afflicted and the needy' (qv Eph. 4: 11-12).

The Lord's Supper (Article X) is to be 'observed by believers in commemoration of the death and sufferings of the Lord – the breaking of His worthy body and the shedding of His precious blood – for the whole human race... and the redemption and eternal salvation which He purchased thereby' (qv I Cor. 10:16).

An entirely new belief (when compared with the Schleithem Confession) is included in Article XI (The Washing of the Saints' Feet) 'as the Lord Jesus did not only

institute and command the same, but did also Himself wash the feet of the apostles, thereby giving an example that they should also wash one another's feet... as a sign to remind us of the true washing – the washing and purification of the soul in the blood of Christ' (qv John 13:14-15).

Article XII (Matrimony) also includes an aspect of living not included in the earlier Confession '... an honorable state of matrimony between two believers of the different sexes... leaving it to each one's own choice... provided it was done "in the Lord"... to marry amongst the "chosen generation" (qv Gen. 1:27).

The Office of Civil Government is the concern of Article XIII '... God has instituted civil government, for the punishment of the wicked and protection of the pious... to preserve its subjects in good order and under good regulations.. to acknowledge (civil government) as a minister of God and be subject and obedient to it... to pay custom, tax and tribute... and we are to pray earnestly for the government and its welfare' (qv I Peter 2:17).

Article XIV (Defense by Force) '... the Lord Jesus has forbidden his disciples and followers all revenge and resistance ... not to "return evil for evil, nor railing for railing" but to "put up the sword into the sheath"... we are to do no wrong... but to seek the welfare and salvation of all men; also if necessity should require it, to flee from the Lord's sake from one city or country to another and suffer the "spoiling of our goods", rather than give occasion of offence to anyone...' (qv Rom. 12:14).

Regarding The Swearing of Oaths, Article XV, '... we believe ... that the Lord Jesus has dissuaded his followers from and forbidden them the same, that is, that he commanded them to "swear not at all" but that their "Yea" should be "yea" and their "nay, nay". From which we understand that all oaths, high and low, are forbidden...' (qv James 5:12).

Article XVI Excommunication or Expulsion from the Church deals with the interpretation of the 'ban' and its consequences. '... the ban, or excommunication, a separate or spiritual punishment by the church, for the amendment, and not for the destruction of offenders... if a person ...does wilfully sin against God... he becomes

separated from God, and is debarred from His kingdom ... such ... a one ... to be excluded from the church .. as an example and warning to others ..(and that) he may be convinced of the error of his ways, and brought to repentance and amendment of life' (qv I Cor. 5:5).

This belief and practice is further developed in Article XVII, 'The Shunning of Those Who Are Expelled'. 'As regards the withdrawing from or the shunning of those who are expelled ... anyone who is so far fallen as to be separated from God ... be shunned and avoided by all the members of the church (particularly by those to whom his misdeeds are known) ... so that we may not become defiled by intercourse with him and partakers of his sins ...' (qv II Thess. 3:14).

Finally and logically, the Last Article, XVIII, expounds the belief of The Resurrection of the Dead and the Last Judgement '... all men who shall have died or "fallen asleep" will – through the incomprehensible power of God – at the day of judgement, be "raised up" and made alive and ... shall "appear before the judgement seat of Christ", where the good shall be separated from the evil ... Yea, where they shall reign and triumph with Christ for ever and ever' (qv Daniel 12:2).

Each Article contains a number of scriptural references (Articles IV and IX each have sixteen; Articles I and XIV twelve; Articles V, VII and XVIII eleven each) apart from the specific references for each Article quoted above from Border's Study Guide to the Dortrecht Confession of Faith, 1632 (Border, 1981). These references fully justify the Mennonite claim that the scriptures provide the bases for *their* particular interpretation of the Christian doctrine.

The true Christian life which the Swiss Brethren, Anabaptists and Mennonites strove to achieve was 'a life patterned after the teaching and example of Christ' (Bender, 1944: 16), an ideal where Christians 'would confess the gospel with their lives as well as with their tongues' (Bender, 1944: 17), which was Luther's original goal of his Reformation. Thus the Radical Reformers always required an outward expression of an inner experience, an outward application of the inward grace of God to all human conduct which distinguished (and with the Mennonites and Amish still distinguishes) their lives from those in the 'outside world'.

It is important to emphasise that there was not one overall or homogenous Anabaptist or Mennonite congregation in spite of many attempts at unification by such leaders as Hans de Ries (1553-1638), Jan Willem of Hoorn and Menno Simons, although the leadership of Menno was widely acknowledged. The greater toleration experienced by religious groups in the latter part of the 16th and 17th centuries may have given grounds for a feeling of greater independence of thought and organisation. In addition, those adherents of Mennonism had spread over an extensive geographical area, which led to difficulties in communication and some groups had advanced both materially and culturally. As de Ries commented, 'The goods are enriched but the soul is impoverished. Clothing has become precious but the internal decorations have perished. Love has diminished and quarrelling has increased' (Dyck, 1933: 131).

By the mid 17th century there was a recognition by some Dutch leaders of a cooling of religious commitment and a weariness from continuing quarrels. In the meantime Swiss Mennonites continued to suffer from waves of persecution which continued into the 18th century. The death penalty was no longer invoked but believers could still be branded, condemned to be galley slaves and their children had no property or inheritance rights. Yet, fortified by their inner grace and buttressed by a resolution emanating from Articles enshrined in the Dortrecht Confession, congregations retained an identity until driven out by such civic authorities as the city of Basle. This became part of a movement northwards through Alsace, the Rhine Valley and into Holland. Alsace was an area where there were meetings of ministers who discussed, with customary vigour, matters of faith and practice. One constant matter was that of the purity of congregations and the *Ordnung*, whereby the discipline of congregations was maintained. The ban and all its implications became a central matter for discussion, especially for a refugee Mennonite minister travelling through Alsace. Jacob Ammann expressed very strong views on the strictness of the application of the ban and the laxity of discipline which he detected in some congregations he had visited. His reactions were to lead to such differences as to result in a schism that eventually resulted in the 'Amish' separating from the mainstream of Mennonism.

CHAPTER 5

THE AMISH – FAITH AND COMMUNITY

“....clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

Col. 3:12

The Amish emerge as a distinct religious group late in the 17th century in Alsace. There is a clear line of descent from the Swiss Brethren and the Anabaptists of Switzerland of the early 16th century, then through the spread of Anabaptism through southern Germany and into the Rhine Valley to the development of Mennonism in Holland and north Germany.

There is a continuity of doctrine in these religious groups of believers' baptism, the supremacy of the Scriptures, the symbolism and importance of the Lord's Supper and the practices of separation from the outside world, pacifism and the discipleship arising from the acceptance of the rules governing the everyday life of congregations, the '*Ordnung*'.

Congregations were also established in Moravia, Prussia, Poland and southern Russia and, although scattered over a wide geographical area, all congregations were united by a basic doctrine expressed in two major Confessions of Faith, Schleithem (1527) and Dortrecht (1632). There were, however, tensions between some congregations due, especially, to differences in the interpretations of the manner in which the *Ordnung* was to be exercised. The regenerate congregations had believers whose commitment to the rules of the *Ordnung* would reflect a falling away from the clearly expressed rules governing acceptable behaviour. The problem that emerged was how should the sinner be treated? Matthew 18: 15-17 was the much quoted passage of Scripture which clearly shows how the wrongdoer or sinner could be persuaded to confess his sins and return to full membership of the congregation. This action was based on the assumption that leaders of congregations and congregations had an agreed understanding of the implications of Matthew 18: 15-17 regarding the 'ban' or excommunication and implemented it in the same manner. This was not so and often resulted in differences, which would mean tensions developing between congregations which, if not healed, could develop into a schism between congregations.

One of a number of concerns that caused schisms was the relationship between members of a congregation and their neighbours, who were sympathetic in their attitude to the Swiss Brethren, Anabaptists, Mennonites and, later, the Amish. Although the source of sympathetic support and practical assistance, these outsiders

(‘Half Anabaptists’ or ‘True Hearted People’) were often members of other churches and were not ‘saved’ in the Anabaptist interpretation of this word or act – only God knew of this. In Switzerland there were amicable relationships between some Christian groups and the Anabaptists but in areas of south Germany, the Palatinate and Alsace, there was a strict separation. This difference between the convictions of separate Anabaptist groups regarding those ‘who resented and joined the state church’ (Nolt, 1992: 25) led to different attitudes towards the ‘outside world’.

This problem of separateness was heightened by the concern, expressed by some leaders of the Mennonites in the late 16th century, that there was a cooling in the religious ardour and a consequent weakening of the traditions enshrined in the *Ordnung*. This was, possibly, most marked but still in a relative sense among the Dutch Mennonites who had prospered in trade and business, becoming an accepted part of Dutch society. The stirrings for religious renewal in response to this religious ‘cooling’ emanated from the area traditionally in the forefront of change – Switzerland, in the person of an elder, Jacob Ammann.

The Dortrecht Confession of 1632 had clearly indicated in its eighteen Articles the doctrine of the Mennonite faith and the requirements of the *Ordnung*, but Ammann was convinced that there should be a stricter interpretation of at least some of the Articles than that observed by the groups he had visited in the Rhine Valley. Moreover, Ammann wished to alter the long held tradition of the annual celebration of the Lord’s Supper and advocated that it should be observed twice yearly. This, he believed, would give an additional opportunity for married women to attend, who might otherwise be prevented because of their regular pregnancies. It would also give the congregation an additional opportunity to discuss the *Ordnung* in the weeks before the communion. This, it was believed, would result in a closer examination of the ways in which members of congregations were living their lives within the requirements of a redemptive community.

The demand for such changes aroused inevitable opposition from leaders like Elder Hans Reist, who also resisted the idea of a stricter enforcement of the ban on those who had left the church for other Christian groups. Were these attitudes of individuals like Reist affecting the ‘purity’ of congregations? Who were to be considered ‘saved’?

What was the right and acceptable relationship between the Mennonites and the True Hearted?

Discussions of these questions were, apparently, not marked by the Christian virtue of reconciliation and Ammann began to excommunicate those who disagreed with his strict views. Ammann followed the Anabaptist tradition of strong leadership with his convinced and clear view as to the interpretation of Anabaptist doctrine in the context of the Dortrecht Confession, his particular vision of the implications of the Scriptures and, equally significant, the application and extension of the *Ordnung*.

Ammann, through his extensive travels, communicated his views to a number of congregations who became convinced that he was a reformer reminding congregations of the original and traditional Anabaptist doctrine. His views of the strict application of the ban (to the extent of not eating together or doing business with the banned) allowed for no compromise. To emphasise and further the degree of separateness, Ammann required those who agreed with his convictions to distinguish themselves in their appearance and, as a consequence, all men grew untrimmed beards, grew their hair such as to cover the tops of their ears and used hooks and eyes rather than buttons on their coats. Their flat, broad brimmed hats, long black coats and black trousers further emphasised their simplicity and plainness. Women wore dark dresses of ankle length and bonnets and did not cut their hair, which was tucked into their bonnets. This outward appearance gave his followers a greater sense of identity, although this would also serve to attract the attention of those who were hostile to the Anabaptists. Equally important in change was Ammann's introduction of foot washing (qv John 13) as part of the communion service.

The outcome of these changes was a significant schism within the Mennonite faith with the followers of Ammann forming a distinct group, the Amish, in spite of attempts to reconcile the differences between the groups as Mennonites could not find scriptural justification for Ammann's claims pertaining to plainness and clothing. Instead, an inner piety, rather than an outward appearance, was stressed, 'the rightness of an individual's heart'. For some Mennonite groups in Switzerland and south Germany, their very survival depended on the understanding and support of outsiders. To the Amish, 'Church renewal came by way of commitment and discipline. In the

end, though, both the Amish and the Mennonites were trying to safeguard the church' (Nolt, 1992: 39).

These differences of outlook and practice distinguished the newly identified Amish from their more numerous Mennonite neighbours. This stricter, more tradition bound faith spread widely and although dispersion could lead to a weakening of religious purpose and resolve, this was countered by the strong sense of community which became a marked feature of Amish life. They did not form communes in the manner of the Hutterites, but farmed within wider 'outside' communities, but where aid and assistance were needed by their members, the Amish acted as a community and thus resisted assimilation by those larger communities of which they formed a part. This expression of mutual aid was, to the Amish, a confession of the 'gospel with their lives as well as their tongues' (Bender, 1944: 17) and served to distinguish them, even further, from the outside world.

Oppression of these radical religious groups continued and there is a history of the Amish reacting to conflict with neighbours and the civic/church authorities by moving to new locations, thus following the words of Genesis 26: 15-18 after the Philistines had abused the land of his father, Isaac moved to new land and dug new wells. Religion remained (and still remains) a way of life to the Amish, not an activity which is separated from other aspects of living and to maintain their commitment to their faith the Amish were prepared to suffer a range of penalties and suffering from migration to martyrdom.

It was persecution that caused the early Amish to move from Switzerland (especially Bern) and the Rhine Valley, although this movement was also hastened by the requirements of military service, which conflicted with the Amish belief in non resistance and opposition to the use of violence. There were instances where there was a degree of religious tolerance which allowed Amish communities to develop, such as in Montbeliard and Lorraine, but there was a movement into Holland during the early years of the 18th century. There they were assisted by Dutch Mennonites, especially when emigration to the New World was being organised. Other Amish moved to Hesse and Bavaria, others to Poland and Russia. Some movements were in response to invitations by local rulers who valued the farming skills of the Amish, but, however

far they travelled to establish new homes, the same church discipline persisted, as did church practices regarding baptism, the Lord's Supper, the singing of hymns from the *Ausbund* and also the wearing of the distinctive plain dress by members of the congregation (MQR, 1930: 140-148).

Although the Amish separated from the Mennonites because of differences especially in the interpretation of the *Ordnung*, there were (and are) many common aspects in their respective doctrines. Religion and custom coalesce to form a way of life akin to both Amish and Mennonite. The basic beliefs of both groups are religious, and these beliefs form the basis of their conceptions of what being 'Amish' and 'Mennonite' means – to the individual, the congregation and the response to the outside world. The institutions they developed ensure their separation, but not isolation from wider society. A critical difference between the Amish and most Mennonites is that the former have retained the traditional, conservative practices to a far greater extent than the latter. The roots of the 'Old Order' or most conservative Amish (there are also 'Old Order' Mennonites) can be traced to the earliest days of their establishment as a separate religious group.

The period from Jacob Ammann's insistence on a strict interpretation of the scriptures through the *Ordnung* to the emigration of the first Amish to the New World is a period of dispersion as outlined above. It is also a period of continued oppression which the Amish met with their traditional fortitude and non-resistance based on their established religious convictions. It was still illegal, late in the 18th century, to leave the state church and, for the Amish, they were denied the right of land ownership whilst some civic authorities rewarded people who reported evidence of Amishmen and the Amish faith. Nonetheless, in spite of this opposition, which can be assumed to be a reason for instilling a greater unity among the Amish, there were disagreements and as a 'Church', the Amish 'only existed as the members were united one another in Christ'. Thus, the Amish in Holland 'had not celebrated the Lord's Supper during their six years of argument' (Nolt, 1992: 54). One problem was that the Amish groups did not have an overall organisation, but depended on separate congregations. Differences had, therefore, to be settled by resorting to ministers of other congregations, yet the sense of 'peoplehood' remained, that their Church was the people of God irrespective of these differences or where their emigration took them.

Thus throughout this period of differences, oppression and migration, the Amish held closely to their doctrine of a regenerated Church, 'walking in righteousness, sacrificial suffering, obedience, submission, humility and non-resistance' (Hostetler, 1993: 21). Wherever they moved, the Amish were 'in the world but not of it' (I Peter 2:11), their salvation assured as theirs was a redemptive community separated from the world.

There is little difference in the religious doctrine accepted by the Amish and Mennonites. The baptismal service, the key to the voluntary acceptance by an individual of his or her place in the redemptive congregation, follows a very similar practice adopted by the Mennonites.

Nolt (1992: 52-53) describes an Amish baptismal service of 1781 which has distinct parallels with contemporary Amish baptismal services. Those who had decided to accept baptism and its consequences, both religious and social, were instructed by the elders and ministers. The instruction commenced with an account of the Creation, the sin of Adam and Eve, their loss of innocence and expulsion from Paradise. The minister would then emphasise the meaning of grace, repentance and the new life based on the Holy Scripture. Then followed a period of study (based, it is assumed, on the Scriptures and the Dortrecht Confession of Faith). The applicants' behaviour during the period was closely observed by members of the congregation and, if that behaviour proved acceptable, the applicant would be baptised. The sermons during the service were based on John 3, Acts 2 and Romans 6, with reference made to Philip and his baptising the Ethiopian eunuch. The applicant kneels and answers three questions:

1. Do you believe from your whole heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?
2. Do you also believe that God raised Him from the dead?
3. Are you willing to be obedient to God and the Church whether to live or die?

There must be an answer 'Yes' to all three questions. Then the bishop places his hands on the head of the applicant and the deacon pours water over the bishop's hands. The bishop then calls the applicant by name and states 'On this confession of faith thou hast confessed, thou art baptised in the name of God the Father, and of the

Son and of the Holy Ghost'. The new member is assisted to his feet by the bishop, peace is pronounced and the bishop says: 'the Lord continue the good work which he hath begun in you and complete it unto a blessed end through Jesus Christ'. He then dismisses him in the name of God.

Likewise the selection of leaders has parallels with the method adopted by the Mennonites (Hostetler, 1993: 109-11). The congregation must be of one mind with no sign of dissent among its members before candidates are selected from within the congregation or district, i.e. are known to the congregation and are considered suitable candidates for ordination in terms set out in I Tim: 3. Only married men are considered. The ministers gather in a room in a member's house (the Amish do not have meeting halls or assembly rooms) with an open door or window. Full members of the congregation pass the door or window and whisper the name of a suitable candidate to the deacon who then tells the bishop. The bishop records the names of the candidates and the votes each receives. In some congregations a minimum of two votes is required; in others, three. It is not usual for the names of candidates to be discussed, although it is the congregation, not the ministers, who make the nominations.

It is exceptional for more than six to eight individuals to be nominated. The Amish, as with the Mennonites, use the 'lot' method to select deacons, ministers and bishops. This follows the example of the apostles selecting a successor to Judas (Acts 1: 23-6). The lot is a slip of paper containing a biblical verse, e.g. Prov. 16: 33 or Acts 1:24 'and they prayed and said, Thou Lord which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen'. A number of hymn books equal to the number of candidates are used with the bishop secretly inserting the lot into one of the books. The books are then placed, in no particular order, on a table or bench, a prayer is said and each candidate is asked to select a book. When, after examination by the bishop, a prayer book is found to contain the lot, the candidate who had selected that book (or 'struck') has his name announced to the congregation. The charge (or statement of the responsibilities placed on the chosen candidate) is read by the bishop who shakes the new deacon or minister's hand and bestows a Holy kiss. If a bishop is selected, two bishops place their hands on his head when the charge is read or given. Prospective bishops have to be family men whose children are full members of the congregation,

hence bishops tend to be older men. As leaders of their congregations, the lives of bishops must reflect the purity and humility expected of every baptised member of the congregation, but are expected to be the acme of what the Amish faith represents. All ordained members continue to live their ordinary lives as farmers or whatever occupation they lead. They are very much 'sons of the soil', as the Amish have never approved of education that is more advanced than grade eight, i.e. pre-secondary education.

The choice of a leader has always been of particular significance to congregations. Many early leaders were martyred for their faith and example and in contemporary congregations there are expressions of sadness for the chosen ordained person, but all agree he is the choice of God and not of the ordained ministers or the congregation, although the latter is enjoined to give the newly ordained individual every support. His is the leadership but every minister is not only the leader of a willing flock, but he ensures that he knows the views and wishes of those whom he leads and thus ensures that their feet are kept firmly on the road of a 'royal priesthood'. This is of critical importance as the Amish, unlike the Mennonites, do not meet in 'Ministers' Meetings' and have no formal links with other Amish congregations.

Throughout their time in Europe, the Amish settled in communities scattered among other people (unlike the Hutterites), living out what Harold S. Bender calls 'the Anabaptist Vision' (Bender, 1944: 13). Even a declared opponent of Anabaptism in 1582 would admit '...there is none which in appearance lends a more modest or pious life than the Anabaptist ... no lying, deception, swearing, strife, harsh language, no intemperate eating and drinking, no outward personal display ... but humility, patience, uprightness, neatness, honesty, temperance, straightforwardness in such measure that one could suppose that they had the Holy Spirit of god' (qv Bender, 1944: 24). These characteristics so fundamental to the *Ordnung* are evident in Amish communities, the inheritors of the Anabaptist faith and practice, today.

The Amish were, and are, opposed, for scriptural reasons, to conforming with the outside world and their separation from it (*Absonderung*) was the basis of a gathering of true Christians in a special community of chosen people based on the ideal of redemption, an acceptance of Christ's way in a living discipleship. Separation by

faith, practice, *gelassenheit* and those other manifestations of being 'Amish' led, almost inevitably, in what was their contemporary society, to conflict and suffering, yet they and the Mennonites 'lived their faith' and accepted the consequence of this. Being 'separate', they had every opportunity to follow their other conviction that, through love, they achieved full brotherhood and a commitment to help those of the congregation who needed spiritual and material assistance.

The new life which a believer's baptism required and justified was often a testing, demanding requirement but the strength of their convictions as well as their no compromise attitudes to the unacceptable demands of the outside world ensured that the Amish maintained their identity and religious commitment throughout their stay in Europe. Their steady vision was the establishment of God's kingdom on the earth for which they were prepared to suffer. It was a light which continued to burn, however strong the opposing gales and, in some wider communities, it sometimes brought a grudging respect for Amish men and women.

A strong faith, a quiet acceptance of what God had given them (*gelassenheit*), a particular emphasis on discipleship, separation from the larger community, an acceptance of a strict *Ordnung* and an acknowledged skill in farming characterised the Amish in all the scattered communities in which they settled. The marked oppression of earlier centuries lessened but when opposition by or the intrusion of the outside world threatened their congregations, the Amish moved on to new settlements, although, in some areas, a remnant might remain. The requirements of military service became a significant factor in major emigrations from parts of Germany (Alsace 1712) and Russia (late 1800s) to the New World.

The Amish, Amish Mennonites and the Mennonites were probably caught up with the urge of so many Europeans to emigrate to the New World, but, with religious groups, this ambition was reinforced by the deep seated desire to achieve religious freedom. William Penn (1644-1718), the Quaker, travelled through Holland, northern Germany and the Rhine Valley (in 1671 and 1677) and encouraged emigration from these areas to the new state of Pennsylvania whose Frame of Government made freedom of worship absolute. Likewise, during Queen Anne's reign, the Crown sought out colonists for the British possessions on mainland North America and agents in the

Palatinate encouraged emigration. Wars such as the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) and that of the Palatinate (1688-1697), which resulted in death, plunder, famine and plague also enforced movement of people within Europe and, eventually, to the more settled lands of the New World.

A specific incentive to the majority of Swiss Amish to leave was the aggressive attitude adopted towards them by the civic authority of Bern which was determined to clear the city and canton of all these 'undesirables'. Before leaving, they had to pay a departure tax after being granted an amnesty, but there were additional problems in disposing of their household and other possessions. Some Amish emigrated to Holland and remained there, eventually merging with Dutch Mennonites; others joined with Mennonites in travelling to the New World.

The first Amish probably arrived in the early 1700s, settling in Berks County, Pennsylvania, to be followed by other families who settled in Lancaster county and along Maiden Creek (Cumru Township) and Conestoga Creek (Morgantown) on the Berks-Lancaster border. Lebanon County and Somerset County attracted later arrivals (1767) and likewise, Mifflin County (1791) (qv Appendix B). There were later movements from these early settlements to Virginia and North Carolina, but Pennsylvania and especially Lancaster County was to become the principal area of Amish settlement where it was said by the Mennonites 'they hold fast to the outward and ancient institutions' (Wenger, 1937: 399).

It is assumed that a number of ministers such as Jacob Hertzler (1703-1780) accompanied their congregations but it also appears (Nolt, 1992: 61-2) that some leaders became peripatetic in serving a number of congregations. There is evidence that services continued in the same form as they did in the old world and that ordained members of congregations carried out their traditional church duties. Some congregations lived in frontier areas and continued to farm, an occupation that made it easier for the Amish to maintain their religious convictions and practices. Congregations might also include millers, tanners, blacksmiths and, occasionally, a physician but there is no evidence of Amish owning slaves. (The earliest Mennonite settlements made public their objection to slavery.) Mutual aid continued to be an essential aspect of everyday life, more especially during the very demanding and

uncertain period of early settlement or as new settlers joined existing communities. There is evidence, particularly from ships' rolls, that the Amish employed, through purchase, 'redemptioners'. These were individuals whose passage to America was paid by their future employers (or ship owners) for whom they had to work for a specified period of time in lieu of the cost of their passage.

The early settlers' belief in non-violence and pacifism was sorely challenged by the predations of native Indians. The Hochstetler family in the Northkill settlement in Berks County was attacked by a band of Indians and were either killed or captured because the father, Jacob, would not allow members of the family to defend themselves. Pennsylvania's wars against the Indians and the War of Independence proved great challenges to Amish beliefs as they sought peace, as a group, through neutrality. Instead, they were allowed to make a financial contribution to assist the cause of the patriots, but such payments and the finding of substitutes to fight in wars was to arouse the hostility of non-Amish throughout their history in America. Some Amish also thought that the group's reactions were not acceptable. Another constant problem was the Amish refusal to take an oath of loyalty to the new government, which caused them to lose the franchise and pay extra taxes.

In the religious context the Amish were, as were the Mennonites, influenced by the pressure of evangelical movements as religious freedom placed no restrictions on the activities of proselytizers and the religious outlook and quietness of living of the 'plain people' may have attracted the attention of those who wished to extend their revivalist approach to this religion. The sudden experience of 'salvation' was contrary to the Amish idea of salvation being lived throughout every aspect of their lives, daily. Regeneration followed baptism, the Amish form of 'conversion' which led to a faithful following of the way of Jesus in the congregation of which they were members and not the individualistic interpretation, which revivalists placed on conversion. Nevertheless Nolt (1992: 69) suggests that a large number of Amish joined revivalist congregations and, in one instance, led to the disappearance of the Lebanon Valley Amish as an Amish congregation. The German Baptist Brethren ('Dunkers'), whose doctrine closely paralleled that of the Amish (and they also shared a common German language) were a particular challenge to the Amish.

Thus the Amish were pressurised by the demands of the state government, wars, the uncertainties of frontier life and the impact of revivalism, which combined influences served to weaken and reduce the numbers who persisted with the traditional doctrine and practices. By the early decade of the 19th century, there were barely a thousand Amish in America. An increase in numbers had to await the cessation of the Napoleonic Wars and it is estimated that approximately three thousand emigrated to North America and settled in Ohio, Illinois, New York State, Indiana, Iowa and Ontario, some after passing through Pennsylvania. There was contact between new and older immigrants and the latter were said to be more traditional and conservative in their outlook. One difference was that of dialect, those from Switzerland being distinguished from those from Germany, but, again, there were the common bonds of conservative thought and practice, which all groups recognised.

The Amish, unlike the Mennonites, have not developed a 'Conference' organisation and rely on their separate congregations to maintain the purity of their beliefs and practices. The newcomers also brought this basic organisation with them as well as their 'plainness' although there were differences in dress between those congregations who used hooks and eyes to secure their outer garments (these groups were labelled *Häfler*) as opposed to those who used buttons – *Knöffler*. Of greater importance was that land in America was available in vast areas and incoming groups could establish themselves as farming communities with their own religious identities. Thus the Amish could continue their traditions of hard work, of believing that the land was a gift from God to be husbanded with responsibility and that it would be handed down to the next generation and ensure their commitment to the community.

The religious history of the Amish in 19th century America is that of redemptive communities. This cooperativeness or *Gemeinde* is a concept that 'expresses all the connotations of church, congregation and community. The true church, they believe, had its origin in God's plan, and after the end of time the church will coexist with God through eternity' (Hostetler, 1993: 74). The doctrine that the Amish brought with them from Europe persisted throughout this period. A congregation of repented believers, 'a royal priesthood', separated from the world, emphasising voluntarism, faith, love and purity in the way believers understand and live the ordinances of Christ; a pure church incarnating the teaching of Jesus into a voluntary social order.

The Amish remained and remain separate from the outside world (qv Romans 12:2 and II Corinthians 6:14). Differences in dress and behaviour, marrying only within the faith, no business links with outsiders (referred to as 'the English'), no swearing of oaths or serving in local government, an abhorrence of violence and a quiet humility based on the key tenet of faith, voluntary adult baptism, reflect the fundamental fact that 'Religion is a total way of life, not a compartmental activity' (Hostetler, 1993: 76).

Like the Mennonites, the Amish emphasise humility (*Demut*) and self denial, themes that are constantly reiterated in their prayers and weekly services which link the words of the scriptures with everyday life.

The *Ordnung* continued to be the guidance to the social life of congregations and ensured continuity of outlook and behaviour within the context of '*gelassenheit*', the individual's submission to God's will and that of the community. It was and remains a stabilising influence, and acceptance of discipleship and discipline based on the traditional interpretation of the Scriptures. The fact that the *Ordnung* was never written down but is interpreted through the spoken word emphasises the importance of continuity of understanding and the opportunity for re-examining the *Ordnung* twice each year – part of the direct inheritance from Jacob Ammann. The influence of the *Ordnung* and their religious doctrine suffused the everyday life of the Amish and strengthened them against the increasing pressure of the outside world of 'Americanisation'.

Throughout the 19th century, especially the latter part of the century, there was a limited but continuous immigration of Amish into Pennsylvania and the mid-west States, which presented established communities with opportunities to exhibit their practical ideas of community help, especially among new families during their period of settling in. There is evidence that such help was not limited to Amish people. There was also movement of older Amish communities as a result of religious conflict and the lure of cheaper land. Such was the Amish skill in farming that infertile areas were accepted as challenges to that skill and often resulted in the development of productive land.

The background to this movement and development was pressure from the newer immigrants and the constant tension of the now quite distinct 'American way' of doing things and Amish leaders acknowledged these problems. Could their traditions be sustained in a dynamic, materialistic, ever growing democracy? What impact would this have on the Amish attitude towards government? What changes could undermine the Amish commitment to the Biblical standards governing their lives? David Beiler (1786-1871), a leader in Lancaster County and a traditionalist, wrote of the underlying problem of increasing worldliness, especially in dress and the behaviour of young people. Strong leadership was essential both to survival and the continuing purity of congregations and an earlier leader, Jacob Mast (1738-1808), was typical of those leaders whose example of piety had a lasting effect on Amish thinking and behaviour.

Gradually, the whole Amish church was strengthened, not only by significant leadership, but by meetings of ministers at 'regional' level when, after discussion, leaders agreed to the implementation of the *Ordnung* based on the principles of meekness and simplicity. There were also doctrinal matters to be considered, especially the movement of members of a congregation from one church to another, e.g. the movement of Amish to a Mennonite church, should they be shunned? The movement of Mennonites to the Amish church, should they be baptised? The answer to both questions was 'Yes'. The form of baptism was discussed. Should believers be baptised in rivers (after the example of Jesus being baptised in the Jordan) or in private homes? Both forms were accepted. Other changes concerned the building of meeting houses and the acceptance of Sunday Schools (1850s-60s) by Amish congregations. These were not accepted by the traditionalist Pennsylvania Amish, who continued to hold services in their homes or barns.

The Amish church organisation remained essentially a congregational form, that is each congregation (consisting of a number of families) was independent of one another and had no *formal* relationship with other congregations. Consequently those members of any congregation who were nominated for the office of deacon, minister or bishop were of particular importance to their congregation. They had to be men of 'good standing', married, probably with children and known for the suitability of their

conversation. The latter was important as the spoken word plays a fundamental role in linking a person's behaviour with what is expected of him under the rules of the *Ordnung*.

As with the Mennonites, Amish ministers were (and are) chosen by '*lot*'. The nominated individuals select a Bible or hymn book from a number equal to the number of nominees. One such Bible or hymn book contains a slip of paper, the lot, and the person selecting this was said to be chosen by God and ordained. It was common for a typical congregation to have a bishop, two ministers and a deacon. Each would be ordained for life and each had specific responsibilities in the congregation. Nolt (1992: 110-111) details these duties:

1. **Völliger Diener** (Full Servant) or Bishop. The spiritual leader of the congregation. Preached and performed baptisms, marriages and ordinations. Pronounced excommunications and re-admission to church membership with the congregation's agreement.
2. **Diener zum Buch** (Servant of the Book/Bible) or Preacher. Assisted the bishop in preaching and teaching. Such persons were sometimes called 'ministers'.
3. **Völliger Armendiener** (Full Servant of the Poor) or Full Deacon. To distinguish from a deacon whose duties a 'Full' Deacon performed together with additional duties. Assisted with baptisms and preaching. Guardians of doctrinal orthodoxy. Could correct bishops and preachers if the sermon included teaching that did not accord with the scriptures. Although this office was common in Europe, it is rare in America.
4. **Armendiener** (Servant of the Book) or Deacon. The guardian of the physical welfare of the congregation. Received funds from members for the 'alms fund' and distributed these to church members who needed financial assistance. Read assigned chapters from the Bible during Sunday service. Assisted the bishop in performing baptisms, communion, church discipline and the foot washing ceremony (providing tubs and water).

The Amish have, traditionally, worshipped every other Sunday in their homes or barns (with benches being transported from farm to farm). Other Sundays are spent with other Amish congregations. The form of service was simpler than the Mennonite in that there was singing (a cappella, and a form of chanting based on hymns from the *Ausbund*), prayers, two sermons and testimony offered by each ordained man as to the correctness of the sermons.

There were (and are) two communions (Spring and Autumn) preceded a week earlier in each case by a congregational meeting when the *Ordnung* was discussed. The congregations' members had to be at peace with one another before communion could take place. These discussions greatly strengthened the understanding and commitment of the congregation as they were the only formal opportunities for any criticism of the *Ordnung* and lifestyle to be expressed.

If the congregation became too large to meet in a member's home or barn is divided into 'districts', but there was a continuing relationship and unity between districts.

The Amish congregations were constantly faced with the danger of changes which would undermine their traditional faith and practice. Meeting houses, Sunday Schools, a more contemporary style of clothing, the pressure of local businesses together with the marked materialism of American culture could easily cause tensions to a simple, pious, plain and humble community. Contact with other religious groups could have a weakening influence as was evidenced when, in the 1850s, the Apostolic Christian Church drew Amish away from their congregations to form a 'New Amish' church. Some Amish changed sufficiently to become involved in local government but this was limited to a small number. Some thought that the American Civil War was, in part, God's punishment for their sins of increasing worldliness and saw the north-south division as reflecting the division between conservative and liberal Amish. The traditional Amish Pennsylvanians were certainly north of the 'Mason-Dixon' line.

There was and still is a constant tension between the Amish emphasis on the congregation and the American stress on individualism. Progress for the latter was expressed in terms of technology, wealth creation, materialism and the sweep of

occupancy of what was to become the 'United States of America', with an emphasis on what was newer, larger and, therefore, 'better'. The scattered families and farms of the Amish, with their biblical commitments, plainness of living and anchorage in their communities, seemed to be destined to disappear under the influence of the all-embracing forces around them.

Of particular significance to the future unity and strength of the Amish was the division that arose in the latter years of the 19th century concerning the form of baptism to be adopted by congregations, a ceremony of fundamental importance to the church and its believers. The choice was between river baptism as opposed to the traditional baptism as part of the indoor service. Those who supported the former were, on the whole, the more progressive Amish, one advocate being Shem Zook (1798-1880) of Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, who was also a printer, publisher and involved in business and local politics. He had thus re-defined the boundaries between his Amish congregation and the outside world. To overcome growing differences between traditional and progressive Amish, an innovation, a national gathering of ministers of the church, was suggested. The intention of these meetings (*Diener-Versammlung*), covering the period 1862-1878, was to produce a united community based on the traditional Amish ideas of community, humility and service, the all important bases of the *Ordnung*. Compromise was not an evident virtue in many of these meetings, more especially regarding details such as the use of musical instruments in church (or in the home), posing for photographs (a mark of pride), joining local militia, political participation, using clothes with bright colours and patterns and decorative furnishings and carriages. The conservatives were adamantly opposed to anything which, in their interpretation, would lead congregations away from God, that is, the words of the Scriptures and thus away from the *Ordnung*, the old order. Those who believed in this traditional, conservative manner became known as 'Old Order' Amish; others were labelled 'Amish-Mennonites', a separation and designation which continues today.

Division and change continued. The Old Order Amish ceased to attend ministers' meetings and the Amish Mennonites continued to adopt some changes, which gave rise to the Egly Amish (1866), named after the bishop who emphasised the need for each individual to have an inner experience of God to achieve salvation in contrast to

the salvation by grace, a cornerstone of Amish doctrine. As a bishop, Egly could refuse baptism to those who had not undergone this personal experience, yet he attracted a number of Amish to his belief. Bishop Joseph Stuckey (1826-1902) also attracted a number of change minded Amish (especially regarding dress standards, hair style, the use of an organ in Sunday School and the acceptance of excommunicated Amish into his congregation) who were also particularly attracted to the idea of universalism – that God would save *all* people rather than simply the elected as believed by traditional Amish. This conviction, together with a more relaxed manner in enforcing the ‘ban’, resulted in some congregations withdrawing fellowship from the Stuckey Amish. Thereafter, the Stuckey Amish became a recognised branch of the Amish Mennonites, retaining their specific beliefs and practices.

The ministers’ meetings ended, abruptly, in 1878 and the Amish Church resumed its traditional emphasis on a congregational organisation. The Old Order Amish, the Old Order Mennonites and the Amish-Mennonites remained as distinct groups covering the traditional-progressive spectrum, yet all sought spiritual renewal in spite of the collapse of the overall organisation that it was hoped could help resolve differences between congregational practices in ‘a hope for healing’. The Old Order Amish continued to be the most traditional in their outlook and separation from the outside world and other groups. The Amish-Mennonites, in some areas, were gradually to lose their distinctiveness and many were to merge with the Mennonites. Those Amish-Mennonites who remained continued to attract Amish throughout the years at the turn of the 19th century. The attitude of some of the more conservative Amish (e.g. the Conestoga Amish, Pennsylvania) towards members who joined an Amish-Mennonite or Mennonite congregation became more tolerant and the Amish-Mennonite Church spread across the continent.

Amish-Mennonites increasingly used English rather than German as their first language and their clothing was more influenced by the styles and colours of the outside world. Their reading matter was no longer limited to the ‘Herald of Truth’, but included local and national newspapers, magazines and even novels. Some male members became involved in banking, business and other outside activities usually related to agriculture. The idea of congregational meetings was never lost on these

groups and became the bases of the Amish-Mennonite 'Conference' which bore a close resemblance to the Mennonite Conference, thus counterbalancing the importance of the separate congregations in examining their faith and *Ordnung*.

Another break with strongly held traditions was the Amish-Mennonite involvement in secondary and higher education, which resulted in the establishment of High Schools, Colleges (especially Teachers' Colleges) and Universities. It is of significance that the Elkhart Institute (in Indiana, not Pennsylvania) was governed by Mennonites and Amish-Mennonites. The opportunities presented by higher education were to open up the legal, medical and teaching professions to young men of those congregations that approved of this educational provision.

The overall trend was not only that of the Amish-Mennonites adapting and adopting more progressive ways (yet not undermining their basic underlying doctrine) but of their becoming ever closer to the Mennonites. There were unifications, but the conservative-progressive emphasis continued to be present. The 'old' Mennonites (not Old Order), the conservative Amish-Mennonites, in addition to the Old Order Amish and Old Order Mennonites and conservative Mennonites indicate the complexities as well as the richness of the Amish and Mennonite 'families' who, secure in their beliefs, entered the 20th century and an increasingly unknown changing America.

CHAPTER 6

THE MENNONITES – EARLY DEVELOPMENTS IN PENNSYLVANIA

“You are the people of God; he loved you and chose you for his own.”

Col. 3:12

The continuous suppression of their faith and the harshness of their persecution caused the ‘Mennonites’, as the Anabaptists came to be called in the 16th century, to

move from region to region in Europe and, finally, to the United States of America. Emigration was not only motivated by an urgent need to escape this persecution but to gain a freedom whereby they and, many years later the Amish, could practise their faith in safety.

All emigrants took this journey across the ocean full of expectancy and, certainly the earliest emigrants, with varying degrees of uncertainty as to what they would experience in the 'new world'. The Mennonites and the Amish were at least buttressed by their faith. That faith was to prove the historic link between the earliest days of the Swiss Brethren and Anabaptism and the growth of these 'radical' churches in the USA. Although there are sharply defining similarities in faith and practices echoing the period from the early 16th century to the times of emigration, there were to be significant developments as these religious groups settled in their new environments. Nonetheless it is certainty and continuity of belief and worship which characterise these peoples more than change and, in this respect, it is significant as to how important the Dortrecht Confession of Faith of 1632 would remain in Mennonite and Amish thinking throughout the centuries. It remains a vital reference point today.

One of the greatest problems faced by any separate, identifiable group of immigrants to the USA in the 17th and 18th centuries was the impact of the growing sense of American nationalism. This nationalism was linked with a strong sense of individualism which was anathema to Mennonites and their reactions are 'a fascinating study of faith under stress' (Keim, 1988: 12). To the Mennonites and the Amish it was the church congregation which, as Keim also states, was 'the context for spiritual experience and the arbiter of community life'.

The core beliefs of these religious groups have been outlined earlier and these were to form the basis of their conservative outlook and conviction in the United States whether the groups settled in Pennsylvania, New York State, Virginia, Maryland or, later, in Ohio and Illinois. They brought with them the belief that an individual could only become a baptised member of a 'believers' church' by a personal, voluntary decision when they were mature enough to understand this decision's religious and communal implications, implying salvation by faith with a regenerate life following this conversion. The Bible was the bedrock of their belief as was their acceptance of

pacifism and a clear separation of their church from what constituted 'the State'. The latter conviction was to prove particularly important during periods of war affecting their new country.

The overwhelming majority of the immigrants were farmers and established themselves as farmers within existing communities and thus sharply distinguished themselves from later immigrants, the Hutterites, who formed their own closed communities quite separate from older settlements. This tradition continues today.

William Penn's emphasis on religious freedom in Pennsylvania allowed for a buffer zone between the Mennonites and Amish and the 'outside world'. This separation was reinforced by the Pennsylvania Deutsch or Dutch dialect and the distinctive plain dress originally adopted in Europe by the Amish. The 'plain people', basing their conviction on I Peter 3:3, rejected any form of decoration or self-adornment as gaudy and full of pride. There was also a rejection of *too* close a relationship with other Christians who swore oaths and could be involved in warfare.

Theologically, Mennonites were influenced by the 'Great Awakening' or revivalism during the early decades of the 19th century, one outcome of which was that some Mennonites left their congregations to join the 'United Brethren'. Of equal importance to their maintaining a conservative attitude, it is said that 'in response to revivalism, Mennonites restated and subtly altered their theology – by a new emphasis on humility. Through much of the coming century, humility theology would dominate' (Schlabach, 1988: 29). The root of this was the traditional pietism so evident in European Mennonism when it was interpreted as repentance and yielding to God, the basis of '*gelassenheit*', a basic feature of Mennonite and Amish life today.

The acceptance of a pietistic outlook contrasted, uneasily for some, with the tradition of suffering. The problem was not the nature of this suffering but its causes in a community where there was no repression, imprisonment or even great hostility towards Mennonites, although they could be fined and limited in their civic freedoms. Nonetheless, the young American nation was marked by its idea of rugged individualism, of strident enterprise and business, of a decidedly aggressive attitude towards the elimination of the country's western frontier and the fulfilment of its

‘manifest destiny’ to form a continental empire in North America. Reminiscent of the countries in the Old World, this aggressive outlook was to result in wars and the creation of an overseas empire. The pacifist Mennonites refused to be involved in military activities and although they paid extra taxes not to be involved (again reminiscent of their forebears, especially in Switzerland and Russia) they were scorned and sometimes despised by patriotic Americans.

In contradistinction, the Mennonites re-emphasised their ideas of separation from the outside world; of being humble and loving and of non-resistance, signs that their idea of Christianity was opposed to so many of the ideas, standard, values and manifestations of the world they were in but not of. Eminent leaders would stress the tenets of the old Anabaptist faith of non-conformity, discipline (quoting Matthew 18 again) and the inner, spiritual submission linked with repentance. Their followers were not going to be diverted from their idea of righteousness and *their* idea of a Christian life.

These differences and resulting tensions were reinforced by the physical contiguity between the Mennonite farms so expertly tended by this religious group and the ‘outside world’. Although the existence of the black walnut tree was taken as an indication of fertile soil, it was undoubtedly the farming skills and hard work of these farmers that has helped to make Pennsylvania (especially Lancaster County) one of the most fertile of the United States. The land, according to these farmers, is a gift from God to be tended lovingly and responsibly before being handed on to the succeeding generation. The Mennonites and Amish are very competent, industrious farmers and are well aware of the Biblical admonition regarding the use of talents. There is said to be a certain envy shown by other farmers to the productivity yields of Mennonite/Amish farms, in spite of these groups’ reliance on labour intensive techniques.

Early farming success and the comparative cheapness of land attracted further waves of immigrants from traditional areas of Europe such as Switzerland, the Rhine Valley and Holland and also newer areas in Poland, Prussia and Russia. Pennsylvania continued to be one of the most potent ‘magnets’ but later immigrants passed through to Ohio (Holmes County especially), Illinois, Virginia, Missouri and Texas. Each

group brought some skill or idea to benefit the new community but their communality of belief enabled them to settle more quickly into their new homeland. Immigrants from Russia, Prussia and Holland appeared to be better educated than the earliest settlers and made a significant contribution to Mennonite religious thinking, especially regarding the 'purity' of Mennonite practices.

There was also a movement from settled communities to the newer lands in the west of the USA which has been considered as part of a far greater movement of people west during the 18th and 19th centuries. This was part of the 'melting pot' idea when America encouraged the poor and downtrodden of Europe to seek a fresh home in the New World. There was always the possibility that small, religious groups would be swamped by this movement and the resulting attempts to make immigrants 'Americans'. That this did not happen to the Mennonites is a tribute to their faith, their emphasis on the 'congregation' or 'community' and the motives that impelled people to move west. Why then did they move? Young people were undoubtedly caught up with the general movement of people who, out of self-interest, planned to make their fortune and/or (particularly the pacifist Mennonites) escape the Civil War. For the Mennonites there were other reasons linked with their faith *viz*:

- i) Difficulties and dissatisfactions within the congregation which often reflected the congregation's interpretation of the ban. This was an historical link to the problems faced by Menno Simons in his declining years and the reason for the establishment of the Amish as a distinct religious group.
- ii) To spread the faith. This was an early manifestation of Mennonite missionary zeal following the Biblical admonition to 'spread the word'. It was believed that this was more effectively achieved by groups rather than individuals. This commitment has continued to the present day. The Amish did not and do not involve themselves in missionary work.
- iii) To seek a more perfect vision of heaven on earth. One of the oldest reasons for schisms and the history of the Mennonite and Amish peoples is marked by divisions of this nature (qv Appendices C and D).

Rather than face conflict in the congregation or with the outside world, families would move to new areas thus reflecting the old idea of flight or migration. Scattering may have weakened congregations numerically, but also ensured the maintenance and strengthening of their basic religious beliefs. This was not the 'land hunger' so evident in settlers moving into native Indian territories, but there were undoubtedly instances of families occupying areas of land too large for their immediate purposes. These, however, would provide for married sons when they required land to establish their farms and thus maintain the basic religious group based on a number of extended families who could form their own congregation. There did not appear to be any significant opposition to the sometimes violent means adopted by men 'of the frontier' that deprived native peoples of their lands, yet there are recorded instances where the pacifist Mennonites and Amish suffered from the predations of native Indians.

Thus, bearing their faith with the resolution of their forebears, families spread into the mid-west and beyond, maintaining a strong sense of religious belief and commitment to the community. Once settled, these pioneers helped later arrivals from Prussia and Russia as these new groups moved especially along the main rivers into Missouri, Texas, Iowa, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Kansas and Nebraska. One wonders to what extent their thoughts and expectations were influenced by their reading of Joshua's crossing of the Jordan.

Strong as their faith was, some settlements did not prosper. For example, a very conservative group from Holland settled in Elkhart County, Indiana, whilst others were taken into older settlements of a similar religious outlook. In spite of problems and disappointments, 'a strong fabric of Mennonite faith and Mennonite community survived across the distances'. (Schlabach, 1988: 45.) This was to be greatly strengthened by the unification of congregations to discuss matters of mutual concern, especially the '*Ordnung*' or 'Order', under which the religious groups lived a disciplined faith. Some groups were to maintain the beliefs and practices brought from the Old World; others were to become more liberal or 'progressive' in their outlook and living. This was a gradual movement throughout the 19th century influenced by such ministers as Jacob Stauffer of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (1840s), Jacob Wisler of Elkhart County, Indiana and Jonas Martin, again of

Lancaster County (1893). The progressives became known as the 'Amish Mennonites', the traditionalists as 'Old Order Amish' and a series of ministers' meetings ('*Dienerversammlungen*') failed to bridge the differences between these groups which still exist today.

In spite of differences, the deeply ingrained commitment to mutual help persisted across these groups, particularly during periods of sickness, famine and falling prices for farm produce. This suffering inspired prayer, resolution and practical assistance to overcome these tribulations without recourse to help outside their communities.

For the greater part of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, the USA was free from war and the threat of war and the vast majority of Mennonites and Amish lived relatively peaceful and prosperous lives. The American War of Independence and the American Civil War were marked challenges to their pacifism and engendered hostility towards these groups, although there is evidence of their involvement in non military (e.g. medical) activities and their payment of extra taxes and for substitutes who went to war instead of an individual Mennonite. This was yet another example of their rejection of the demands of the 'State' coupled with their known pacifism and these attitudes were to be challenged throughout the history of these religious groups. For many members it was a deeply disturbing moral matter that the State would accept extra taxes and substitutes and that Mennonites would approve of these actions.

Another dilemma was the clash between the religious beliefs of the Mennonites and the burgeoning American businesses and trade, as so many were sceptical of the pursuit and production of wealth or the creation of artefacts of an elaborate nature, e.g. the decoration of houses or barns. Low interest rates are generally accepted, but usuary is not tolerated, thus the poorer members of a community could and still receive generous financial assistance.

Migrations within the USA and continued emigrations to America added richness and texture to the Mennonite fabric and new immigrants, especially from Holland and Russia, with more liberal attitudes, made room for progressivism. The commencement of Mennonite publications, e.g. that by John F Funk, *Die Mennonitsche Rundschau* (1880) also assisted in this process and possibly added to

the differences between the traditionalists and liberals. Differences in interpretations of the ban appeared to be a constant source of argument as were the tensions arising from the influence of the outside world. Differences in attitudes towards the involvement of Mennonites in the business world have been noted and to this problem was added the reaction to the temperance movement. Total abstinence was not part of the *Ordnung*, but there was opposition to the profitable production and sales of alcoholic drink and drunkenness was, traditionally, considered a sin and therefore came under the ban.

Towards the end of the 19th century, Mennonite publications, the expressed views of certain leaders and the reactions of the Mennonite Brethren (a group originally from Russia who maintained a degree of separation from other groups and who were constant reminders to all groups of the need to keep Mennonism *pure*), often criticised businessmen for their alleged ruthlessness which ignored biblical principles in pursuing their self interests. This criticism reflected the basic conflict between the Mennonite acceptance of the paramount importance of the congregation and the outside world's emphasis on individualism and the self-made man. The requirements of the *Ordnung*, modesty and humility lived through the concept of *gelassenheit*, sharply divided the Mennonite world and kingdom from that which they observed about them.

Tensions and differences between the traditionalists and the liberals or progressives gave rise to changes such as the keeping of written records of baptisms, births, deaths and marriages, together with decisions made at Conferences. The latter ensured that there were likely to be fewer problems arising as to what had been agreed at these major gatherings. A further indication of a less traditional attitude was the establishment of Sunday Schools (1860) through the endeavours of leaders such as John F Funk (1835-1930) and Christian Yoder (1845-1932). Traditionalists emphasised the role of the family in the religious education of children but the growth of this wider provision was allowed in Lancaster County provided the Schools were conducted according to the rules and order of the church in the school house, not the church. This attitude was in contrast to the progressive 'General Conference' Mennonite groups who established the Christian Endeavour Society, an interdenominational youth movement which stressed citizenship, talked of responsible

businessmen and patriotism. Exceptionally these groups also stressed the importance of women and wished them to be appointed deacons and although representing a distinct minority, their actions caused older, traditional groups to recognise the needs of young people and establish Young People's Bible Meetings.

The 'out of church' and 'out of work' time was kept under constant scrutiny as articles in *'The Mennonite'*, a progressive journal, testify. Some leaders were opposed to frivolity (even laughing aloud) and warned of the dangers of the tradition of visiting one another's homes for social intercourse becoming a duty, even a ritual. Some treated music with suspicion, especially the use of instruments which could be considered as sources of pride. Was there a mention of musical instruments in the life of Jesus? Yet singing was among the oldest traditions of these peoples and would play (and still plays) an important part in church services and in the evening gatherings of young people. These gatherings greatly add to the sense of community and communal pleasure.

Some changes have arisen within a congregation from requests by younger members. This was particularly so when the ever-present problem of the purchase of automobiles was considered by the most progressive of the Mennonite groups. Such an idea would conflict with the accepted idea that the horse and buggy should be the only form of transport *owned* by members of the congregation (taxis and buses could be hired for use). If there was sufficient support for change at congregational level it would be further discussed at Conference and either rejected or accepted. Some rejections could result in a schism with a congregation leaving to form its own separate group such as the 'Black Bumper' Mennonites, who decided to purchase cars on condition that all chrome parts were painted black.

In addition to the Conference organisation, the later decades of the 19th century witnessed the emergence of Boards that clarified and deepened the concerns of Mennonites in particular activities (Dyck, 1993: 220) *viz*: the Board for Publications (1878); for Missions (1882) and for Education (1895) which became more formal organisations in the first decade of the 20th century. All these organisations were to have a profound influence on Mennonite thinking and endeavours, both within the Mennonite 'family' and in the outside world.

The 'family' gradually increased in numbers and spread into the great majority of the states of the United States, although some groups were very small in the numbers of families forming a congregation. Irrespective of size, all groups retained their distinctive, separate identity through the continued acceptance of the traditional beliefs that were considered to be of fundamental importance to all baptised members. Reflecting the idea of *gelassenheit*, a meekness and lowliness of heart combined with non-conformity to the outside world together with the acceptance of hard work, non-resistance and repentance, Mennonites had a practical basis for their ethics. All these requirements were assumed and expected to be the everyday behaviour of all members of the believers' church. There was nothing of the abstract in identifying God's people in their behaviour, plainness of dress and the lack of pride that brought forth a condemnation from others of the group. Some even rejected the raised platform in church as this was said to place ministers above their congregations, yet it was the inward acceptance of humility (Schlabach, 1988: 102) rather than its outward form which was of basic importance. This thinking was based on I Peter 5:5 'God resisted the proud and giveth grace to the humble', but even this did not prevent the expression of a most resolute attitude against any State or Federal decree which was believed to undermine this general outlook.

A problem arising within a congregation in its interpretation of 'pride' was that any differences of opinion could be judged as fracturing the unity of the visible church and, thus, spiritually weakening. To some this judgement was not seen as an understanding or sympathetic, let alone a forgiving attitude. On a larger scale humility theology maintained the all-important idea of discipleship for both the Mennonites and the Amish. According to Schlabach (1988: 105) 'for better or worse, it helped them resist being Protestantized and Americanized. In a society with great power of assimilation, that was quite a feat.' The congregation and its accepted rules of discipline was the bulwark against the swamping effects of unbridled individualism. The *Ordnung* set clearly defined ways of behaving and what constituted sinning, which, to a visible church, meant such anti-social behaviour as drunkenness, lewd conversation, hostility to others, lack of generosity, fornication, marrying outside the faith and any manifestation of pride. This set of rules formed the religious boundaries into which members of the congregation were born and reared and which were

accepted as the expression of God's will being internalised and reinforced by the congregation's influence throughout an individual's life. The church ministers led the congregation and were constant reminders of what was expected of those who had chosen 'to follow Christ in life'. Originality and innovation were not rewarded and could result in the kind of censure by a congregation which few individuals would risk.

A constant factor in church organisation was the identification and choosing of deacons, ministers and Bishops. From the earliest acceptance of the idea of a priesthood of believers, these leaders were untrained, unpaid and exclusively male following I Corinthians 14: 34-35 '.....the woman should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak.' However, women can suggest the names of individuals considered acceptable for nomination. Any man receiving baptism was making such a commitment to the faith that he knew he could be called upon to perform any office expected of him by the congregation. Persons considered for ordination must be from the particular church's district, be known to the congregation and be of 'good standing' in that congregation to the extent of being known for his suitable conversation (I Peter 3:10 'For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile'.) Equally the congregation must be at peace with itself and manifest a loving unity before an ordination is considered by all members. There is usually a period of two weeks devoted to discussion and prayer before one of the twice-yearly preparatory services (*Attningsgme*) i.e. preparatory to the communion service. These services offer an opportunity to discuss the Ordnung but this is rarely questioned so that the congregation is at peace before the service of ordination or communion takes place.

Deacons, ministers and Bishops are chosen by 'lot'. The process begins with members of the congregation entering individually the room next to the main room in the church (qv Appendix E) and quietly mentioning to an ordained person the name of the individual considered suitable for ordination. Usually the names of two or three individuals are mentioned if the ordination concerns a deacon. The numbers for the ordination of a minister or Bishop are said to be greater. The Bishop then takes a number of special hymn books equivalent to the number of names proposed by the congregation and, privately, inserts a slip of paper ('the lot') into one of the hymn

books which are placed randomly on a table in the entrance room of the church. The officiating Bishop says 'Lord of all generations, show us which one you have chosen among these brethren.' (Kraybill, 1993: 55.) Each person whose name has been mentioned as a suitable person for ordination is asked to select a hymn book and the one who finds that the hymn book he has selected contains the 'lot' is thereby selected for ordination. This system ensures that the chosen person is divinely selected and not directly by the congregation. The 'lot' follows the wording of Proverbs 16:33 'The lot is cast into the lap but the decision is wholly of the Lord.' Also included on the slip of paper is a verse with biblical reference and the words 'Herewith you are chosen to the office of.....(deacon, minister or Bishop)' both verse and statement being written in the Pennsylvania Deutsch dialect.

The chosen person is ordained on the Tuesday or Wednesday of the week following his selection by lot. The ordinand has clearly defined responsibilities (Jentsch, 1973: 156-158) viz:

- i) A Bishop is required to administer baptism, communion and ordination; to preach and give testimony; to prepare instruction classes and counsel regarding violation of the *Ordnung*; to pronounce excommunication and announce restoration; to conduct weddings and funerals; to travel to other communities to provide spiritual guidance and conduct services; to visit the sick; generally oversee the community and participate in meetings of Conference.
- ii) A minister preaches and assists in the instruction class for those seeking baptism; gives testimony at church services; assists in counselling violations of *Ordnung*; visits the sick; takes part in Conferences; in the absence of the Bishop takes weddings, funerals and instruction classes and may also carry out these duties in other communities if invited to do so.
- iii) A deacon provides the bread and wine for communion; takes care of the communion cup; supervises the collection and distribution of money for mutual aid including the appointment of visitors to make the collection; appoints

appraisers to assess property damage; assists in counselling in violations of *Ordnung*; gives testimony in church services; in the absence of a minister may be called upon to preach; visits the sick; takes part in meetings of Conference.

The giving of testimony is of particular importance theologically as this ensures that the Scripture has been correctly interpreted in the sermons and is related to the life of the community. This serves to reinforce what is without error for the congregation in its beliefs. If there are no religious leaders in the community, ministers and deacons will join the Bishop in visits to these groups which helps to enhance fellowship over a larger community. Traditionally, deacons can be considered for the office of minister and ministers for the office of Bishop, but the overall responsibility in a community lies with the senior Bishop, who can assign tasks to other ordained colleagues, and any Bishop can visit, unannounced, a community when he is expected to preach a sermon. He may also visit congregations in other States in America and provinces in Canada with his expenses being met by the visited congregation. The Bishop's home and life are expected to be the epitome of plainness.

Religious tradition is not only reinforced by church leaders; it is also maintained by church ritual as this is carried out in an almost standardised form year after year. The diagram (Appendix E) shows the plan of a typical Mennonite Church, its grounds and adjoining cemetery. The plainness of the church is most striking as there is no tower, steeple, bells or coloured glass in the windows. Inside there are no pictures, symbols, hymn boards, altar or altar rail, or clock, and the furniture is unpolished. There are benches for the congregation, a table for the ministers or the Bishop on which there is a Bible and two New Testaments (one in English and the other in German). There is a separate singing table with seats occupied by those who will lead the singing. Males and females sit apart in the main body of the church with children sitting with their mothers. There is usually a crèche for very young children.

Men enter the church first through the men's entrance and, traditionally, greet each other with a handshake and, quite possibly, a holy kiss (I Thessalonians 5:26 'Greet all brethren with a holy kiss') then the women enter through the women's entrance room to be followed by children through the appropriate entrances.

Jentsch (1973: 163-167) describes in detail a typical Mennonite service and notes that all singing is *a capella*, possibly following the words in Amos 6:5 ‘....woe to those...who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp and like David invent for themselves instruments of music’. The selection of hymns is influenced by those included in the Ausbund (the nucleus of the hymns dates back to 1535 when a group of Anabaptists wrote fifty three hymns during their period of imprisonment in a castle in Passau, Bavaria) and the traditional chanting is on the themes of suffering, salvation, sorrow, sin, divine provision and threats from the outside world. Singing or chanting is in German, although there are Amish Mennonites who sing in unison in English.

Sermons emphasise sin and salvation and are preached spontaneously by the deacon, minister or Bishop chosen to do so immediately before the service as a result of a discussion in the ministers’ room. The themes are limited and repetitive and only in the period for testimony following the sermon is there any participation by male members of the congregation. Women do not contribute to testimony. Reference to and exposition of biblical extracts by the male members of the congregation show a keen knowledge of the Bible. Traditionally, the structure of the service is a hymn followed by a sermon, prayer, hymn, sermon, hymn and concluding prayer. During the service the congregation’s attention may be drawn to the unacceptable behaviour of a particular member and these remarks are accompanied by an earnest plea that the congregation encourages the recalcitrant, in the most loving way, to cease this behaviour.

Following the service there is the all important opportunity for conversation, usually in sexually segregated groups, which is used to communicate matters of interest (most Mennonites forbid the use of telephones in the home), especially reports of mutual aid and the required contributions. The language of these conversations and of the service is usually in the Pennsylvania Deutsch dialect, although some Amish Mennonites will use English.

To those to whom the faith and its constant reinforcement is of vital importance, communion services are of particular significance. Communion takes place twice

yearly on Easter Sunday and a Sunday in October and usually lasts three and a half hours. The service commences with a hymn, then the ministers enter and the first sermon is delivered on a theme of scriptural history, e.g. the Creation or the Flood. There is then a silent prayer, followed by a sermon by a deacon on a theme chosen by the Bishop and related to the Last Supper, e.g. Matthew 26: 26-29; Mark 14: 22-25; Luke 22: 17-20; I Corinthians 11: 23-25. This is followed by a sermon, again on scriptural history, usually related to Abraham and the entry to Canaan, given by a minister before the Bishop gives a sermon on the life of Jesus with emphasis on the Crucifixion. Then the Bishop refers to biblical texts containing the words of Jesus pertaining to His body and blood, before distributing the elements as he moves among members of the congregation. Each member stands to receive the bread and the cup of wine as each is offered. The congregation sings a hymn whilst the elements are offered.

Testimony is then given, followed by audible prayer, the Lord's Prayer and the Blessing before a further hymn is sung and the scriptural text (John 13: 1-20) regarding foot washing is read by the Bishop (John 13 verse 14 'If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet'). Foot washing, a sign of humility, has long been a Mennonite tradition accepted by most congregations and is a distinct feature of the communion service. It is one of the responsibilities of the deacon to provide ten small wooden tubs with warm water and place them in appropriate positions in the church. People remove their shoes and stocking and form pairs (the sexes are segregated) and one wears an apron while the other sits. Each foot is washed in turn and dried on the apron. Partners then change places and repeat the process. This is followed by the holy kiss and the salutation 'The Lord be with us' or 'The Lord strengthen us in love'. The Bishop, immediately he has finished his part in the foot washing, leads in hymn singing and the service then ends with a dismissal grace.

Only baptised members of the congregation can be included in the communion service and, before being baptised, individuals wishing to be accepted as full members of the congregation must attend instruction classes, usually over a period of twelve weeks. The age for making this all important decision is left to the individual, but all are generally aware of the demands of full church membership and, as the

consequences of such membership can be very demanding, the decision must be the result of mature reflection. The act and outcome of baptism are at the heart of the faith and the concept of a 'believers' church' must be clearly appreciated as those undertaking this commitment may be called upon to undertake any responsibilities required of them by the congregation. Young Mennonites have a distinct advantage in that they have grown up in a religious community where faith is such a visible and constant part of life. Some would claim that this is a religious cocoon between their life and that of the outside world. Thus if a person is, through the grace of baptism, brought to the commitment of faith in Christ, then he can exercise his loyalty to God in his farming, business, as a parent or craftsman. This is to recognise (as Calvin did) 'a profound unity in Christian life because a Christian acknowledges God's universal rule, sees all creation in Christ and concentrates his own endeavours in the service of Christ's kingdom' (Williams, 1961: 258).

Young Mennonite people usually contemplate baptism and church fellowship in their later teens and will have undoubtedly spoken of this matter at their 'sing songs' and other leisure activities where young people gather. This is a period of their lives when they are allowed to 'kick up their heels' (*Rumspringa*) and their behaviour tests the limits of what is expected of them, e.g. they secretly drive cars, purchase (but hide) mobile radios, visit cinemas and bars. Eventually the question of whether or not they become full members of their congregation has to be decided and approximately 80% decide to undergo baptism, to the great satisfaction of their parents. Marriage can only be contracted between baptised members of the community and this undoubtedly influences this decision, especially as regards its timing.

Decisions to be baptised are finalised by June when the group meets the Bishop in the ministers' room before the Sunday service and each member is questioned as to the certainty and seriousness of this decision. Is there evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit in their lives? The Bishop questions their thoughts and deeds and will be especially concerned as to any behaviour which may have to be corrected. During the service the names of those who wish to be baptised are announced and the period of instruction begins on the last Sunday of July or the first Sunday in August, which enables baptism to take place at the October communion service.

The six periods of instruction, each of two hours, take place in the church in the early afternoon. The main concern of each session is three of the eighteen Articles of the Dortrecht Confession of Faith and Border's (1981) Study Guide could well be used by members of the class. Exposition of the Articles takes the form of lectures (no questions and answers) and there is no memorisation of any Sections of the Articles. 'Dropouts' are not known, which indicates a strong commitment on the part of class members; nonetheless any questionable conduct of which the Bishop is aware is admonished and a refusal to change leads to the termination of membership of the class.

Each session commences with a hymn introduced by a deacon and sung by men at the singing table and is followed by an opening sermon on appropriate topic by a minister. Then there is a period of silent prayer, followed by an exposition, by the Bishop, of a part of the Dortrecht Confession. The Articles (three each session) are read and explained in the context of the Ordnung with the Bishop inviting the minister and deacon to correct or add to his commentary. This is the traditional testimony to any exposition of the faith and leads to audible prayer and the Lord's Prayer. The session concludes with a benediction, hymn and the announcement of the next class. The candidates then either return home or accept an invitation to dinner with members of the fellowship. Between sessions, candidates will continue their everyday life, including visits on Sunday evenings to their intended spouse if they are courting.

The baptismal service is conducted on the Saturday immediately before the October communion and is characterised by its seriousness and a feeling of expectancy by candidates and congregation. The three-hour service commences with a hymn; the ministers then enter; there is another hymn followed by the opening sermon. Silent prayer precedes the reading, by the Bishop, of a scriptural text related to baptism. The minister then preaches a sermon on the sixth Chapter of Matthew, regarding the new life to be found in Christ, forgiving one's fellow men, putting one's trust in God, charity, prayer, fasting and, above all, seeking the Kingdom of God. This is followed by the Bishop preaching a sermon on the text chosen by him earlier in the service.

The act of baptism then takes place with the candidates rising to meet the Bishop in front of the congregation. When the Bishop reads Philippians 2: 10 'at the name of

Jesus every knee shall bow', each candidate kneels and three questions are asked of each candidate concerning their willingness to follow the ordinances of the gospels. This requires a positive answer to the questions regarding the requirements of humility, resistance to Satan and submission to the discipline of the community. The Bishop prays audibly with each candidate, then rises and cups his hands over each candidate's head in turn. The deacon then pours water from a bowl into the bishop's hands through which it falls on to the candidate's head and shoulders. The Bishop helps each candidate to rise, using his right hand and, placing his left hand on the candidate's shoulder, welcomes each into the new life as brother or sister in the community. Each is reminded to accept the responsibilities of the new life with diligence and is promised the strength of the Lord in any 'calamity, tribulation or prosecution' with the joys of heaven to those who remain steadfast. The kiss of peace is then bestowed by the Bishop to the young men and by the Bishop's wife to the young women. After a period of testimony, there are audible prayers, the Lord's Prayer, a blessing, a hymn, an announcement of the *Ordnung* and then dismissal.

Special services are conducted on Good Friday, Ascension Day, Christmas and for visiting ministers, but family prayers are a constant factor each and every day, especially at meal times and bed times. These take the form of silent prayers, but all prayers, traditionally, relate to the needs of the community. Likewise, Bible reading is accepted as a life long activity for the family, commencing at the earliest possible age with illustrated stories emphasising simple biblical phrases such as 'God is Love', 'Jesus Saves', 'God Bless Our Home' and 'Trust and Obey', which are often depicted in framed statements hung on walls in the home. Religious poetry is also a feature of family life, as is hymn singing at the conclusion of 'chores' and at weekend gatherings of young people. The evidence of faith is clearly manifested daily in the life of Mennonites, whatever label is attached to their general outlook, be it 'Old Order', 'Conservative' or 'Amish Mennonite', and the community is united in its expectation of a regenerated life of those who have been baptised.

Services in church, baptisms, communion, prayers in family life, the *Ordnung*, what is taught in schools (especially for some groups in Sunday Schools) and how it is taught, have been and remain constant, essential features of the lives of these religious groups, but the service a week before communion is of particular importance as it

gives the congregation an opportunity to discuss the *Ordnung*. On exceptional occasions it may be questioned and changes suggested. If these changes receive strong support (and the response of the Bishop is critical) they are presented by the Bishop to the regional Conference for further discussion and clarification.

The history of Mennonism reveals that some suggested changes have related to the dress or appearance of individual members such as the use of hooks and eyes rather than buttons on garments, the kind of suspenders (braces) worn by men, the width of the rims of hats, the width of collars, the length of hair and the matter of beards. The bonnets of ladies (especially tie strings) and the colour of dresses and small capes have all come under scrutiny in the context of the interpretation of 'plainness'. To the outsider, such details may appear to be of minor importance, but, to a community wishing to preserve its separate identity and discipline, these distinctions can be matters giving rise to warm disputes. Compromise is of little use if justification for any of these details can be found in the Scriptures.

The acceptance of Sunday Schools, English rather than German as a first language (1840s-1850s), the use of cars (1920s-1930s), the voltage of batteries to produce electricity (1930s), the treatment of milk to ensure its purity reached government standards (1960s), the age at which children could finish compulsory school (1970s) and the gradual growth of post school education (spread over many decades) together with the constant problem regarding the application of the ban have resulted in controversies within the faith and with the outside world. Some differences have been such as to result in schisms when congregations have decided to form their own, separate communities. Thus the tree of the Mennonite 'family' has many branches identified under labels such as 'Conference', 'Conservative', 'Reformed', 'Old Order' or the name of a leader who inspired the movement away from larger groups or congregations, e.g. the Beachy Amish Mennonites after Bishop Moses Beachy of Somerset County, Pennsylvania, who led his congregation out of the Old Order Amish in 1925 or the Groffdale Old Order Mennonite Conference led by Joseph O Wenger (1868-1956), because they opposed the use of cars, yet share a meeting house with the group (the Weaverland Conference) that uses black cars (Scott, 1996: 29-32). Further reference will be made to the causes and outcomes of schisms in later descriptions.

In spite of the many branches to the Mennonite family tree, there is a discernible basic organisation ensuring the continuity of faith and tradition. As Dyck (1993: 220) states, 'The Mennonite Church.....has a form of government which is difficult to name. It is neither purely episcopal, synodal nor congregational, but a combination of all three. The district conferences now set the basic disciplinary standards for the congregations.' These standards are ensured by Bishops (or elders) and deacons at congregational level provided policies have been discussed and decisions reached by congregations. However, there are still instances of some groups emphasising the authority of Bishops and conferences; others stress the importance of congregations. Mennonite organisation is never simple, especially as some Bishops have been replaced by conference ministers and the old Mennonite General Conference has been replaced since 1971 by a General Assembly. Not all have agreed with these changes and the Fellowship of Concerned Mennonites, formed in 1983, resulted from the concern regarding theological developments in the Mennonite Church, more particularly the work of the various Boards mentioned earlier. In contrast, the establishment and organisation of Mennonite Mutual Aid in 1946 to help others has received support throughout the Mennonite Church 'family', which may be considered of some significance as it also bridges the difficult link with the business world.

Change, especially of an organisational nature, is therefore quite evident in the history of the Mennonite Church, but of perhaps even greater importance are the changes instituted by four significant leaders whose achievements span the 19th and 20th centuries. These leaders have been identified by Dyck (1993: 221-235) as John Fretz Funk (1835-1944), John S Coffman (1848-1899), Daniel Kauffman (1865-1944) and Harold S Bender (1897-1962). What were the contributions each made to the continuing Mennonite story that links beliefs and practices not only during the periods of their respective lives, but to the era which precedes the earliest efforts and convictions of the oldest leader?

John Fretz Funk is claimed to be the most important figure in the life of the Mennonite Church in the 19th century. A Pennsylvanian educated beyond the minimum grade and baptised when he was twenty two, he established the first

significant Mennonite periodical, '*The Herald of Truth*' and its German equivalent, '*Herald der Wahrheit*', in 1864. He was ordained in 1865 and established his printing business in Elkhart, Indiana, in 1867, remaining there for the rest of his life. So successful were the publications he produced that he was required and agreed to sell his business in 1908 to the Mennonite Publications Board at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, which remains an important source of Mennonite literature and the means whereby religious ideas can reach the far flung Mennonite family.

Bishop Funk was also an inspiration of the Sunday School movement, thus reinforcing the spiritual life of the Mennonite churches and families and, simultaneously, overcoming initial opposition to this movement. Likewise he was instrumental, with the support of J S Coffman, in establishing an Evangelizing Fund which enabled preachers to be sent to neglected communities, thus ensuring the faith was sustained even in the smallest congregations. The organisation controlling the Fund eventually developed into the Board for Missions and Charities, thus spreading the faith well beyond the boundaries of the USA.

The establishment of a General Conference in 1898 was another signal contribution by Bishop Funk to the Mennonite faith, which greatly strengthened the unity of the Church. These contributions, through Funk's zeal and enterprise, form a bridge between 17th and 20th century religious and organisational ideas in conserving the fundamental tenets of Mennonite belief.

John S Coffman of Virginia is important not only as a colleague of Bishop Funk, but also for his commitment to evangelical work as a means of bringing a freshness to and an extension of the faith. He was a particularly successful preacher and is remembered for attracting a large number of young people to the Church. Additionally Coffman championed more advanced or higher education for Mennonites which was contrary to tradition and caused problems before it was accepted as a necessary step into the modern world. The pointer on this road was the establishment of Elkhart Institute (1896) which, in 1903, became Goshen College, Indiana, a significant development in the Mennonite 'awakening' but one rejected by those in Pennsylvania.

Daniel Kauffman was another Pennsylvanian who moved to Elkhart County, Indiana (possibly to escape more traditional Mennonite views) and gained a University degree in Missouri. Converted in 1890, he was ordained Bishop in 1896 and carried out his duties for 48 years. In so doing, he became a very influential leader in the Church. His outstanding contributions remain his life long writings from 1898 to 1941. Of particular importance was Kauffman's '*Bible Doctrine*' (1914), the reference for faith and conduct wherein salvation and discipleship were separated, as were faith and works. The former reflected evangelical revivalism with faith becoming propositional; the latter were of a sequence where discipleship was third, yet the breaking of any of the rules of the *Ordnung* was considered to undermine all in an action which implied a move to modernism. He also claimed that Mennonism was Fundamentalist, but not the extreme form evident in other faiths at this time. Kauffman concentrated on the matter of liberalism and he expressed his views forcibly in the *Gospel Herald*, of which he was the editor. Dyck (1993: 226) claims that Kauffman 'was basically conservative, yet he would make concessions in religious practice, provided these would not violate the ordinances and restrictions, in order to maintain the unity of the church. But there could be no concessions in the area of doctrine'.

The last of the four major leaders identified by Dyck is Harold S Bender. Born at Elkhart, he was baptised at twelve years of age, graduated from Goshen College and gained degrees in divinity, theology (Princeton Theological Seminary) and a doctorate in theology from Heidelberg University. Known for his excellence as a teacher in Bible and Church History, Bender was also an able administrator as Dean of Goshen College where he introduced a four year theological degree (1933) and a Bachelor of Divinity degree. These were of great benefit to young Mennonites wishing to graduate in these studies and use their knowledge in work for the faith. He made a significant contribution to the dissemination of Mennonite ideas in the definitive biography of *Conrad Grebel* (1935) and in '*The Anabaptist Vision*' (1944) which was said to be 'a fresh interpretation, a brilliant synthesis, which since has been recognised as a classic statement to be reckoned with for years to come' (Ernst Correll). Dean Bender founded *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* (1927), the Mennonite Historical Society (1924) and edited the four volume *Mennonite Encyclopaedia* (1952-1959). Finally he was an outstanding ecumenical leader of the Mennonites through his membership of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), travelling regularly and extensively in

Europe. On three occasions (1952, 1957 and 1962) Dean Bender was President of the Mennonite World Conference and acknowledged by all in the faith to be an outstanding scholar and leader.

It is as a result of the energy, commitment and influence of such leaders, together with the clarity of their theological views, that the purity of the faith has been maintained. This is not to claim that their outlook was one of unbending rigidity because they instituted changes, especially of an organisational and outreach character that have witnessed the Mennonites entering the twenty first century, yet without sacrificing the basic tenets of their faith. This claim can be fully justified in the writings of Dean Bender and the numerous links he and the other leaders made between the contemporary, visible Mennonite Church and the beliefs contained in the Schleithem and Dortrecht Confessions of faith of 1527 and 1632 respectively.

CHAPTER 7

THE MENNONITES AND AMISH IN 20TH CENTURY PENNSYLVANIA

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.”

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Matthew 5:14; 16

At the turn of the 20th century, the Mennonites and Amish had resided in some of the United States for some three hundred years, yet remained distinctive religious groups whose differences ranged from the most conservative 'Old Orders' to the liberal-progressives. The former were and remain most clearly distinguishable from the larger communities of which they form a part; the latter have accepted changes such as to reflect many of the characteristics of the outside world without being absorbed by that world.

Throughout the century the foundation of their stability and continuity has been their continued acceptance of their fundamental religious beliefs, based on various confessions of faith which have stressed the basic tenets of those beliefs *viz* the authority of the Bible, adult or believers' baptisms, the separation of their Church from the State, a fellowship of voluntary believers, the maintaining of the purity of their beliefs and the acceptance of non-resistance reflecting a way of love as in John 13: 34-35 'A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love to another'.

As the USA became one of the world's great nations whose economic prosperity and burgeoning population was bound up with industrialisation, mechanisation and materialism, the way of life of the Mennonites and Amish has been under constant pressure. That they were able to maintain their separateness and the purity of their faith in the face of such outside pressure is testimony to the steadfastness of their religious and social convictions. Both religious groups have spread from original settlements in Pennsylvania to many other States and have established 'agrarian cultural islands' (Hostetler, 1993: 67) as the quiet, plain people, an intensive form of agriculture, hard work, thrift and mutual aid as disciplines based on their distinctive faith. Thus there has been a marked continuity in their belief and way of life.

The religious freedom enjoyed by these groups has enabled them to flourish, although the Amish number far less than the Mennonites - roughly in the proportion of one to ten, the latter numbering over 1.3 million (baptised and others) world wide. Both groups have much in common, particularly their basic religious doctrine and the rules ('*Ordnung*') governing their everyday lives.

The Amish are said to 'view themselves as a Christian community suspended in a tension field between obedience to God and those who have rejected God in their disobedience. Purity and goodness are in conflict with impurity and evil' (Hostetler, 1993: 73). In the 20th century, as throughout their history, the Amish have had to emphasise and safeguard their ideas of humility as against pride, stewardship against greed and, especially, submission as against disobedience. Hostetler (1993: 74) further defines the Amish commitment to the idea of the church as a redemptive community. This sense of corporateness ('*Gemeinde*') expresses all the connotations of church, congregation and community. The true church, they believe, had its origin in God's plan, and after the end of time the church will co-exist with God through eternity'. The emphasis is, therefore, on the community as central to redemption with the teachings of Jesus being made explicit in a setting of voluntary membership. Salvation is not an individual action but remains a constant group activity. Thus whatever schisms have occurred in the Mennonite and, to a much lesser degree, the Amish 'families', these convictions serve to sustain and strengthen these groups. To these convictions must be added the acceptance of the *Ordnung*.

One matter of concern to the outsider has been the paucity of biblical exegesis, such as that found in many other faiths, which may reflect the fact that the Amish have, traditionally, rejected higher or advanced education. Deacons, ministers and bishops have lacked this academic background which has served to emphasise the apparent simplicity of their interpretation of their faith and their adherence to the words of the Scriptures. The constant reference to the Bible (often the German version) has greatly deepened their knowledge of the Word, which is quite palpable in the testimonies given during a church service on the sermons given by ministers. The Mennonites have long accepted higher education, including the establishment of their own colleges (Goshen College, Indiana, in particular) and have a tradition, through preaching and publishing, of a more vigorous attitude towards the interpretation of the Scriptures and the *Ordnung*. It is a matter of conjecture whether this has contributed to the schisms which have produced the mosaic of the Mennonite family, although differences have also been generated by immigrants from Russia in particular.

The history of both the Mennonites and Amish during the last century is a history of adjustment to outside pressures and reactions to and accommodation of differences

between different church districts, congregations and conferences (a combination of congregations). Overall the Amish have made least adjustment to their traditional and conservative beliefs and behaviour and 'can as people of God, be something of the presence of His Kingdom' (Sine, 1980: 10).

Pennsylvania's Mennonites and Amish, compared with groups in other States, were, generally, the most critical of innovations and remain the least progressive of their respective religious groups. The acceptance of English as the language of sermons and the late introduction of Sunday Schools in Mennonite communities reflect this. Old Order Amish would consider such changes as a form of weakening their faith. Seemingly small changes could indicate the respective strengths of the progressive and traditional outlooks. The building of a new style pulpit in preference to the continued use of the ministers' table, without the consent of the congregation, was one such change that caused problems – and the removal of the pulpit. The preachers were not to be placed in a 'superior' position to their congregation, an echo of religious 'democracy' from the distant past. Likewise when Sunday Schools were held in the meeting house of the large Weaverland (Groffdale) Mennonite group again without permission, the Sunday School was closed. Those who opposed this decision refused to kneel in prayer (qv Scott, 1996: 22) which indicated not only the strength of the opposition but the peaceful means they adopted to show their 'lack of unity' in this matter. Scott also cites another problem encountered at the turn of the century *viz* the performing of marriage ceremonies of couples, one of whom was not a Mennonite, by ordained Mennonites (eventually allowed). The involvement in legal matters to legalise the acceptance of property left to the Mennonite Church by a member caused further problems. This action was finally accepted, but led to a schism within the Weaverland-Groffdale-Bowmansville District and the creation of the Weaverland Mennonite Conference (the 'Martinities') by a third of the District's congregation. Although some objectors to change (especially Bishops) could be silenced, or, if a minister, their ministry revoked, differences would still allow these different groups to share meeting houses during the 'off Sundays' when the regular congregation did not meet for services.

There were continuing differences and therefore tensions between different groups in the Mennonite family and from these there emerged 'Old Order Mennonites', 'Amish-

Mennonites' (many later discarded the 'Amish' part of their title) and progressive Mennonites, and it is the different reactions of the various groups to, especially, the impact of modern technology and its changes, which has left its stamp on these groups. Some differences are of a minor nature, some major, and this makes any generalisations open to immediate question.

For many in the USA, the advance of technology was symbolised by the automobile. Would its acceptance by the group, congregation or Conference result in their becoming *of* as well as *in* the world? The traditionalists preserved the old ways and continued to use the horse and buggy, e.g. Groffdale (Wenger) Conference and the Old Order Amish; the progressives accepted the use of cars, although some insisted that chrome bumpers be painted black to overcome any sense of pride (hence 'black bumper Mennonites'). To complicate this matter, it was the Weaverland Old Order Mennonite conference that permitted car ownership in 1927. Other Old Orders may ride in cars, but do not own them and the car must be driven by a non-baptised member of the congregation.

World Wars I and II placed heavy burdens on the faith of Amish and Mennonites as they were and are implacably opposed to the use of force and are pacifists by conviction and nature. Non-violence has been and remains a strong and significant characteristic of both groups, however traditional or progressive. Drafted conscientious objectors were roughly treated for their refusal to wear a uniform or bear arms whilst Amish and Mennonite communities speaking their Pennsylvanian Deutsch (German) dialect and refusing to support the State in buying war bonds attracted a great deal of opprobrium. Some meeting houses were vandalised and communities kept under Government surveillance. One Bishop, Manasses E. Bontrager (1868-1947) of Kansas, was fined for expressing support for the brethren who defied the State in not responding to the 'call to colours'. In the Second World War, both the Federal government and the pacifist religious groups avoided the worse excesses of World War I treatment as Civilian Public Service (CPS) offered alternatives to military service for Conscientious Objectors in hospitals, on the land, forestry work and, in some instances, young men could spend time on their own farms. In addition, again stressing their Christian convictions, the Old Order Amish COs expressed a willingness to bring relief to those in need, irrespective of the

dangers that that work might entail. Of the 772 Old Order Amish drafted, 23 did enlist in the Army, 27 undertook non-combatant duties and the remainder declared themselves as COs (Nolt, 1992: 243).

In the great depression there was another severe challenge to Mennonite and Amish ideals as they were then predominantly farmers and their incomes, as with other farmers in the USA, fell by as much as 60% (Nolt, 1992: 237). To alleviate problems arising from such a catastrophic fall, the federal Government offered farmers grants to reduce their acreage production. This was refused as the source of revenue was the State. For similar reasons, two years later (1935) the Social Security programme was also rejected as both groups have always considered it the duty of families and the congregation following the precept to 'honour thy father and thy mother', to take care of the aged, widows, orphans and needy in the wider context of I Corinthians 13: 'but the greatest of these is charity' and all that that entails.

Wartime rationing presented a further problem, although the principle of fairness on which rationing was based was accepted, the stamps linked with rationing bore pictures of war weapons and, consequently, rejected. The Amish (and, it is assumed, the Mennonites) preferred, to this form of State intrusion into their lives, to do without scarce goods although the produce of their farms and their traditional thriftiness allayed the worse consequences of this refusal.

The post-war period was equally challenging to Amish and Mennonites in Pennsylvania with pressure from technological changes, demand for land for buildings (domestic, industrial) and road construction, increasing emphasis on mobility on the roads and a sharp increase in incomes leading to demands for greater choice in the 'market'. Would the Old Orders' simple and plain ways continue to resist and survive in the midst of the constant buffeting of forces which clashed with their deeply held beliefs and ways of life more akin to the 19th rather than the 20th century?

For a significant number of groups the 'horse and buggy' way persisted, as did the opposition to the use of mains electricity (otherwise homes would be linked with the 'outside world') in homes and farms. Telephones were only available outside homes,

preferably at the nearest crossroads and then only to be used in essential matters as face-to-face conversation is of great importance to the Amish and Mennonites. Separation from the world continued to be reflected in the plainness of dress, length of hair, bonnets for women and beards for Amish men. The more progressive Mennonites used different patterns for dresses and colours. They also used mains electricity in the home and for farm equipment in contrast to the Amish use of water and wind power, gas and diesel driven generators and dry cell batteries for torches and in their buggies. Tractors were used as sources of power rather than to plough fields and the use of tyres on tractor wheels was forbidden. The horse proves quite adequate for intensive farming over the average seventy acre farm and determines the speed of farming and transport and the area of an Amish or Old Order Mennonite community. Visiting and conversation are staples in the Amish way of life and the most distant families to be visited are no further than can be reached and returned from in the time it takes a trotting horse to do so without being too demanding. Young people also use this form of transport or bicycles when they visit. A sharp increase in the population of Pennsylvania has not only occupied scarce farming land and sharply increased its price (doubling in the last ten years to the chagrin of Amish fathers in their efforts to find land for their sons to farm), it has also increased traffic on roads to the detriment of the safety of the horse and buggy. When the combination of these pressures becomes too much or dangerous, groups will adopt the traditional Amish reaction and move to other areas in the west or Canada.

Some pressures in direct conflict with Mennonite and Amish beliefs could not be avoided. The Korean War, when the Federal Government, reflecting public opinion which opposed conscientious objectors, demanded some form of alternative service. COs undertook two years of such service outside their own communities (qv Nolt, 1992: 248), especially in public institutions. This requirement was more acceptable than that made of COs in the World Wars, but was of concern to members of congregations as the experiences of selective service gave young men their first perception of life in big cities (qv Appendix F), considerable free time and money to spend. This conflicted with the reassuring, close family ties and the discipline of the congregation and resulted in some young men deserting their faith and community. Others suffered emotional problems and depression. Yet the majority successfully resisted the worse features of this strange, new life. Those who rejected this work

were fined and imprisoned, again echoing the treatment of those in the past who had suffered for their religious beliefs. An attempt to offset some of the problems of the service programme was the production and distribution to all COs of an Old Order Amish magazine '*Ambassador of Peace*' (1966) which linked Amish COs with their home communities and other Amish COs. Publications of this nature have played a significant role in Mennonite and Amish history e.g. '*The Budget*', a now weekly publication first published in 1890, is of particular importance to the Old Order Amish as it contains letters and views from communities spread across the United States and thus links these communities in a special manner.

The tension arising between these religious Orders and the Federal Government's legislation led to a highly important organisational development in 1964 when the National Amish Steering Committee was founded to deal with government policies or legislation that impacted on Amish beliefs. Previously each congregation had expressed its reservation or opposition to this kind of legislation.

The Amish needed all their organisational talents to meet another critical threat to their way of life when Federal policy required the consolidation of one room schools in favour of fewer but much larger elementary and High Schools. Amish parents believed this development would undermine the children's religious understanding and their sense of community and opposed this development by refusing to send their children to school. Some suffered imprisonment for this action but after a lengthy legal battle, taken up by non-Amish supporters, the United States Supreme Court decided in 1972 in favour of the one room schools being retained and that formal schooling could end at the completion of the 8th grade with a certain vocational form of part-time education following on again in the community. The Old Order Mennonites were equally opposed to surrendering their schools but the more progressive had long accepted High Schools and Colleges for their young people.

This difference in attitudes towards formal education between the traditionalists and the progressives was, and is, of great significance, as it brings some of the progressive groups close to the outside world's idea of education. The initial inspiration for this movement was largely the influence of better-educated immigrants, especially from Russia and Prussia. It is an open question as to whether this influence has resulted in a

greater dynamic within the progressive Mennonite groups and it may have made a significant contribution to another difference between the Mennonites and Amish, which was clearly shown throughout the 20th century *viz* the missionary movement. The initial inspiration for missionary work can be traced to the work of John F Funk (1835-1930) and John S Coffman (1849-1899), the former from Bucks County, Pennsylvania and the latter from Virginia, although they made a major impact on Mennonite thinking in Elkhart County, Indiana. Both were also responsible for work in publishing, education, revivalism and evangelicalism and represent signs of the 'quickening' in the thinking and practice of the Mennonite Church in the late 1800s. These activities resulted in a schism with the more conservative Mennonites who became known as the Old Order Mennonites.

Missionary work has had two different but complimentary commitments; one internal, confining itself to the United States and the other external, where work is undertaken in foreign countries following the words of Matthew 28:19 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Scott (1996: 215) indicates that there are fourteen Mennonite Movement Missions, founded between 1962 and 1993, operating in 25 locations in Mexico, Central America, Africa, South America, Philippines, Haiti and Romania. Other work was commenced in Germany in 1950 and Luxembourg in 1951, a century after Dutch Mennonites sent their first missionary to Java. This commitment to evangelical work was said by J W Kliwer, Chairman of the Mission Board for 25 years, to be 'the cement that had held this structure (the Mennonite General Conference) together' (Dyck, 1993: 264). Missionary work and education served to bring scattered Mennonite congregations together in a Conference organisation, thus adding to the 'mosaic' of the Mennonite family.

The Mennonite Church formed the Mennonite General Conference in 1898 to create a degree of unity between congregations but this aroused the suspicions of those groups who thought that a large bureaucratic organisation was not suitable for the Church and either never joined or retained a dual membership with the conference and congregation. In 1971 the MGC was renamed the Mennonite Church General Assembly, yet the old problem of a weakening of biblical commitment re-emerged and a separate group, The Fellowship of Concerned Mennonites, was formed in 1984.

The Amish continue to rely on a congregational organisation (apart from the National Amish Steering Committee) but there still remains an overall similarity between the two major religious groupings in such matters as communion twice a year, feet washing, simple, plain dress, *gelassenheit* and an acceptance of congregational discipline. However, during the period 1917-1927, there was an influx of Amish into the Mennonite Church and the consequent formation of the Amish-Mennonite Church, a less conservative church than the old Mennonites with whom they merged. Some Amish-Mennonite groups have remained independent and traditional, but not as conservative as the Old Order Amish.

To complicate organisational and *Ordnung* matters, a separate group, the Beachy Amish-Mennonites, organised itself in 1927 when Bishop Moses M Beachy (1874-1946) would not excommunicate the Old Order Amish who had joined the Amish-Mennonites. This weakening of strict shunning led to an inevitable schism with those whose conservatism in this matter would not be weakened. Rapid changes followed with the Beachy group accepting mains electricity, use of automobiles, more automation on farms and relaxed dress codes. Some dress standards were retained and the form of worship retained, but some groups began to hold services in meeting houses and thus became a half way house between the Amish-Mennonites and the Old Order Amish. Some who opposed changes leading to schisms were concerned as to how far and how many changes would be made as groups moved towards the world outside the congregation; others supporting change believed it was justified by an increased spiritual vigour in congregations and the Beachy group continued to attract not only individuals from the Old Order Amish, but others who may have been influenced by the group's emphasis on evangelism and its daily worship. Significantly the Lancaster Mennonite Conference remains a conservative organisation.

Thus there is a range of congregations in the Mennonite family from the most conservative (the Stauffer Mennonites who are most like the Old Order Amish) who, in 1996 number over 8,000 in the USA (qv Scott, 1986: 162) to the Intermediate Conservatives (1,800) Moderate Conservatives (6,621), the Fundamental Conservatives (3,959) and Theological Conservatives (9,994). These numbers are

small compared with the Mennonite Church who have congregations in all but three of the United States (qv Map p419, Dyck 1993) and number over 300,000 members.

Given the history of the Mennonite Church in the United States, it is not surprising that the largest conservative group is to be found in eastern Pennsylvania and although small in number compared with the Church as a whole, they are expanding and form a counter to other, larger groups and are a constant reminder of the basis of the Mennonite faith.

Visiting Mennonite congregations and recalling how changes have influenced their practices, it is interesting to note both similarities and differences. Is German spoken or English or both? Are German or English Bibles used, or both? Are prayer books used? (The Amish use them.) Is there music in the service? (The Amish do not use musical instruments.) Is the hymn singing lively or a somewhat long drawn out doleful chant? Is the *Ausbund* used in the selection of hymns? Is there any reference made to the behaviour of any individual? Are there cars or horses and buggies outside the meeting hall? Does the form of service vary in any particular way? (Most services follow a similar pattern viz hymns, prayers (silent or audible), sermons, testimonies, announcements and benediction). What of the appearance of the members of the congregation? Are they 'plain'? Are the women with or without bonnets? Short or long hair? Are wedding rings worn? Are their dresses coloured with patterns or not? Do the men have neckties? Are they clean-shaven? Do they use buttons rather than hooks and eyes to secure their outer garments? Thus congregations can be placed somewhere on the conservative-progressive continuum which could be confirmed in a visit to their homes with the presence or absence of mains electricity and television confirming the degree of progressivism attained by some families. These differences are the outcomes of long discussions at congregation and Conference level and caused, in the 1950s, a movement that separated the Conservative Mennonite Conference from the Mennonite Church General Assembly.

In 1991, the Conservative Mennonite Conference issued a Statement of Theology (qv Scott, 1996: 133) that emphasised a strong biblical faith, the inerrancy of the Bible, a rejection of the theory of evolution and opposition to women as pastoral leaders. In 1994, homosexuality was condemned. Having clarified and declared its position, the

CMC was still prepared to discuss and join in fellowship with other groups if there was mutual agreement with these declared beliefs and principles.

The Mennonite Church was not only becoming more liberal in its tendencies, it was experiencing a marked change from a church whose administration was undertaken by unpaid, self educated, ordained men to one with salaried ministers from colleges and an increasingly bureaucratic organisation run by professionals. In some groups the selection of ministers by the 'lot' was not as common, but there was still a commitment to such practices as feet washing, non-involvement with and in government, non-resistance and opposition to ministers performing marriage ceremonies for divorced members.

Consequently in reviewing developments in the Amish and Mennonite Churches in the 20th century, it is essential, especially with the Mennonites, to separate the outward manifestations of practices, the organisation of different parts of the 'family' and the doctrine on which their whole life is based. From time to time the Mennonites have published Confessions of Faith which have described, justified and confirmed their basic beliefs. In 1921 '*Christian Fundamentals*' was a document published by the Mennonite General Conference and, if compared with earlier Confessions, especially the Dortrecht of 1623, it clearly indicates the continuity in the fundamentals of the Mennonite faith viz (qv Scott, 1996: 146) the Bible as the basic inspiration of the faith; the acceptance of the idea of the creation as found in Genesis; Jesus Christ as deity; through faith the achievement of salvation by grace; the action of the Holy Spirit and the assurance of salvation. Reference is also made to separation from the outside world, church discipline, feet washing, prayer shawl, the holy kiss and anointing with oil. The fundamentals also emphasise modesty in dress, rejection of the swearing of oaths, insurance (contracted with outside agencies) and membership of secret orders, separation of the church and State and pacifism.

The defence of the traditional Mennonite faith was also clearly stated by Daniel Kauffman (1865-1944) in his *Manual of Bible Doctrine* (1898) and his two further publications, *Bible Doctrine* (1914) and *Doctrines of the Bible* (1928) which criticised modern ideas emanating from Goshen College.

Another *Mennonite Confession of Faith* was produced in 1963 by the Mennonite General Conference 'to restate the doctrinal position of the church in terms relevant to today's issues and especially to incorporate the insights of the various doctrinal pronouncements of the Mennonite General Conference'. The statement was 'Biblical in character rather than theological; positive rather than polemical and simple rather than technical or philosophical'. It was unanimously accepted.

There are 20 Articles in the 1963 document and these show a close correspondence with the Dortrecht Confession. However, there are also important additions.

Article 1: God and His Attributes.

Article 2: Divine revelation.

Article 3: God's Creation and Providence.

Article 4: Man and his Sin.

Article 5: Christ the Saviour from Sin.

Article 6: Salvation by Grace through Faith.

Article 7: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life.

Article 8: The Church of Christ ('Nature' – congregations and conferences are mentioned. 'Function' – to demonstrate to the world the will of God ... to make disciples of all nations. 'Discipline' – to lead each member to full stature in Christ. 'Ceremonies and Practices' – baptism, washing of the saints' feet, the holy kiss, the laying-on of hands in ordination, the veiling of Christian women, the anointing of the sick with oil and the institution of Christian marriage. 'The Church and Healing' – a ministry of prayer for those in need.)

Article 9: The Mission of the Church to Society.

Article 10: The Ministers of the Church (... should ensure the full participation of the members with their spiritual gifts in its life and discipline).

Article 11: Christian Baptism (... we generally practise pouring as our mode of baptism).

Article 12: The Lord's Supper (... recognise the bread and cup as symbols commemorating Christ's broken body and shed blood).

Article 13: Symbols of Christian Brotherhood (... the holy kiss and the right hand of fellowship).

Article 14: Symbols of Christian Order (... men and women are equal ... fitted ... for different functions).

Article 15: Marriage and the Home (... marriage be a holy state, monogamous and for life).

Article 16: Discipleship and Non Conformity (...avoid such things as harmful drugs, beverage alcohol and tobacco).

Article 17: Christian Integrity (... to be strictly truthful and transparent in life and doctrine, with no secrecy or hypocrisy).

Article 18: Love and Non-Resistance (... the supreme example is the Lord Jesus Himself).

Article 20: The final Consummation (... at death the righteous enter at once into conscious joy and fellowship with Christ).

Each Article is linked with relevant passages from the Old and New Testaments, especially the latter, and there are 168 citings which 'are representative, but not exhaustive'. Thus the Mennonites of whatever part of the larger 'family', and the Amish, can and do justify their beliefs in the Scriptures such that their Churches are 'bound ultimately to the Holy Scripture, not to any human formulation of doctrine' as the Confession states. Consequently the Bible remains the basic and ultimate source of doctrine and not the 'order' or *Ordnung*.

The most recent Confession of Faith was that formulated in 1995 and published jointly by the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church General Board. The Introduction to this publication outlines the functions of Confessions of faith in that they:

- a) provide guidelines for the interpretation of Scripture
- b) provide guidance for belief and practice and support but do not replace the lived witness of faith
- c) build a foundation for unity within and among churches
- d) offer an outline for instructing new church members
- e) give an updated interpretation of belief and practice in the midst of changing times

There are 24 Articles in the 1995 Confession divided into four sets. Articles 1-8 describe the main themes of faith of the wider Christian Church; the second set (9-16) relate to the church and its practices; the third set (17-23) with discipleship and the final Article, 24, describes and explains the reign of God. There is a marked overlap between the themes of these Articles and those of earlier Confessions, although headings differ slightly *viz*: God; Jesus Christ; Holy Spirit; Scripture; Creation and Divine Providence; The Creation and Calling of Human Beings; Sin; Salvation; The Church of Jesus Christ; the Church in Mission; Baptism; The Lord's Supper; Foot Washing; Discipline in the Church; Ministry and Leadership; Church Order and Unity; Discipleship and the Christian Life; Christian Spirituality; Family, Singleness and Marriage; Truth and the Avoidance of Oaths; Christian Stewardship; Peace, Justice and Non-resistance; the Church's Relation to Government and Society; The Reign of God.

The 24 Articles are a marked expansion on those of the Schleithem and Dortrecht Confessions, but the core of the doctrine remains, although the emphasis on some themes has changed. Article 18, 'Christian Spirituality', is a new emphasis: 'We draw the life of the Spirit from Jesus Christ ... When we are in the presence of the Spirit, we also keep in step with the Spirit and show the fruit of the Spirit in our actions. Our outer behaviour matches our inner life'. In the Commentary on this particular Article, the reader is reminded that 'Anabaptists and Mennonites have used several words to describe spirituality such as piety, humility, *gelassenheit* (yieldedness or letting go), *Frömmigkeit* (piety) and *Nachfolge* (following Christ). These concepts all have to do with radical openness to knowing God, to doing God's will. They do not separate spirituality from ethics or reflection from action ... this spirituality (is in) the section on discipleship'.

The various Confessions describe a world and commitment to inspire those who wish to follow this path to Christ, yet paragraph 4 of the Commentary on Article 19, 'Family Singleness and Marriage', is realistic in recognising that some believers will fall short of the promises made at the time of their baptism and that 'Some in the church experience divorce, abuse, sexual misconduct, that make marriage and family life burdensome or even impossible. Jesus affirmed the sanctity of marriage ... Today's church needs to uphold the permanency of marriage and help couples in

conflict towards reconciliation'. Thus the church's attitude to marriage has not changed, neither has 'decision making by consensus (as) a way of coming to unity' and 'the church as a community of believers which is included in the Commentary on Article 16, 'Church Order and Unity'. An echo of the earliest days is heard in the Commentary on Article 14, 'Discipline in the Church', 'Anabaptists and Mennonites in 16th century Europe saw discipline as vital for pastoral care and for the well being of the church. Indeed they considered discipline to be as important for church renewal as believers' baptism and participation in the Lord's Supper'. Thus the continuity between the various Confessions is quite evident, although there are phrases pertaining to more recent developments which have served to weaken the practice of 'disciplining' leading to schisms as outlined earlier. The Amish would acknowledge this continuity and the content of the beliefs described in the Confessions. It is the application of the Confessions and their implications for the *Ordnung* which have served to separate the two major religious groups, but that separation is not one of sharp distinction but, in many ways more a gradation of belief from the ultra conservatives or traditional (especially the Amish dimension) to the most 'progressive', liberal Mennonites. Irrespective of differences, all would accord with the Biblical interpretations included in the Confessions.

The 1995 Confession has 178 citings of the Old Testament (especially Genesis, the Psalms and Isaiah) and 497 from the New Testament (especially Matthew, Romans and John) which re-emphasise these radical groups' linking of the Testaments but the stress is placed on the New Testament.

A constant issue in the Confessions is that of the separation of Church and State and the reaction of the Mennonites and Amish regarding military service and the consolidation of schools has been outlined earlier and yet another dramatic challenge to this strongly held, traditional belief emerged during the Great Depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s, when the United States Government attempted to overcome the worse consequences in the fall in the prices (some as great as 60%) of farm produce. Farming was then the predominant economic activity of both Mennonites and Amish but they refused to be involved in the government's Agricultural Adjustment Programme, as this would have meant accepting financial assistance from government resources. Likewise the Social Security Programme of 1935 was rejected,

as was the government's suggestion to abandon horse power in favour of tractors. The 'horse and buggy' symbolise the way of life of the Old Orders as this form of power and transport determines the speed and rhythm of these communities.

The scattered farms of the Old Orders can be readily reached by horse and buggy for Sunday services or social visits (for meals and conversations – telephones are not allowed in the homes) by adults and young people. Horse and mule power can cope with farm work as farms are not large, although the work is demanding. Tractors are used as sources of power on the land but rubber tyres are not allowed. In rejecting State and Federal Government assistance in their farming and every day lives, the Amish and Mennonites insist on being in the world but not of it (qv. John 17:14-19). As paragraph 3 of the Commentary on Article 23 of the 1995 Confession, 'The Church's Relation to Government and Society', states, 'Will this participation in the government or in other institutions of society enable us to be ambassadors of Christ's reconciliation? Or will such participation violate our commitment to the way of Christ and compromise our loyalty to Christ?' These questions are asked regarding voting, taxation, using courts, using flags, seeking to influence legislation and pledging allegiance. They will undoubtedly continue to be asked and answered with integrity if the Old Orders in particular are to maintain their unique communities.

Amish doctrine was questioned in a different context in the 1950s when some members claimed a 'spiritual awakening' and thus they were certain of their salvation. This was in direct conflict with Amish belief that salvation was God's gift to those who endured 'to the end' (qv Mark 13: 13, 'And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved'). Traditionalists believed that this new claim reflected pride and arrogance although it attracted some younger believers and some believers were so convinced of this feeling that they left the Amish for more receptive Mennonite groups.

Nonetheless, in spite of conflicts with the State and Federal Governments and differences between congregations and Conferences which have led to many divisions, (Scott, 1986: 35, distinguishes between 61 groups of Plain Churches and related groups in 1986 and this figure may now exceed 90), both the Mennonites and Amish have entered the 21st century as clearly identifiable successors to their

forebears of earlier centuries. There have been material changes in response to the constant pressure of the outside world wherever these religious groups have settled in the United States as is particularly evident in the use of contemporary technology and mains electricity on the farms and in the homes of more progressive groups, even in Pennsylvania which still exhibits a marked conservatism in its Old Order groups.

Economic pressure in the form of increasing land prices has forced many young people of both groups to find non-farming work. They have particular skills in working with wood and metal and in construction work whilst young women find work in the community either 'in service' with other families in the community, as waitresses in restaurants and cafes or in the local apple canning factory. These occupations take young people away from the daily life of their tightly knit communities and the 'discipline' of that life, exposing them to the temptations and demands of the 'outside world'. This could have profound consequences for their continuing commitment to their beliefs. As one Amish has said, 'The lunch pail may weaken our congregation.' Some Amishmen have developed their own business (qv Kraybill, 1990: 87) but not in factory or professional work.

A particular set of religious beliefs remains and retains the strong communal tie and although the 20th century has continued to witness the divisions of groups or districts due, especially, to the strictness in the interpretation and application of the *Ordnung*, it is significant that even when a splinter group decides to adopt more liberal ways, it remains within the faith. Equally significant is that approximately 80% of the young people decide to accept believers' baptism and all that it entails. Numbers within the Amish and Mennonite Churches are increasing and, if present trends continue, the Amish are likely to double their numbers in the next 20-25 years. This is an outcome not only of the Amish having large families (six to seven children is common) and a low infant mortality rate, but also of a steady if small influx of outsiders. The congregation forms a large extended family (between 150 and 200) and this, together with the influence of the church, school and farming, which keeps the family 'at home', ensures that filial and religious influence are constant factors in the lives of all who belong to the congregation. 'With nurture, virtue grows inside the heart and forms a moral blueprint for living. How people act says more about their faith than

what they say they believe' (Seitz, 1995: 53). This was said by a non-Amish after years of close friendship with them.

In spite of their aspirations to live a 'Bible centred' life, it should not be assumed that either the Mennonites or Amish are groups of paragons as they experience sorrows, distresses and the questioning of the *Ordnung*. It is their close fellowship and discipline which keeps their faith pure and their congregation strong. Their abiding idea of love and redemption acts as a buffer to criticisms and hostility from the outside world.

Young people of these religious groups, from observation and conversations especially with Mennonites, are quite genuine but somewhat reserved in their reaction to strangers. They, like their elders, can find the worse aspects of tourism extremely intrusive, yet so many visitors are genuinely interested in finding out why and how these people live their lives. Their outdoor leisure pursuits from softball to corner ball (competitive or team games are not allowed) in the summer and ice skating and sledging in the winter are readily observed, as are auctions of farm equipment, horses, quilts and furniture (the Amish never act as auctioneers). Much of leisure time is taken up in visiting, sharing meals and conversation with relatives and other members of the congregation which further sustains group relationships and, for young people to indulge in 'games' (dances) in the barns. It is on these occasions that friendships develop which often lead to marriage. Socialising in this manner also provides an opportunity to discuss the all-important matter of baptism – a necessary preliminary before marriage is allowed.

There are no taboos regarding the use of modern medicine and hospitalisation, but this is paid for, as health insurance (as provided by the State) is rejected. The community, through the work of deacons, helps those members suffering financial hardship, as no social security is accepted. Likewise the older members of the family are taken care of in their retirement by the younger son who inherits the farm and builds a 'grosdaddy' extension to the house to accommodate his parents.

Quietness, calm, hard work, discipline, being Bible conscious and keeping apart from the outside world are characteristics as much in evidence with the Mennonites and

Amish as they were among so many of their Anabaptist ancestors, yet most generalisations of their behaviour and practices can be readily questioned, as there are so many groups, particularly in the Mennonite 'family', that exhibit differences over a range of what might be termed their way of life and belief. One generalisation that can be made is the fundamental belief in the Bible of all these different groups or congregations and the importance of the congregation.

As I Corinthians 12: 14, 24-26 states, 'For the body is not one member, but many ... God hath tempered the body together ... that there should be no schism in the body: but that the members should have the same care for one another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it'.

CHAPTER 8

THE AMISH AND MENNONITES RELATIONS WITH THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS

“For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil.”

Romans 13:3

One of the earliest beliefs of the Swiss Brethren was that the ‘State’, be it the city or canton councils of Switzerland or other local rulers, had no right to determine the religious beliefs of any people. This was a matter between the believer and God. Yet

the Diet of Speyer (1526) agreed the formula '*Quius regio, Eius religio*' (the ruler determines the religion of the ruled), which brought a solution to religious disagreements to the benefit of Roman Catholics and Protestants but was of no avail to the Brethren, the Anabaptists, the Radical Reformers.

Luther accepted the protection of rulers and civic authorities sympathetic to the developing Lutheran Church and this acceptance of the role of the State *vis à vis* the new Church has justified some in labelling the Lutheran Reformation as a 'Magisterial Reformation' in contrast to the Anabaptists' 'Radical Reformation'. The latter believed the acceptance of the authority of the 'State' in lieu of the authority of the Roman Catholic Church would merely substitute a new tyranny for an old. This attitude of rejection led to the persecution of the Anabaptists by the Catholics, Protestants and the civic authorities and this persecution left a permanent distrust of these persecutors, especially that of 'government' which is evident in contemporary Amish/Mennonite thinking.

Loss of civic rights, torture, martyrdom and exile failed to undermine the resolute determination of this comparatively small religious group to sustain their religious beliefs throughout their living faith. This separation from the 'outside world' accorded with Romans 12:2 'and be ye not conformed to this world' and II Corinthians 6:14 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers ...' and was reiterated in the Schleithem Confession of 1527 (Article IV) and the Dortrecht Confession of 1632 (Article VIII). Specific rejection of their acting as magistrates is outlined in Article VI of the former and in Article XIII of the latter Confession. Thus there was a clash between being a 'Christian' and being a 'citizen' which persists among the Amish and Mennonites.

Both groups have always acknowledged the need for government as being a creation of the will of God but their commitment is to the rule of God. This also justifies their rejection of the swearing of oaths and their acting as magistrates sitting in judgement of others.

The far more recent Confession of 1963 is quite explicit in Article 19: 'In law enforcement the state does not and cannot operate on the non-resistant principles of

Christ's Kingdom. Therefore, non-resistant Christians cannot undertake any service in the state or in society which would violate the principles of love and holiness as taught by Christ and His inspired apostles'. This belief is substantiated by references to Acts 4:19; Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 1:20-22; 5:23; Timothy 2:1-2. However, the most recently published Confession of 1995 interprets the relationship between the Mennonite faith and the government in a significantly different way viz: Article 23 '... as Christians we are to respect those in authority and to pray for all people, including those in government, that they also may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. We may participate in government or other institutions of society only in ways that do not violate the love and holiness taught by Christ and do not compromise our loyalty to Christ ... Because we confess that Jesus Christ has been exalted as Lord of Lords, we recognize no other authority's claims as ultimate'. The justification of the Mennonite belief regarding 'The Church's Relation to Society' (Article 28) is cited in I Timothy 2:1-4; Matthew 5:13-14; Isaiah 49:6; II Corinthians 5:20; Jeremiah 29:7; Colossians 2:15.

Thus the roots of doctrine pertaining to the rule of God and the rule of man-made government are found in the earliest Confessions and are continued, albeit with slightly different interpretation, in the most recent Confession spanning a period of over four hundred and sixty years of continuous belief.

This continuity and stability emphasises the success of the Amish and Mennonites in safeguarding or conserving their faith in spite of their being a small religious community in the face of the overwhelming pressure of the immense forces of 'Americanisation'.

How has this been possible? To achieve some rational understanding of what is a complex question, reference must be made to the ever-present influences of State and Federal governments, more especially when social, political, economic and legislative pressures have been at their most penetrative on these religious groups. What has opposed the civic authorities is a religion, a culture and a way of life of a minute part (at the most 740,000) of America's 260 million population.

This religious conservatism has, in part, rested on the nature of 'government' as believed in and practised by these religious groups. This series of rules or ordered activity was invested in the congregation through the expressed views of its baptised members, especially its male members, although baptised women were involved in nominating suitable individuals as leaders. The actual selection was by the use of the 'lot', as described earlier, and thus the leader who emerged was said to be chosen by God and not the congregation.

Leaders were 'shepherds' who guided their flock and ensured that there was an acceptable understanding of the Scriptures and an accordance with the *Ordnung*, although the Scriptures were always accepted as the supreme authority. To ensure what is now termed a consensus of agreement, there were biannual meetings (an inheritance from Jacob Ammann) when the order or *Ordnung* was discussed. There had to be agreement or peace among the members of the congregation before communion could be celebrated. This congregational form of 'government' at least presented an opportunity at each of these biannual meetings for individuals to make known their interpretation or questioning of the *Ordnung* – an order based on the Scriptures. The 'ban' or *Meidung* on a sinner who was not prepared to admit sinning was agreed by the congregation and announced by its Bishop or Elder. The release from the *Meidung* and the return of the sinner to full fellowship of the congregation was also to be agreed by all members, reflecting what might be termed a simplistic but uncompromising form of 'government' that ensured the purity of the congregation.

During the period 1847-1860, a number of Mennonite congregations formed a 'Conference' and this new tier of 'government' has gradually assumed powers over the separate congregations to the extent, in recent years, of appointing ministers to congregations – the keys to the direct 'government' of believers. It is equally significant that the Amish rejected this form of Conference organisation as being too bureaucratic and consequently have maintained a congregational form of organisation.

The separation from the outside world, following II Corinthians 6:17 'Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord' and maintaining the purity of the faith through the *Ordnung* led to tensions and clashes between the beliefs

of these religious groups and the wider community. This was especially so in the relationships between the most conservative, traditional Amish and Mennonites and their neighbours (qv Appendices G and H). Differences were most marked between the different understandings of a 'Christian' way of life within the context of religious freedom as this term was generally understood under the terms of the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Amish and Mennonites *live*, every day of their lives, their understanding of how a Christian community should behave and believe that this can only be achieved if there is a separation from those who did not believe, practise and behave in the manner chosen and guarded by these religious minorities.

A major confrontation between the concepts of 'Christian' and government arose when the Federal government decided to consolidate schools, i.e. dispensing with the small, one room schoolhouses so typical of rural America to make way for a large school to which children from a wide area were transported by bus. Amish and Mennonites objected to this on the grounds that it would take their children out of their closely-knit communities and affect the sense of 'brotherhood' – an essential aspect of their living. It was also believed that the children would be confronted with behaviour and studies which would weaken and possibly undermine the children's religious beliefs and traditional way of living. Many of the subjects included in the consolidated schools' curricula were considered unnecessary and irrelevant to the lives and expectations of the children. They were required to do farm work and their traditionally limited schooling was believed to be adequate for their farming life.

Non-Amish individuals protested on behalf of the Amish and the conservative Mennonites and after a series of legal hearings in a number of States, the US Supreme Court ruled (in what is known as *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972)) that these groups could continue their traditional form of schooling. It was also agreed that this schooling could cease at the end of the eighth grade, provided there was some vocational education together with the teaching of German, English and health education for the following two years. Chief Justice Warren Burger, pronouncing the Supreme Court's unanimous decision that the Amish had a right to refuse to send their children to consolidated schools, stated that 'almost 300 years of consistent practice, and strong evidence of a sustained faith pervading and regulating respondents' entire mode of

life support the claim that enforcement of the State's requirements of compulsory formal education after the eighth grade would gravely endanger, if not destroy, the free exercise of respondents' religious beliefs' (Keim, 1975: 159). Burger also wrote 'Amish objection to formal education beyond the eighth grade is firmly grounded in central religious beliefs. They object to the high school and higher education generally because the values it teaches are in marked variance with Amish values, i.e. intellectual and scientific accomplishments, self-distinction, competitiveness, worldly success, and social life with other students. Amish society emphasises informal learning-through-doing, a life of goodness rather than a life of intellect; wisdom rather than technical knowledge; community welfare rather than competition; and separation, rather than integration with contemporary society' (Good, 1985: 28).

This decision accepts that the Amish (and, by inference the most conservative Mennonites) are, because of their traditional adherence to *their* concept of living a Christian life, different in outlook from the outside world, the vast majority of Americans. It also explicitly acknowledges the order which governs their everyday lives as indicated earlier. This *Ordnung* is always related to and confirmed by the Scriptures. Thus a fundamentally important part of the way of life of the Amish and traditional Mennonites, the schooling of their children, was accepted by the government of the outside world and came under the legal safeguards exercised by that government (Kraybill, 1993: 85). It is important to note that this safeguarding of schooling was based on the 'firmly grounded' religious beliefs of these people.

One problem to be faced by these conservative religious groups was that pursuing a matter in the courts was prohibited by a religious belief based on Matthew 5:25 'Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison'. The task of representing their views fell to the National Committee for Amish Religious Education established through the initiative of a Lutheran pastor, William Lindholm, supported by an entirely non-Amish Committee which, since 1967, has continued to represent these views.

That Committee contrasts with The National Amish Steering Committee formed in 1966 with an entirely Amish membership to convey their views to the Federal

government regarding 'matters that concern or hinder our Old Order Amish way of life, to counsel with the various groups of states, and see if a unified plan could be found that would be acceptable to the Amish as well as Washington' (Oshan, 1993: 69). The 'plan' referred to the Civilian Public Service for Conscientious Objectors in World War II, the Korean War and the war in Vietnam, but the Committee has continued to play a role in representing views on a number of matters to the State and Federal governments without, in any manner, being involved in litigation.

The safeguarding of the distinctive Amish way of formally teaching its children was a vindication of their religion and traditional idea of an acceptable way of living. This reflected, especially, the group's separation from the outside world. 'Religion (to the Amish) is more than worship, it is a way of life. The Amish emphasise behaviour over beliefs, practice over ideas. Religious faith for them is not merely a personal belief: it is a practice fleshed out in daily life by the community' (Lindholm, 1993: 120, in Kraybill, *The Amish and the State*).

The belief that they are called by God to be separate from a predominantly sinful world is justified in II Corinthians 6:14-18 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers ...' and I Peter 2:9 'but ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light'.

That separation re-emphasises the acceptance of an obedience to Amish beliefs and is clearly manifest, in this world, in the rejection of the idea and consequences of the government's granting of Social Security payments. Thus Old Age and Disability Pensions, Medicare and Survivors' Pensions conflict with Old Order beliefs. On the one hand there is reference to the biblical admonition that parents should be honoured 'that thy days may be long'; on the other that the government should not intrude into a community's life in offering this kind of financial support. The Old Orders make their own provision for these social and individual needs as they relate to the community's old, sick, handicapped and those in financial distress. The State and Federal demands were, in a manner similar to the opposition to consolidated schools, rejected. Farm subsidies were likewise refused. Eventually exemption from such State aid was granted to the Old Orders. These religious groups justify their idea of independence

on scriptural grounds, e.g. Galatians 6:2 'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ', whilst, concomitantly, accepting moral responsibility for their own lives within their community's commitment to the word of God. Thus stress is placed on individual responsibility and not individual rights. 'Rights' smack of pride.

The Old Orders, in common with the less traditional groups, have therefore always acknowledged the need for 'government' in the outside world where that government has a positive, acceptable role as indicated in Romans 13:3 'For the rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil' and, in Romans 13: 6-7, the need to pay taxes to the rulers or government *viz* '... for this cause pay ye tribute ... Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due ... honour to whom honour'. Consequently these religious groups, however traditional, are akin to the progressives in paying all Federal and State taxes without accepting in return financial assistance from those forms of government.

There was, however, a further clash between beliefs and State laws in the matter of slow moving vehicle (SMVs) signs on the rear of buggies, which, to some, are symbols of the Old Order's religion. Buggies and horses certainly define the speed of living and the extent of a particular community. Many Amish had adopted some form of safety signs for their buggies but the most conservative, the Swartzentrubers (in Wayne and Holmes Counties, Ohio) clung to their *Ordnung* which forbid the use of signs as imposed by State law. They were considered too worldly, too bright (suggesting the vice of pride) and relying on a man-made protection rather than that of God.

A number of prosecutions for not showing SMV signs occurred in various States, which eventually led, in the majority of cases, to the acceptance of an agreed sign, although this is not enforced if the individual's religious belief 'is sincere'. The Amish, again stressing their religious beliefs, would not engage in litigation but relied on the National Amish Steering Committee and, especially, the National Committee for Amish Religious Freedom, which have also 'been involved in other legal issues related to Amish life (such as) ... land use, zoning, enforced chemotherapy, superhighway encroachment, mid-wife licensure, tourism, Hollywood movies, driver's license photos and farm land preservation (Lindholm, 1993: 123), thus

'protecting the Amish from the infringement of the State, the Committee has fortified the precious tradition of religious liberty in the United States and in so doing has helped preserve the freedom of all religious minorities to practise their religious faith' (ibid: 123).

To the non-Amish, some at least of the matters causing tension between the Old Orders and the outside community appear to be of a trivial nature, revealing a simplistic but dogged interpretation of what constitutes a 'pure' way of life. Any legislation which explicitly or implicitly is considered to weaken the 'Old Order' way of living based on the Scriptures and the *Ordnung* is opposed. Although there have been long drawn out and, at times, extremely painful differences between these religious groups and the outside world, the Old Orders have eventually gained sympathetic consideration from the Federal and State governments. This benevolent attitude has been resented by some non-Amish and exposes the Old Orders to further criticism, creating a need for continuing action and vigilance to preserve their unique way of believing and living.

More recent controversy centres, again, on schooling and the consequences of allowing young people to work among potentially dangerous machinery whilst non-Amish children and young people are forbidden by law to undertake such work as they have not yet completed their statutory schooling. This may prove a significant ground for debate in the future with the Old Order having to consider compulsory education beyond the eighth grade unless the Federal and State governments continue to accept past legislation.

Farming is still a significant economic activity for many Old Orders and their farmers are known for the high standards of their husbandry, but this is now being questioned as the use of natural and artificial fertilizers is said by the authorities to be contaminating water sources in Lancaster County and as distant as Chesapeake Bay, some fifty miles away. The changes which may be required by the government to regulate farming techniques may cause some farmers to seek their future in other areas. In Pennsylvania this could cause further problems if land is consequently sold to non-Amish or if Amish (or Mennonites) under the 'ban' sell their farms for

residential development. The outcome could seriously alter the size and nature of the Old Order community.

Religious belief and practice is thus brought under pressure for a number of reasons by the government, yet the continuity of the unique way of life of the Old Orders is essential, not only to these communities, but to the economy of the outside world as these people attract millions of dollars annually from tourists.

Religious tensions and differences can result in schisms as outlined earlier and, more recently, the New Order Amish came into being in 1996 when 100 families from Lancaster County left the Old Order. The New Order people are decidedly less conservative than the Old in that they accept individual salvation, build meeting houses and are often linked with evangelicals. The acceptance of the use of cars, mainline electricity in the home, telephones and radio further separate these people from the Old Order, but this ensures that the core values of the faith are maintained by the remnant of the traditional groups. This may make for greater pressure on the Old Orders (both Amish and Mennonites) unless the New Order is seen to form a cordon of faith as a buttress between the Old Order and the outside world and its government. It therefore can be said of the Old Order Amish in these circumstances as for the Mennonites that 'the identity of groups with the original and overall Mennonite tradition remains as strong as ever, or even intensifies' (Redekop, 1989: 265) i.e. 'schismatic activity seems to solidify the tradition, uniqueness, vitality and separateness of Mennonite identity' (ibid: 265).

Given the fact that uniqueness and vitality through conviction have their historical roots in the Scriptures and echo the words of the early Anabaptists and, provided there is a continuing dialogue on matters which cause differences between these religious groups (be they conservative or progressive) and the government (be it Federal or State) these features of the Amish and Mennonite beliefs are likely to continue and, possibly, strengthen.

CHAPTER 9

THE MENNONITES AND AMISH CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

“Messianic communities should and could be powerful instruments of witness. If they were, they would keep their distinctive peoplehood.”

Toews, Paul

Mennonites in American Society 1930-1970 p 84

Herald Press, PA (1996)

The continuity of any distinctive religious group largely depends on its commitment to a particular set of beliefs, its success in attracting new adherents to the faith, convincing newer members to continue their membership and resisting or accommodating changes which would otherwise undermine the basic tenets of the group's beliefs. Consequently, the future is inextricably linked with a particular past and, with a religion, this continuity has a particular importance in expressing its practices, values and attitudes.

The bedrocks of Anabaptism, the foundation of Mennonite and Amish faith, are the centrality of the words and works of Jesus Christ and the Scriptures. Justification for their beliefs and practices flows from these sources.

A basic hallmark of the faith is that of adult believers' baptism voluntarily undertaken, which marks the entry of the individual into a redemptive community and, consequently, the quiet acceptance of the discipline of that community or brotherhood. Additionally, continuing the convictions first expressed in the earliest days of Anabaptism, there is the separation of these religious groups from the evils of the outside world, the acceptance of pacifism and non-violence and the rejection of any expressed loyalty by oath taking to the civil government. The justification for these beliefs and practices can be found in the Scriptures, the most frequently quoted in conversations with these people being passages from e.g. Matthew 3:11-13-16; 5:38-9; Romans 12:2; 13:1-4; I Corinthians 5:11; 11:13-15; II Corinthians 13:12; I Peter 2:11-12; 3:13-18; Mark 16:16 and I John 1:7-10; 2:10, 15-16, 25, 27; 3:23; 4 and 5:13.

The summation of these beliefs is neither a form of Roman Catholicism nor Protestantism, but a Third Way (Lederach, 1980), Anabaptism, which claims that God's Kingdom is both present and coming and is a leavening permeating all society (qv Albert N. Keim in Lederach, 1980: 10). The teachings of Anabaptism constantly emphasise the life, work and teachings of Jesus, of 'walking in the resurrection'. Jesus, they believe, was the clearest revelation of what God was and is, what He would want of believers if they were to find the way to His Kingdom (qv John 1:18;

John 14:9, 'He who has seen me has seen the Father'; II Corinthians 4:6). In following the words of the Scriptures the believers' church has, from its earliest days, claimed a 'new birth' following baptism. A new birth, a new life, as Anabaptism has always been a lived and living faith reflecting that of the life of Jesus. In that reflection is the acceptance of suffering made more acceptable as it is not of an individual alone (although many, especially the early martyrs, did so suffer physically) but as part of a visible church, a congregation, a loving brotherhood. As Lederach states (1980: 24), 'Mennonite theology, however, focuses on what Jesus is doing now *in* the church, *for* the church and *with* the church ...'. It is from this church, through the Holy Spirit, that the faith of the Mennonites sends preachers and teachers on missionary work so that all may know God. The commitment of the Amish to this work is very restricted, being limited to the Beachy Amish.

The earliest Anabaptists, the Swiss Brethren, sought not to reform the orthodox church but to reconstitute or re-create a 'Church' similar to that of the earliest Christians. In this the believers' church, as Weaver (1987: 21) claims, 'separates itself from the Christian outlook on the basis of an answer to a single question: Does God work His purposes in the world primarily through the existing society and its structures or through the creation of a new society?' This sharply contrasts with the idea of Christianity as a movement of renewal within society rather than as a church as an alternative to what exists in society. Thus to be truly members of God's Kingdom, the believers' church has to separate itself from existing society (qv Romans 12:2 'And be not conformed to this world'). This separate church (or brotherhood, congregation or Conference) according to Mennonite and Amish belief, is one entered into voluntarily and is not one into which one is born. It exists *now* in the manifest lives of its disciples whom Jesus is working (qv Ephesians 3:10) through the Holy Spirit. The unyoking of the Mennonites and Amish from the outside world permits them to live a Christian life according to *their* beliefs. Their comparative isolation as farmers, together with their distinctive dress, dialect and form of transportation, reinforces their separateness and identity although the continued decline in the numbers involved in farming may affect this separateness and, possibly, other aspects of these groups' lives.

Reinforcing separateness is a concept not only central to Old Order perception and thought, but yet another strand in the continuity of belief is the *Ordnung*, the 'order' or rules governing any congregation because, in the theological sense, it is taken to mean 'the plan or structure of God's salvation, or to indicate how Christians should live after their initial decisions to follow Christ' (Schlabach, 1988: 208). As Lederach (1980: 130) claims, 'The disciplined church is the holy community where the goal of obedience is high, but where the weaknesses of the disciples are confronted by living concern and offers of forgiveness' (Gal. 6:1). Binding and loosing is legitimate only when done 'in the name of Christ' that is, His character and will (Matthew 18:20; Col. 3:17). It is the work of the congregation rather than that of a hierarchy controlling the congregation.

Anabaptists continue to believe that members had 'to yield inwardly to the Spirit of God, outwardly to the community and to outward discipline ... the necessary unity between the inner lives of believers and their outer lives of discipleship and community life ... (Snyder, 1997: 152) which invariably emphasised the aesthetic ideals of humility, patience, resignation and renunciation of personal gain' (Snyder, 1997: 367). Thus the 'self' or 'I' is subsumed in the congregation or brotherhood and gives rise, in the outside world, to criticism of the marginalisation of the individual.

The (largely) unwritten rules of the 'order' so significant to present day Anabaptists were characteristic of the early phase of the earliest, embryonic Christian community according to Taylor (1999: 154) when, faced with problems which could no longer be solved by reference to the prophets, disciples and the less vivid remembrance of Jesus' words, 'their leaders ... set down specific rules and guidelines to deal with as many contingencies as they could foresee'. Quoting Greenslade (1967) on the build up of the structures of legalism, Taylor (1999: 155) notes the 'ecclesiastical discipline which held the church member in the straight and narrow way from the moment he entered the Christian community'. The danger is that 'often legislation is a symptom, not of growth but of the stultification of growth' (Taylor, 1999: 158) 'yet decisions of conscience are best born out of freedom' (Taylor, 1999: 159). This is a criticism often levelled at the Anabaptists' conservative outlook, (exemplified by the 'Old Orders'), which ties them to their past in so many ways and is constantly reinforced by their daily behaviour, yet acknowledges the individual believer's freedom of conscience.

Any critique of the religious conservatism of the Mennonites and especially the Amish has to recognise their acceptance of an interpretation of the Scriptures through their Confessions of Faith which has created almost unchanging oases of a particular Christian belief in the surrounding American society and ethos with its emphasis on materialism, secularism and technological progress. The constant factor ensuring the historical continuity between the Swiss Brethren, Anabaptists, Mennonites, Amish and their modern descendants is a Bible centred faith, the brotherhood or congregation and an accepted discipline in their lives. In some aspects of their faith they are not totally separated from other Christians yet the Mennonites and Amish *live* their beliefs in what is claimed to be a more Scripturally dominated way of life than many (any?) of the surrounding faiths without manifesting the zealotry of some.

An historic problem clearly manifested in contemporary congregations is enshrined in the question of the relationship between the individual believer and the brotherhood, congregation or Conference. This also gives rise to the question or concept of what it is to be human in the context of the developing personality, i.e. what influences create the 'I' or the 'self'. It is said that 'person is that upon which the rest of our knowledge and being depends' (Hughes, 2001: 3) and that 'as persons we are only what we are in relation to other persons' (MacMurray, 1961: 213). Does the particular manner in which Mennonites and Amish conceive of 'community' with its commitment to an interpretation of the Scriptures, *Ordnung* and *gelassenheit* create a matrix that embodies 'the objectionable features of both individualism and collectivism'? (Hughes, 2001: 3). Does the redemptive community of baptised believers based on love and humility, recognise the danger of limiting the development, spiritually and socially, of its members? Is there a danger that unless this *is* recognised it may conflict with the biblical interpretation of what is man? Or, maybe to oversimplify this matter, does the warmth of fellowship or brotherhood within the community have a negative influence or present a barrier to the warmth of fellowship with God? Alternatively, the guiding relationships within the community where the individual becomes more fully a 'person' can be a more certain means of entering a fuller relationship with God. Relationships can manifest dynamic aspects, the believer to other believers, the believer to the whole congregation and the believer and the congregation to God. All these relationships are inter-dependent as are the Supreme

Relationships within the Godhead. This inter-dependency is of particular importance to the Anabaptists because of their emphasis on the congregation, not the individual, as the pathway to redemption that is linked, as Hoffman claimed in the 16th century, with each person seeking atonement 'ploughing their souls' to receive the Holy Spirit. Yet 'this perfection is no more than what Father, Son and Spirit give to and receive from one another in the inseparable communion that flows from their love' (Hughes, 2001: 5) and that flowing influence should not be hindered by any community even if this were possible.

At the heart of the community are, therefore, the ideas and demands of inter-dependency, that neither individualism or collectivism, as two extremes, can be fulfilling; on the contrary, if taken to extremes, they can be mutually destructive. Perhaps the Mennonites and Amish have, to *their* satisfaction, a quiet rather than a prideful feeling, achieved a balance between these conflicting demands which allows them to live their lives in harmony with the Scriptures and the *Ordnung*. Nonetheless, the nature of inter-dependent relationships is a matter of continuing concern with these groups as conversations with Mennonites and Amish Mennonites, in particular, reveal. The role of men in the congregations has been outlined earlier as has the different and subordinate role of women ('the head of woman is the man', I Corinthians 11:3; 'To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands', Titus 2:5), although this has never meant exploitation or mistreatment it has meant a degree of separateness in religious practice. It was evident in an Amish Mennonite service that the women members of the congregation took no part in the testimony following the two sermons. There are no women ministers, although the most liberal Mennonites are considering the nomination of women for the ministry and this could signal a significant change in attitude in some congregations.

Whereas a basic belief links the different congregations or Conferences, the number of divisions under the broad heading 'Mennonite' approaching one hundred, there are differences in outlook sufficiently sharp and strongly held for groups to form different congregations. Divisions and schisms have produced a *Mennonite Mosaic* (Kauffman and Driedger, 1991) as different groups have responded in different ways and degrees to the pressures of the outside world and the acceptance, particularly, of technological changes. The advent of the car and telephone are but two such changes symbolising

the measure of liberalism accepted by different groups. In addition, the acceptance of technological changes in farming equipment by different groups has added to the complexity of the pattern of Mennonite culture. In contrast the Amish have witnessed but three schisms resulting in the Peachy Amish (1906), the Beachy Amish (1950) and the New Order Amish (1966), largely the results of different interpretations of the ban or *Meidung*, the acceptance of cars in place of the horse and buggy, a wider acceptance of technological changes and a reaction against missionary work. Such divisions do not occur suddenly but are the result of discussions over a period of time which indicates a long struggle both for and against modernisation.

These struggles with the pressures to change become part of the discussion of the *Ordnung* before communion is taken and are likely to feature as much in the future as in the past, yet change can be accommodated without affecting the congregation's basic religious beliefs. Voices can be raised in questioning any of the rules within the 'order', but individualism is *not* encouraged; yet it is one of the many paradoxes of Anabaptism that there is an acknowledgement of the individual's freedom of conscience and those believers who find the *Ordnung* frustrating usually move to a group with a less strict order. Implicit in this outlook is the acknowledgement that every individual's life is an odyssey from birth, through discipleship of a redemptive community to that final harbour in His Kingdom, if one has lived faithfully according to the church's teaching. This teaching continues to be expressed by the elders, tradition and the religious wisdom accrued by the community or brotherhood. Again the question can be posed as to the achievement of a satisfactory balance between individual and community values and demands in living the group's beliefs. Do these Old Order groups in particular have to pay the price and sacrifice some of their individuality to that of the congregation?

Discipleship, *gelassenheit* and the *Ordnung* are keys to the understanding of contemporary groups of Anabaptists and in the context of continuity and change, Yoder (1998) draws parallels between the earliest Christian groups with the simple, plain church of the early Anabaptists. Living in a world over which they had no control both groups 'could not conceive of the exercise of social responsibility in any form other than that of simply *being* a faithful, witnessing minority' (Yoder, 1998: 6). According to Mehl (1996), Jesus' 'concern was centred exclusively on the individual

... only in modern times in response to socialism's challenge, (Christian ethics) come to deal with matters of social structure' (p44 quoted in Yoder, 1998: 7). In I Peter 2:13 believers are asked to submit themselves to human institutions and I Timothy 2 repeats the need to accept government and ordained preachers, thus indicating a relationship between the believer and the community. Yet this is a voluntary subjugation, a bondage producing a pattern of 'creative transformation' (Yoder, 1998: 185) and that 'His motto of revolutionary subordination, of willing servanthood in the place of domination, enables the person in a subordinate position ... 'to accept and live within that status without resentment, at the same time that it calls upon the person in the super-ordinate position to forsake or renounce all domineering use of that status' (Yoder, 1998: 186). This is a concise interpretation and justification of *gelassenheit* among the Mennonites and Amish; nonetheless if, again following Yoder (215), 'the righteousness of God and the righteousness of humanity are most fundamentally located at the individual level', there is a need to recognise the complexity of the 'individual and the community' problem.

A wider understanding of this matter can be generated in balancing the emphasis on such statements as that in II Corinthians 5:17, 'If anyone be in Christ *he* is a new creature', reinforced by John 3:5-6, the transformation of an individual person, and that of a new creation as implied in I Peter 2:13 and Ephesians 2:15, which implies a *social* reality. Even the use of the word 'church' is said to be limited, by Paul, to describe a group of believers known to be unified by their belief, reconciliation and obedience. There are strong resemblances between these interpretations of the Scriptures by Yoder and the beliefs incorporated into the various Confessions of modern Anabaptists and their particular way of living in and through their faith. Thus the Amish and Mennonites present to the wider world both the motives and behaviour of a faith which emphasises the role of a believer in a redemptive community but places the former in a subordinate position to the latter and both as secondary to the principal and abiding reason for their belief and behaviour – the life of Jesus. A Jesus of 'the first century Jewish eschatological world, within which alone the truly historical Jesus belongs', (Wright, 2000: 9), the inspirational Jesus, the turning point of history accepted by the Anabaptists in their attempt to recreate that first century simple church. Thus the truths of Jesus' words and life can liberate a believer from the limitations of relativism and materialism yet remain a constant fulfilment of Jesus'

promise to mankind of redemption through His divine intervention. However, the Anabaptists have remained in the world but not of it; in that they contrast sharply with the Essenes in the earliest days of Christianity who retreated into the desert from the outside world and there waited for God, forming an exclusive group that rejected the halt, lame and other handicapped individuals. The Anabaptists have separated from the world in the manner described earlier, but their farms are scattered within the wider community (not in commune-type settlements as developed by the Hutterites) and there are constant links with that community through the sale of agricultural products, the sale of a range of artefacts from cottage industries and the employment of their skills in wood and metal working in the wider community. It is axiomatic, considering their emphasis on members of the congregation, that the welfare of *all* members is considered the responsibility of the whole congregation and no individual is excluded because of any kind of handicap; each is considered a gift from God.

After almost 300 years of existence in the USA, what is the future of the Mennonites and Amish? Are they caught up in a timeless way of life based on timeless ideas of 'God', 'being a Christian', 'baptism', 'what the Bible says', 'discipline' and 'the congregation' or, as in Ecclesiastes 'there is a time to keep and a time to throw away'? Is there a God-given right to hold onto the past provided it is done in a balanced manner, such that 'tradition stabilises our lives, gives a certain assurance, inspires, comforts and gives meaning to practices' (qv Duncan, 2001: 29)? Is all glory in the past? God continues to create, yet Jesus is constant, the Holy Spirit is active in the world. Do the Amish and Mennonites hold a balanced view of the past ('We have always done it that way') and remain creative in their outlook? Emphasis has been placed on the continuity of their basic beliefs and the manner in which they have been retained or conserved, yet it must be asked whether this process has stultified spiritual growth as Christians or has ensured the continuation of a particular way of showing the commitment of a redemptive community which, for these groups, assures them that their way *is* the way to His Kingdom? Certainly the numbers of those choosing this Way have grown from meagre beginnings with the Amish today numbering approximately 140,000 (and predicted to double in the next 20 to 25 years) and the Mennonites already numbering approximately 350,000 (with more than 1 million world-wide). This growth has occurred in spite of the numerous tensions and problems in what might be termed an alien society in that that society's beliefs and

values are so often inimical to those of these comparatively small religious groups. It is, as Kraybill (1989) declares, 'a riddle'. Within this riddle are a number of seeming if not actual paradoxes, around each paradox a complexity and multiplicity of different manifestations of a way of life which defy generalisations except that which is the most important and fundamental, viz that all the many groups of Mennonites and Amish covering the traditional-progressive continuum are clearly linked by the same tenets of belief.

One comparatively safe generalisation is that there are differences between many congregations of these groups and some groups have moved from their original congregation and settlement to find a peace and tranquillity to worship in their particular way. There is no evidence to suggest that such movement will not continue, although the scale of this movement is conjectural. The Amish have established settlements in 23 of the States; the Mennonites in all but three of the mainland States.

The future of these religious groups may be most clearly seen in areas where they are juxtaposed with a vibrant, growing and changing society as in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, or in Holmes County, Ohio, where the groups come under closest scrutiny by that 'outside world' from which the existential or realised Christianity of the Anabaptists has resulted in their separation. Their differences also attract the attention of large numbers of tourists, some of whom merely observe; others seek to discover and understand the underlying reasons for these differences, but all make a considerable contribution to the Anabaptist economy. The response to such pressures may, eventually, make a significant impact as some families or groups may decide to move and establish new settlements where such pressures do not exist.

What does the future hold for these seemingly unchanging religious groups and have they anything of a religious nature to offer the outside world? Kraybill and Olshan (1994) state ' The Amish are engaged in a war against the spirit of progress, against arrogance, against progress as a goal and against the social fragmentation and alienation that often accompany some forms of "progress"' (p vii). In its extreme form, this engagement is a battle against the idea of the perfection of human institutions bolstered by technological change and rationalism which will overcome the evils created by man. To the Anabaptists, this notion of perfection is opposed by

faith and *gelassenheit*, resisting modernisation, but realising that immunity from it is not possible. To understand this basic opposition is to begin to understand what this belief can give to the outside world, to remind that world that Christian living according to the Anabaptist beliefs can counterbalance the most blatant aspects of the material selfishness of the outside world.

Their form of 'government' with approximately 30 families forming a congregation or brotherhood linked with other congregations to form a 'Conference' is also an example to the larger society of a form of small scale government based on faith and the *Ordnung* which may have wider applications if the discipline, born of this faith, is acknowledged and accepted. Part of that discipline is to accept the limitation of choices in everyday life, including the rejection of amassing wealth. The governance by the *Ordnung* is, in its detail, capable of being changed by the agreement of the congregation and so meets its wishes as these reflect *its* members' understanding of the Scriptures. This acceptance of slow change based on discussions and agreement may be a continuing lesson for the wider world.

Their 'actualised' theology will remain as their faith and work is interwoven in their daily work and worship again as a constant reminder of the manner in which Christian values can suffuse an individual's life. This is reflected in new situations as the Anabaptists have to turn from work on farms to work in and with the wider community where the temptations of that wider community are constant but so are the opportunities to express the constancy of the faith. This outlook was summed up by an Amish: 'We are not here to have a good time. Or to make a lot of money or become famous. Instead we are here to do the will of God, love our fellow men, and prepare for eternity' (Kraybill and Olshan, 1994: 7).

The Anabaptists will also manifest their belief in their commitment to the community where personal ambitions, achievements and rights are relegated to a secondary place after collective values. In this context, Kraybill and Olshan (1994: 7) assert that '... self-denial, humility, meekness and obedience are considered four 'of the most important Christian duties' in Amish life'. The same could be said of the Mennonites. The continuity of the acceptance of these human attributes is part of the key influences that the Anabaptists may have on their neighbours and will be among the

most difficult for American society with its emphasis on individualism to accept. This Anabaptist attitude will continue to contribute towards an understanding of the 'individual and the community' problem without solving it, but may help to ameliorate the worse aspects of the extremes of this duality. The wider world will not be able to develop an *Ordnung* or a complimentary *gelassenheit*, but it will provide an opportunity for communities to examine the moral order under which they live and to re-examine ideas of personal and social discipline. It may also be an opportunity to show how the *Scriptures* influence this order and discipline as with the Anabaptists. Groups of non-Anabaptists are not likely to move and form new settlements like the Amish and Mennonites, but their examination of their values may result in a lessening of personal and communal tensions. It may also strengthen the resistance to temptations and reinterpret what is meant by 'suffering', although 'walking in the resurrection' may be a goal beyond reach except for a dedicated minority. 'Seeking the Kingdom of God', the first priority of the Anabaptists with both a personal and collective commitment (the former through the latter) could become the spiritual priority of anyone who follows this path and if their example to the outside world or communities 'recover the straggler and bandage the hurt' (Ezekiel 34:16) then the influence of the quiet patience, dedication and humility of the Anabaptists will have had the desired effect.

Schooling, especially to the Amish, may well re-emerge as a matter of controversy as there are movements to raise the statutory school leaving age of Amish children from 13 to 16 and to prevent children under 16 from working in workshop industries, thus avoiding the possibility of industrial injuries. The Amish objections to former proposed legislation pertaining to the school leaving age have been outlined earlier; to the latter proposal the Amish claim that such prohibition violates its religious tradition of making youngsters learn by apprenticeship. Such legislation has failed in the Senate which indicates that the Amish are still able to find sympathetic support for their religious claims in the seat of civic government. It is a matter of conjecture as to the continuation of that support, especially as increasing numbers of Amish youth have to find work outside the farm. As Amish numbers continued to increase, this problem will become more visible than at present where there are 23,817 pupils in 846 schools founded in 930 districts (1994 figures) (qv Kraybill and Olshan, 1994: 87) of which 267 schools with 7,071 pupils are in Pennsylvania's 221 Church

Districts. The Mennonites (except the Old Orders) have a far more liberal attitude towards schools and have long had establishments of higher education, which indicates that they will have fewer problems in the field of education.

Federal and State legislation continues to cause problems for the Anabaptists, especially in agriculture planning requirements covering buildings, sewerage, pollution of water supplies and drain-off and the cooling of milk by electricity. The demands of legislation and the cost of improvements has caused some farmers to move in search of a simpler life. The future may well present similar problems and the nature of the reaction to them by any particular group will depend on where that group is located on the traditional-progressive continuum. There is no evidence to indicate that the Old Orders will but remain the most conservative in outlook and that all groups will continue to reject legislation considered to undermine their faith. This might range from the arguments for main line electricity (rejected by all but the most progressive Mennonites) to the introduction of certain subjects into the schools' curriculum such as science and sex education.

Should there be little change (and none regarding the faith) in the future, this will, in no small measure, be due to the persistent influence of the home, the hub of worship, work and the multiplicity of social activities on which families and the community depend. It is in this setting that women play a critical role, not simply as mothers of large families (the number of children of an average family is six) but as the metaphorical anchor of a home which is Bible centred with the faith a constant influence. Both mother and father are examples of hard work and women accept their subordinate rather than inferior role with that humility that is characteristic of the Amish and Mennonites. Nonetheless it is essential to recognise the fundamental community influence supplementing and complementing the influence of the home in the matter of worship where 'the individual is integrated into and finds expression in the collective activities of waiting, silence, listening and community singing' (Kraybill and Olshan, 1994: 99). This is hardly likely to change in the future as is the influence of the elders in maintaining the quiet strength of the congregation or brotherhood, ensuring its stability and purity. The redemptive community has been built on accepted beliefs over a very long period of time and, having persisted in a recognisable form over 300 years, is unlikely to change in any significant form as it

has served the faith as foundation and spiritual rudder through its beliefs, practices and values.

A recurring theme which has led to significant developments is the application of the 'ban' or *Meidung*, which has been related to the acceptance of technological changes or the shunning of members who have moved to more liberal congregations. It can be assumed that technological changes affecting the home, farm, cottage industries, communications and transport will continue and could well be the cause of changes in the *Ordnung* and, possibly, schisms, as groups become more liberal or cling to traditional ways.

Present trends in Pennsylvania show an increase in the numbers of Amish involved in a variety of cottage industries and this may well affect attitudes towards wealth; the acceptance of day-long hard labour at work being undermined in the kind of work in the wider community undertaken by the Amish and the weakening of the traditional acceptance of submission and other traditional attitudes made easier by the historic dependence on farming. Farming has a spiritual element for Amish and Mennonites as it is believed that this world is part of man's inheritance of God's provision. 'The farm is healthier and you're closer to God' as an Amish farmer is quoted in Kraybill and Olshan (1994: 169). 'Working away' from the farm *may* weaken commitment to the community and communal values.

Likewise the historic commitment to pacifism and non-violence will be tested as these Anabaptist groups become more involved in the outside world as there are examples of these people being the targets of hostility, especially from young men of their own age. The continuing use of iron rimmed wheels on Old Order buggies which damage road surfaces and horse manure on roads also attracts the hostile reaction of 'outsiders' and could influence Old Order ideas regarding their traditional slow transport which helps define the area covered by a congregation of families. A further negative attitude toward these religious groups has been engendered by their refusal to accept Social Security although paying all required State and Federal taxes and this refusal is hardly likely to be weakened by the payment of Social Security for non-Amish employees by Amish employers. To the latter this arrangement confirms their

separateness from the demands of government but rendering to Caesar what is Caesar's.

The combined influences of these inner and external demands may over a period of time have a marked influence on these religious groups, although their history suggests change will be slow and the result of constant communication and agreement. Hostetler (1993: 401) claims that 'The new Amishness that is emerging on the horizon is a sense of worth as measured by outside standards. The traditional virtues of restraint and moderation have been combined with a new sense of diversity and community self-realisation. Status is based on what the individual can produce, on how well he accepts responsibility, and on the sense of being needed. ... The Amish ... have not separated redemption from community, the soul from the body or labour from the soil. All of these are the works of God. The world ... is a place of spiritual trial, but it is also a place where body, flesh, and spirit interact to achieve some kind of ultimate reality'. In seeking that reality there will be individuals who will experiment, will stray from the narrow path and rebel, especially during the period of '*rumspringa*' when teenagers experiment with alcohol, cars, radios and, in rare instances, drugs. Yet such is the continuing influence of the family, home and congregation that more than 80% of the young people choose, voluntarily, to become fully baptised members of the congregation. The majority of those who do not make this choice join other, less traditional, congregations but, in all probability, remain in fellowship with the 'home' congregation. The moral order of each congregation is revitalised by 'baptism, worship, communion and ordination' (Kraybill, 1989: 111) and through the application of the *Meidung* ('One of the secrets of Amish survival', Kraybill, 1989: 117) forms a strong buffer between the congregation and its values and those of the outside world. This crystallises the idea of continuity and change from the Anabaptist perspective. The traditional rites of redemption and purification have stood the test of time and when these practices, the essence of Amish culture, as with other practices, are exposed to pressures from the outside world, the Anabaptists beg for leniency. 'For religious endorsement, they appealed to the Bible, the teaching of Christ, the examples of the Apostles, Anabaptist martyrs, Amish forefathers, tradition, experience, conscience, as well as religious liberty granted by the Constitution' (Kraybill, 1989: 130). Thus are the challenges to their basic faith met,

otherwise, without this questioning, it is believed that the basic tenets of their belief will be undermined, ultimately if not immediately.

It is essential to the Old Orders that, following the words of the Shepherd of Hermas, they 'hold fast to the simplicity of heart and innocence', 'the wisdom of man was foolishness in the eyes of God' (I Corinthians 1:18-28) whilst as in I Corinthians 8:1, 'knowledge puffeth up and makes one proud', a vice to these people. More likely their traditional outlook which is likely to continue into the future will be more in keeping with the words of Isaiah, 'in repentance and rest is your salvation; in quietness and confidence will be your strength'. This quietness and confidence can conceal a dynamism and zeal which has been shown in the creation of new settlements, 162 being found in the period 1972-1982 with an overall total of 930 congregations (Kraybill and Olshan, 1994: 250). Pennsylvania has 44 settlements and 221 congregations and is continuing to expand these numbers, although some congregations can expire. The Mennonites have always been more numerous and, in Pennsylvania, there are 41,993 members in 405 settlements (figures supplied by the Mennonite Church, London). The very size of settlements may affect their futures, but of greater importance will be the strength of commitment of believers and the toleration of their separate way of life by outsiders, more especially the civic authorities. It is of some significance that the numbers of Amish and Mennonites are increasing and this is due not only to large families and low infant mortality but that new adherents, outside the traditional Anabaptist areas, are being attracted, in small numbers, to the faith.

Those who commit themselves to Anabaptism manifest a faith which, as Edward Norman states when considering a comparable perspective, 'involves at its centre the abandonment of personal claims in order to achieve a surrender to the priorities set by God' (Norman, 2000: 29). This sacrificial element in an individual's belief in a collective manner is a special form of obligation leading to a particular identity. Baptised believers accept the truth of Christianity as it reflects the truth of their tradition, 'the successive witness of generations' as Norman claims which, 'inspires an exclusive loyalty to the faith ... on the road to Jesus, their spiritual goal'. 'Road' can be interpreted as a pilgrim's journey with disciples, possibly, on the way. It can therefore be agreed with Duncan (2001: 29) that 'spirituality is not ... a static

condition. It is a developing process, it is (as St Paul said) 'passing towards a mark'. It is movement'. Can the Anabaptists be criticised as believers in a dogmatism which is fixed and final? Duncan (2001: 29) quotes Karl Barth: 'a good theologian does not live in a house of ideas, principles and methods. He walks right through all such buildings and always comes out in the fresh air again. He remains on the way'. There is much in this statement that echoes the existentialist theology of Anabaptism as described by Robert Friedmann that links, inseparably, faith and living and, admittedly, clings onto the ancient landmarks so relevant to belief and behaviour. Yet, again quoting Duncan, 'there has always been, in healthy religion, a flexibility that is not in conflict with deep conviction. Thus theological adventure and risk have their proper place. In the bonding of the deep roots of conviction biblically based, with freedom for honest exploration, gives us the opportunity to widen the horizons while rooted in the faith. Remain on the way but travel on'. Much of this kind of thinking is alien to the Anabaptists, especially the most conservative, but the *Ordnungen* of various congregations have been changed after much discussion, heart searching and prayer as the influence of the Holy Spirit is sought, interpreted and obeyed. It can hardly be claimed that these groups are in bondage to their *Ordnung* as this order is opened to formal criticism twice a year before communion and if changes are accepted these may be considered 'not as a single alternative to present experience but rather a renewed way of living in the present' (I Corinthians 7:20; John 17:15-16) (Yoder, 1999: 185) and thus 'a creative transformation'.

Freedom of action may, as the result of tradition, be more limited in the conservative 'Old Orders' and has provoked criticism and schisms, yet if one accepts Yoder's view (1999: 186) of Jesus' motto of 'revolutionary subordination', of willing servanthood in place of domination, enabling the person in a subordinate position in society to accept and live within that status without resentment ... The subordinate person becomes a free ethical agent in the act of voluntarily acceding to subordination in the power of Christ instead of bowing to it either fatalistically or resentfully ... the old and the new order exist concurrently on different levels'. This assertion, for the Anabaptists, would require or assume a very delicate balance between the preaching of the ministers and the reaction of congregations, especially during the sensitive and critical period of adolescence ('*rumspringa*') when young people are faced with moral imponderables before making the overwhelmingly important decision to accept (or

not) believers' baptism. These influences must be set against those of the group or gang of young people whose behaviour so often challenges the tightly defined expectations of the baptised members of the congregation. The problem of indoctrination where members passively accept the authority of the leaders (whatever guise leaders take), and conversation regarding alternative behaviour is absent; at its nadir this results in a lack of tension and, possibly, a lack of striving with, as a consequence, stagnation. The individual and, in some instances, the congregation or brotherhood, reaches a stage at this level of being suffused by group demands, which proves unacceptable and the individual leaves the group or the congregation splits from other congregations and ceases to be 'in fellowship' with them.

The future could, however, witness stirrings of a religious and social nature as in the 1950s and 1960s when, under the influence of Russell Maniaci (1895-1972), a Roman Catholic who became a Mennonite, groups of Amish became involved in a missionary movement which established a formal organisation, organised Conferences, established a national network, collected funds and produced its own literature including a paper, *'Witnessing'* (Nolt, 2001: 34). The movement inspired Bible study classes, involvement in small-scale missionary work and voluntary service but ran into difficulties in solving problems relating the home congregation to distant mission work coupled with the sense of isolation from community support. It did, however, mean that missionary workers became involved in professional training and thus the Amish, although in small numbers, entered higher education. Opposition to this work emanated from the conservative Old Orders who questioned the use of English language worship, Bible study classes and the increasing acceptance of technological changes, especially the use of tractors on farms. Gradually a split developed and the mission-minded believers joined the Beachy Amish (known for their 'modern' outlook in the use of tobacco and cars but weak on evangelism and youth activities). The 'Old Order Amish Mennonites' became Old Order Amish and, in the mid 1960s, as the Old Order Amish became even more conservative, the 'New Order Amish' group emerged as a separate congregation in Lancaster County (Nolt, 2001: 35). It is said that the mission movement was 'probably one of the most powerful forces which has struck the Amish church since its beginning. The only possible exception might be that represented by the split which developed in the mid-19th century' (Nolt, 2001: 33, quoting Harvey Graber 'Spiritual Awakening in the Old Order Amish Church,

1956). One of the outcomes of the mission movement that lasted fifteen years was to redefine the identity of Amish groups. The movement certainly possessed a dynamic and an outward looking, experimental conviction that, although it formally ceased in 1965, may have left spiritual embers which others may fan into a new spirit. The alternative is for the Old Orders to settle back into their traditional serenity, an attitude summed up in the phrase reflecting a Pennsylvania Old Order Amish bishop's belief in 'mission work rather from an exemplary point, that is, in living a Christian life, rather than spreading it by word' (Nolt, 2001: 24, footnote 62).

An additional example of outreach which could affect the future of the Old Orders is the co-operation between the Amish and the Mennonite Central Committee in distributing food (especially food tinned by Amish and Mennonites), clothing and providing appropriate services in response to natural and man-made disasters. The MCC has also been active in youth and adult literacy programmes, medical aid, settlement of refugees, agricultural development activities, vocational educational and counselling services related, particularly, to drug and alcohol abuse. Dyck (1993: 4) claims that 'these ministries were made possible through new life in the congregation, a new sense of social responsibility, more inter-Mennonite co-operation and increasing economic abundance'. This assistance is an extension of the help given to members of the congregation, be it financial, practical or spiritual, as justified by the Biblical admonition to 'love thy neighbour' and expressing this love in a practical manner whether the 'neighbour' be in the congregation, Conference or overseas. This work, undertaken in love, humility and quiet understanding, counteracts in a small but real way the outside world's emphasis on warfare, armaments, racism and governmental, institutional wrongs. The Mennonites, as the result of their world-wide missionary work, could be agents for change and this response to other people's desperate needs in times of catastrophes could react on the home congregations of Anabaptists and be the cause of changes. Nonetheless, it is their faith that inspires them to act in this manner and the faith is likely to remain the bedrock of their lives and practices.

The faith motivates more local outreach activities, helping to reduce the comparative isolation of Amish and Mennonite congregations through the work sponsored by the Fresh Air Fund that encourages children from deprived city areas to spend vacation

time in the homes of these people. Outsiders are regularly invited to Sunday meals and many tourists are welcomed to visit Amish and Mennonite homes. In addition, knowledge of the outside world is gained by visiting holiday areas such as Sarasota in Florida, foreign travel and, especially with the Mennonites, exchange visits with Mennonites living abroad. Although there are reported problems with the Pennsylvania Deutsch dialect, it is assumed that visitors and visited develop a greater understanding of each other's ways of living as a result of these activities.

There is, therefore, a dynamic among these groups, more especially the more progressive and liberal Mennonites, but it is ironic that these separated groups, as they become more open to the wider world's problems and accrue more of the characteristics of that world as they respond to those problems. The use of the term 'liberal' is a comparative term in this context as 'most Mennonites would measure as conservative on basic issues of orthodoxy like biblical interpretation, Christology, belief in the resurrection, as well as on issues of morality like drinking, gambling, and use of illicit drugs' (Dyck 1993: 423). These intrusive problems are part of the struggle with 'modernism' but, for the Anabaptists, the real, vital and continuing reference is the unchanging faith.

The history of Anabaptism in America shows that the Mennonites are, with the exception of the Old Orders and Conservatives, more flexible in their response to modernising influences and have allowed the development of Sunday Schools and literature used in these schools, have long accepted High Schools and colleges and have been influenced by evangelical and charismatic movements and the impact of Christian radio (Lapp, 2001: 99-120). These groups are, again, to be considered on the progressive end of the liberal-traditional continuum. The great majority of the Amish cling to a simpler, far less changing life and practices but all are readily identifiable under the banner of Anabaptism. They would therefore agree with those features of orthodoxy as identified by Kauffman and Driedger (1991: 69-70) *viz*: no doubt that God exists; no doubt that Jesus is human and divine; Jesus will return to earth some day; miracles are supernatural acts of God; the physical resurrection of Jesus was a fact; Satan is an active personal devil and definitely life beyond death – agreed by between 85 and 99% of the sample of 3500 Mennonites questioned and it may be assumed that Amish responses would not greatly differ. Are these people

Fundamentalists? Three 'Fundamentalism Items' in Kauffman and Driedger's survey *viz*: Jesus was born of a virgin; the Bible is the inerrant Word of God and 'should exclude from membership those who don't accept the fundamentals' were agreed to by an overwhelming majority of the sample. One item 'Accept Christ as Saviour or suffer eternal punishment' was agreed to by a majority (63%) and one item 'God created the earth in six 24 hour days' received an agreed response from 46% of the sample. It may be doubtful on this size of sample or the questions quoted to label the Anabaptists clearly as 'Fundamentalists' as conversations with Amish-Mennonites have confirmed.

What, then, have these groups or congregations of Mennonites and Amish in Pennsylvania to give or show the 'outside world' from which their beliefs separate them? This, in part, rests on the outside world's perception of these groups which ranges from people trapped in a bubble of time to one which considers these groups as retaining a great deal of what was traditional living and values in an America of yesterday. Anabaptist family values are extolled as role models (as by President George Bush in a visit to Lancaster County in 1989), but this view can and is countenanced by those who find family discipline in these groups too harsh and demanding. Likewise there is criticism almost verging on contempt for the paradoxes that litter the lives of these people, more especially the selective views in accepting technological changes into their homes and farms. Yet there is an acknowledged warmth and security in their families and congregations which is 'valued ... as exotic remnants of an idealised past' (Kraybill and Olshan, 1994: 235). This overlooks the constant struggle the Amish and Mennonites have in maintaining their moral order (a salutary lesson to the outside world) in the face of constant pressure, demands and temptations from the outside world.

Both groups can be said to benefit from their *Ordungen* as constant reminders of approved behaviour and in this context 'It is precisely (the) Amish refusal to accept the assumptions, values and definitions of the larger society that the relevance of the Amish for the rest of us may lie' (Kraybill and Olshan, 1994: 237). This acceptance of discipline frees the groups from the determinants of circumstances, the demands of outside authorities. Envy of the outside world, envy of its achievements appear entirely lacking. Could wider society benefit from freeing itself from the forces of

determinism and eradicate or greatly control circumstances that give rise to envy? A strong hold on belief and an acceptance of communal discipline which is reflective of an enduring love for the individual could form the basis of a less materialistic, secularised society. Observation indicates that their beliefs and practices produce a group of people who are quiet, reserved, living a slower life, yet appear to be fulfilled within the context of their *gelassenheit*. Although hard-working because their method of farming is labour intensive, these groups still create the time to maintain strong links with other members of the congregation or brotherhood in regular visits (condemned by some as becoming a ritual), conversation or 'intercourse' (telephones are not expected to be used for other than business purposes) and, for younger members of the community, 'games' (i.e. unsophisticated barn dancing). Outdoor activities such as swimming, softball, fishing, ice skating and, more recently 'roller blading' (accepted provided the 'blades' are black) are sources of deep satisfaction rather than having to rely on commercial entertainment and mass media. Choices are far more limited, but these limitations, not restricted to entertainment, show the wider community that open-endedness in choices is not essential to human happiness and there are attractions in a simpler, more disciplined world.

Regrettably there is not a constant or complete agreement as to the nature and limits of some individual and communal activities which has provoked sharp disagreements in the past when Sunday Schools, Bible study groups and the use of English in worship have been introduced with resulting divisions and the movements of some groups to more acceptable locations. This is a feature of Anabaptism which the wider world could hardly copy in resolving disputes. Neither could there be a national *Ordnung*, yet society needs an approved moral order where spiritual values are a key component and the contemporary emphasis on 'faith schools' may be indicative of a deep seated desire to establish or re-establish such an order.

The acceptance of their traditional Christian beliefs reinforced by their particular form of discipline which maintains the purity of the group results in the creation of a reliable compass to guide individuals through the unknown troubles of their lives as they 'walk in the resurrection', to His Kingdom. The results of understanding and using this 'compass' have created communities where divorce, delinquency, alcohol and drug abuse, depression and violence are *significantly* less than in the wider

community. Standards of behaviour and attendant values are clearly known to members of the community and these create stability and security. 'No ideology or analysis can substitute for the word of God. Any attempt to extract something of value from Amish culture without acknowledging the validity of its religious foundations will strike the Amish as fundamentally flawed. For them there is no mystery why Amish life is valuable. There is no need for analysis. They do nothing more than attempt to follow as closely as possible the precepts of the New Testament' (Kraybill and Olshan, 1994: 241). The commitment to Jesus Christ is fundamental and constant. This is all equally true of the Mennonites as they, like the Amish, do not lead lives of blind submission and would never claim to be uncorrupted, yet in their discipline and their attempt to follow the life of Jesus Christ in their every day lives they continue to maintain *their* idea of God's Kingdom on earth and thus become a light to the modern world.

Thus the Amish and Mennonites remain quiet but visible reference points to the outside world as they live their lives in but not of the world. There are major differences in that living which should make the outside world pause and reflect on the reasons why divorce is almost unknown (not permitted in the Amish faith or the Old Order Mennonites), illegitimacy likewise almost unknown, pre-marital and extra marital sex far less than national figures (Kauffman and Meyers, 2001: 199-210) as are the figures for physical and sexual abuse. Although this refers to Mennonite families, it is doubtful in the extreme whether Amish families behave in a significantly different manner except to err towards lower incidences of these indications of human weaknesses. Mennonites do, however, manifest a more modern idea of the role of women and as this perception has changed it may be significantly related to the fact that divorce rates are increasing and that there has been a weakening of the tradition for members of the faith to marry within the faith or from the same ethnic or racial group. The Amish have had to encourage marriage outside the community but within the faith because close marriages in the past have restricted the genetic pool, resulting in higher ratios of dwarfism, deafness, spina bifida, cerebral palsy symptoms and, recently, cases of crigler-najaar syndrome which lowers a body's resistance to disease. Kauffman and Meyers (2001: 208) claim that lower birth rates, an increase in the number of women working outside the home and an increase (small but in Mennonite communities significant) of one parent families will

weaken the family and as the influence of the home plays such an important role in congregational life (yet another feature of Anabaptist communities of importance to the outside world) this could have a significant effect on the congregation and brotherhood.

Anabaptists remind the world of the importance of humility, that man is a limited being and, in losing sight of God through a materialistic outlook, denies himself the redemption that Christian belief heralds. It has been said 'Seeing humility as less about meekness and more about empathy would change how we (Mennonites) relate to one another' (Goering, 2000: 135) and this is not only of relevance in Pennsylvania but in America and wherever the Mennonites have established their faith, especially in Zaire where the largest group of Mennonites outside America resides. There are so many contemporary instances of man attempting to play God in medicine, science and technology that the virtues of the simpler life as we 'walk humbly with our God' (Micah 6: 8) are lost. Anabaptists remind the world that spiritual progress is a gift of God when acknowledgement is made of the divine presence in creation and there is a 'congruence of the person with the demands of God' (Duncan, 2001: 29). The world sees in the Anabaptists the serenity of those who submit themselves to the risen Christ. This religion is a nexus of obligations when earthly priorities have been surrendered to achieve spiritual benefits that are largely of the future. In this these religious groups, be they labelled traditional, conservative, progressive or liberal, show the world what *they* believe to be the Way to the Truth and Light of His Kingdom.

This is predicated on what is involved in the continuing idea of 'believers' baptism' based not only on historical and spiritual justification but the clear, affirmative answers to the four questions of the Amish baptismal vows (Dyck, 1993: 240):

1. Are you able to confess with the Ethiopian eunuch that you believe Jesus Christ is God's son?
2. Do you confess that you are uniting with the true church of the Lord?
3. Do you renounce the devil and the world with all its wicked ways, and also your own flesh and blood, and commit yourself to serve Jesus Christ alone who died for you on the cross?

4. Do you promise to keep the ordinance (*Ordnung*) of the Lord and the church, to faithfully observe and to help administer them, and never to depart from them so long as you shall live?

It is the living response to the implications of each of these questions that has ensured the conservation of the religion known as Anabaptism as practised in Pennsylvania by the Amish and Mennonites.

What is the future for these groups who have maintained their separate faith and culture for the greater part of three centuries in Pennsylvania and many others of the United States? They are comparatively small in number, especially the Amish, but are increasing. They are separated from the burgeoning outside world so different from that of the Amish and Mennonites yet, as a result of negotiation, they have managed to filter the material influences of the outside world without being of that world. The bedrock beliefs of their faith remain unchanged and these, reinforced by the discipline of the *Ordnung* and the acceptance of *gelassenheit*, have ensured their survival into the 21st century. A simplistic answer as to their future would assert the strength of their faith, the strength of their congregations or brotherhoods, their measured adaptability to the outside world and the largely benign attitude adopted towards them by the State and Federal Governments. *In extremis*, if pressures on their way of life and beliefs become too great, these groups will emigrate and seek alternative settlements in other, more receptive, less demanding areas to continue their existence.

A realistic answer is that their future cannot be predicted as the nature and strength of influences, both internal and external, to the congregation, such as the price of land, government regulations and pressures of urbanisation (Kraybill and Niemayer, 1993: 174-5) can only be surmised. Even the oldest, most traditional 'Orders' in Pennsylvania are responding to the demands of high density farming, developing 'shop' or cottage industries and are even developing new settlements. The most progressive groups are far more open to negotiating their changing patterns of employment with the outside world and more readily adopt technological changes when these prove advantageous and do not present a threat to the groups' worship and practices.

As in all congregations, it will be the younger members who will eventually decide as to their future and the future of the congregations that stress communal values before those of the individual. Present trends indicate that the great majority of younger members will commit themselves to believers' baptism and all that that entails. 'Breaking away' from the brotherhood is a rare and painful reaction yet a wholehearted commitment to the redemptive community by its younger members is fully understood when baptism is accepted.

Perhaps the major paradox among many to be distinguished in the lives of the Anabaptists is that their settlements are tolerated by the State and Federal Governments yet the intrusions of civic government are opposed by the Anabaptists. This rejection is extended to any assistance from government, although all taxes are paid to the government. This benign attitude towards the Old Orders, especially regarding formal schooling and, until recently, pollution of water sources, has aroused criticism that may be an influence in the future.

The Anabaptists make their own provision in helping the sick and the aged and pay for any hospitalisation or medical assistance. Matters of insurance are also accepted as being the responsibility of the congregation. This challenges the outside world to look again at personal and family responsibilities in contrast with the Anabaptist way of dealing with these matters.

Therefore, as to a second question that may be posed, what have these groups in Pennsylvania (and many other States) got to give or show to the wider world from which their religious beliefs have unyoked them? More especially have they anything of real and lasting value, in ideas, commitments and practices, that might have a positive influence on a world so marked by materialism, profit making, secularism, relativism and individualism?

It is generally agreed that Anabaptism, with its stress on the community (or congregation, brotherhood, Conference), does not tolerate individualism but stresses obedience to the community and consequently limits choices in such fields as education, occupation and artistic pursuits. Is this lack of choice and emphasis on communal values taken *too* far or is the outside world, in contrast, too open to a

plethora of choices that causes problems? Is the Anabaptist way of life *too* rigid and *too* intolerant? Are the strings of religious tradition *too* tight (Kraybill and Niemeyer, 1993: 177)? Does this assume or suggest that the outside world is too lax, pliable and tolerant? Yet what kind of world would there be without those activities and involvements disapproved by Anabaptists such as science, television, radio, computer technology, theatres, cinemas, higher education, fast and efficient transport, telephones and other means of rapid communication from the home, mains electricity and such things as a multiplicity of newspapers, journals and magazines that the outside world now takes for granted?

On the contrary, Anabaptist society reveals the other side of a cultural coin minted in their religious belief and practices. There is a plain, humble, secure, slower life where there is not the confusion of too many choices, too fast a world (the Amish live on 'slow time'), too shallow an existence for so many, too much insecurity, poverty and emotional problems. There is literally a caring community where there is no unemployment and hardly any poverty and the rates of divorce (not allowed by the Old Orders), alcoholism, drug taking, delinquency, illegitimacy and abuse of different kinds are significantly lower than in the outside world and, in some groups, almost unknown. They are, in many ways, 'community sufficient' and only use outside agencies (e.g. child birth facilities) when there are problems or emergencies that cannot be solved by using community resources. It is remarkable in the Old Order Amish and other groups where formal schooling ceases at the end of the eighth grade (at thirteen years of age) how accomplished men and women are in farming, quilt making, gardening, making buggies and saddlery and various crafts related to furniture making and the production of conservatories, metal artefacts used in farming, bottling and canning farm products and also the production of appendages for holiday mobile homes. This without the 'planning' and 'management' required in the outside world. The rebuilding of a large barn epitomises this lack of a plan ('God gives us the plan') and the many talents of the builders. Likewise the communities appear to be devoid of the kind of stress attendant upon so many modern activities which may emanate from more complex work and an emphasis on speed, progress, profit and responding to the demands of the production line. There appears to be an accepted emphasis on the human element, the group influence in such work. The result is a personality which is quiet, secure and satisfied in its community without

any reference to bigger, better and faster which may present a model to the outside world. Happiness arises from the contentment of living in an integrated, disciplined community certain of its basic religious values that affect all aspects of life and work. The genuineness of these people is a feature of their lives that provokes positive comments from those who come into contact with the Anabaptists.

The Anabaptists are happy to sacrifice assertiveness, rapid change, individualism, making life more complex and less community rooted for the integrated, restrictive and restricted world of, especially, the Old Orders. The Anabaptists would not wish the outside world to copy their world but if the adaptation of some features of their world were possible, it might make the outside world that little better as all could benefit from a healthy measure of discipline and a re-emphasis on the importance of the community in acting to raise social standards.

When the pros and cons of the material manifestations of the Anabaptist way of life have been described and assessed it must be emphasised that the bedrock of that life is their unchanging faith; and this relationship is essential to the understanding of that life today and its possible future. Equally fundamental is the manner in which that way of life has proved faithful to the Scriptures and various Confessions of Faith throughout the long history of Anabaptism. Beliefs and practices have been conserved by their being passed through redemptive communities and such communities exist today certain in their existence, challenged daily to hold fast to the faith and, on occasion, falling short of that demand, yet the 'salt' of Anabaptism has not lost its savour.

Is this an out of date faith that should now be left 'to wither on the vine' or join another church and celebrate a 'new birth' or should its particular achievements in the faith and through congregational work be a challenge to the outside world? This could be based on the faith's emphasis on an actualised theology linking worship and work and could be the fulfilment of a great contemporary need to find meaning in this rapidly changing, seemingly rudderless world. It is this heritage of faith that may still play an active, fulfilling role in the future of Anabaptism and the outside world's reaction to it. As Dyck (1993: 442) states, in answering the question 'What shall we do with it? (the 'it' being the Anabaptist faith):

By accepting our past we become free to change, adapt and relate in new ways to the needs of our time without being bound by traditionalism or by the emotional effects of rejecting our heritage. This choice means we have nothing to defend – neither ourselves nor the church, nor a rejection of the church nor even the gospel; we have then only to testify to the power of Jesus Christ in the past and in our own living experience.

Dyck's claim is a fair summation of the outlook and achievements of progressive Mennonites who have adapted to the pressures of the modern world in many ways but remain different and separate from that world in their communities or congregations. One of the main influences in developing an attitude towards the outside world has been through their involvement in missionary work. This work has involved the Mennonites in bringing relief in the form of food, clothing, shelter, the development of literacy programmes and the establishment of new settlements in many foreign countries. The outcome has been a greater understanding of the outside world yet the success and the acceptance of these endeavours has been due to the manner in which the Mennonites live their faith. Contiguity with other people in the United States and many foreign countries has not weakened the faith, though adaptations have had to be made to the variety of circumstances faced by the missionaries. On the contrary their faith has been the inspiration of this work and its acceptance by those to whom it is directed. The manner in which missionary work is conducted may also influence the growing numbers accepting the Mennonite way of interpreting the work of God's Kingdom.

Such dynamic enterprises and developments should not and do not mask the basic, unchanging features of Anabaptist belief. A clear link can be seen between what Mennonites believe today (Wenger, 1991) and the Seven Articles of the Schleithem Confession of 1527. Weaver (1987: 50) sums up the content of the Articles' emphases 'on discipline, holy living, separation (from the outside world) and imitation of Jesus' and, in detail, the opposition to oaths, acceptance of the baptism of adults, rejection of the element of sacramentalism in the Lord's Supper, pacifism as a norm of behaviour, rejection of any civic office in the sense of serving in such office and an emphasis on a

visible church through an accepted discipline and a plain living symbolised by their choice of clothing'. A church 'of the Word' stressed (and still stresses) the reading and discussion of the Scriptures and the selection of its own ministers. Lederach (1980: 123) outlines in 'The Third Way' what contemporary Anabaptism affirms *viz*: the Centrality of Jesus Christ, the Primacy of God's Kingdom, the Visibility of the Church, the Wholeness of Salvation (our faith can be a practical reality in all relationships and spheres of activity) and the Practice of Faith (our faith must retain its integrity whilst it also becomes credible to the world). 'These affirmations do not replace the current Confessions of Faith but are a response to the present situation in our church and its challenges and needs and gives a self-identity'. 'Once you were no people but now you are God's people' (I Peter 2:10).

These affirmations, first published in 1978, acknowledge the great social changes in North America and consequent developments of problems, temptations and perceptions for the Mennonites (and, to a lesser extent to the less dynamic, more conservative Amish) as they have gradually moved from a distinctly rural to a more urban people with new occupations. The critical challenge has been to their historic faith whilst, simultaneously, retaining the nature of their church and way of life in these changing conditions. The congruence between the Articles of 1527 and the Affirmation of 1978 is evident and shows how the Anabaptists have conserved their beliefs over this long period. Confirmation of the continuity of beliefs is also revealed in a simple statement from an Amish Mennonite church in Florida. The leaflet, obtained in 1999, includes an outline pertaining to the bases of their belief *viz*: 'We believe all the principles of ancient historic Christianity, such as the divinity and trinity of God (Matthew 28:19; John 1:1; 15:26), that man is lost in sin, that Jesus is the Saviour from sin, and that the Holy Spirit and the Bible, God's Word, are agents in helping to turn man from sin to a life of holiness and service to God. We believe, further, that the Christian church is made up of born again holy people, that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, and that He is personally coming again to take His Church, the people of Jesus, into heaven (John 14:3).

Jesus will, at the end of time, conduct the judgement of all men, and unrepentant sinners will find their abode separated from God, forever in hell (Matthew 25).

We further believe in: the inspiration of the Bible (II Timothy 3:16). A strict separation of church and state as strangers and pilgrims (I Peter 2:11-16). Believers' baptism (i.e. as adults not infants) (Mark 16:16). Love for enemies, non-resistance to evil, non-participation in war (Matthew 5:38-9; James 5:5-6; I Peter 3:13-18).'

Again, the similarity with earliest and more recent expressions of Anabaptist beliefs is evident as is the living faith of contemporary Amish Mennonites that echoes the sentiments expressed by Franz Agricola, a Roman Catholic, in 1582 (qv Wenger, 1991: 65) 'Among the ... sects there is none which in appearance leads a more pious life than the Anabaptists. ... they are irreproachable; no lying, deception, swearing, harsh language; no intemperate eating and drinking; no outward personal display is found among them, but humility, patience, uprightness, meekness, honesty, temperance, straightforwardness in such measure that one would suppose they have the Holy Spirit of God'. It is their acceptance of social separation, an agreed discipline resting securely on an unchanging faith that links so much of contemporary Amish Mennonite faith and behaviour with their historic religion and, with God's help, their continuing commitment to their belief will secure them in their future.

Those who have observed the Amish and Mennonites and discussed matters of their faith with them will acknowledge that those characteristics of their behaviour as Anabaptists in the days of Franz Agricola are very evident in their lives today. They do not accept an outsider's perception of their lives as one of perfection as they readily admit to falling short of an idealistic religious life. Nonetheless, by living and maintaining long-held religious beliefs, they have encountered something of a corner of God's Kingdom on earth.

To the outside world, the Amish and Mennonites present a sharply contrasting way of life of which many aspects have endured over a long period of time. Some, such as clothing, dialect, beards and length of hair, transport and farming methods, have continued since the earliest days of Anabaptism. These, the outward appearances of these groups, can and do conceal the unchanging tenets of belief, yet it is the ability to adjust to particular external social pressures of the outside world yet simultaneously holding fast to religious convictions and practices that has resulted in the survival of the Amish and Mennonites as religious groups in contemporary society. Some groups

exhibit more progressive or liberal ways in their response to external pressures than the traditionalists.

The most progressive Mennonites resemble, in many ways, the outside world, yet even they reveal significant differences when their way of life is examined in detail; that is, 'progressive' or 'traditional' are relative terms when contrasting these groups and, especially, their relationship to the outside world. The overall picture of the culture developed by the Anabaptists is made more complex by the number of divisions or congregations that have developed under the broad heading 'Mennonite' and, to a far lesser extent, 'Amish'. Nonetheless the terms progressive and traditional can be used to describe the response of different groups to, especially, the ever-present changes of a technological nature that create pressure and tension on these groups. The perception of the outside world regarding the Amish and Mennonites is largely determined by these groups' outward appearance, behaviour, transport, leisure activities, selling farm and other products to the general public, farming practices and worship when the latter can be observed. The most cursory examination of this particular way of life readily reveals its complexities and paradoxes.

Kraybill (1994: 244-247) provides a useful basis in describing the responses of the Amish to the 'encounter with modernity' and this, with great justification because of their many common characteristics, could be applied to the Mennonites. These responses are categorised as concessions *by* the Amish, concessions *to* the Amish, compromises and the non-negotiables. Examples indicated by Kraybill in each of these categories are:

i. Concessions by the Amish:

Lights, signals and reflectors on buggies; bulk milk tanks; modern farm management techniques; larger dairy herds; chemical fertilizers; insecticides and pesticides; artificial insemination of cows; nonfarm employment; power tools for manufacturing; indoor bathroom facilities; modern kitchens; contemporary house exteriors; use of professional services including those of lawyers, physicians, accountants and dentists; Social Security for employees; modern medicine.

ii. Concessions to the Amish:

Alternatives for conscientious objectors; exemptions from high school attendance; waiver of school certification requirements; waiver of minimum wage requirements for teachers; Social Security exemption for self-employed; workmen's compensation exemption for self-employed; unemployment insurance exemption for self-employed; waiver of hard hat regulation; alteration of zoning regulations (by township); horse travel on public roads; avoidance of Sunday milk pickup.

iii. Compromises or negotiated settlements:

Vocational school; selective use of telephones; modern farm equipment towed by horses; use of engines on field equipment; air and hydraulic power; hiring of cars and vans; modern gas appliances; Amish-owned tourist stands; selective use of electricity; non-farm work based at home; permanent-press fabric for traditional garb; home freezers in a non-Amish neighbour's home; contemporary materials for carriage construction; electrical inverters; Amish-owned and operated businesses; scooters.

iv. The non-negotiables:

Worship in homes; worship service format; confession, excommunication and shunning; traditional authority structure; lay ministers; mutual aid; limited education; horse-drawn equipment; horse and carriage; traditional dress styles; Pennsylvania German dialect; traditional sex roles; family size and importance; primacy of the church district; small and informal social units.

The Mennonites, especially the Old Order, would accept the great majority of these commitments whereas the progressives would emphasise higher education, greater

use of English especially in church services, Sunday schools, Bible study, a Conference organisation linking congregations, main line electricity exceptionally, cars, worship in church buildings or meeting houses, a more relaxed dress regulation and the importance of missionary work.

The most traditional Amish (the Swartzentrubers of Wayne and Holmes Counties, Ohio) would not accept the concessions or compromises as they believe these indicate a drift worldwards and worse, that the group is like salt that have lost his savour (Matt. 5:13-16) and should 'return to the Bible truth and practices' (McGrath, 1989 : 25). Thus are divisions and differences among the Anabaptists maintained and the outside world can only attempt to understand the underlying reasons for these differences based on the Bible, *Ordnungen* **and** the wider society's influences.

The Amish and the Mennonites remain unique groups whose differences, compared with those of the outside world, remain as constant reminders of their inherited traditions covering the whole continuum of the traditional-liberal outlook and practice. These traditions are firmly based on what has been described as an existentialist or realised, actualised theology which inextricably links their religious beliefs with everyday living. This commitment has endured since the early 16th century and has resulted in these groups who remain separated from the wider community, yet whose beliefs and practices may be a light to those who seek a path to God's kingdom on earth and the world to come.

The material differences between these groups and society at large are quite evident, but their significance lies in the symbolism they portray of something deeper in these congregations of believers – of a sense of identity, of tranquillity, of a quiet but resolute confidence in the religious beliefs that they accept as the bases of their understanding of the scriptures and the manner in which these are translated into everyday living.

Fulfilment of their individuality is expressed in and through the congregation or community and, as such, is intolerant of divergences from this commitment which is accepted, voluntarily, at baptism. Satisfaction is found in a uniformity which

suppresses individualism and a pluralistic outlook. In sacrificing a whole range of occupations and interests (especially artistic endeavours) they have created what may be termed 'faith communities' which reflect a dignity and manifestation of security palpable to an unprejudiced, outside observer. Faith, based on a concept of love so clearly described by Jesus, ensures that all members of the community, congregation or brotherhood are regarded equally and accepted as the responsibility of the community. This results in an absence of stress linked with a disciplined way of living. Additionally there is no poverty, unemployment and, especially, violent crime. Does this then make these people happier and more fulfilled than their neighbours in the outside world without suggesting that theirs is the perfect society? They certainly do not have to grapple, constantly, with ideas and artefacts that are faster, bigger and, by implication, 'better'. Development, yes; change if accepted by the congregation, yes; 'progress' very doubtful or an unqualified rejection as the forces of modernisation in a materialistic, consumer dominated world are opposed insofar as any such influence may undermine the groups' basic beliefs.

Kraybill's 'non-negotiables' outlined above reveal where the line of religious belief has been drawn over the centuries and is still conserved today. Do these limitations in choices and consequent sacrifices to maintain a religious commitment and a particular way of life also limit the development of the human persona and, especially, the religious aspect of personality? If so, these peoples are still prepared to accept limitations to achieve *their* way of living and believing. It is of particular significance and a salutary indication to the outside world that such a high percentage (over 80%) of their youth are prepared to accept voluntary believers' baptism and live this so different and demanding way of life requiring a separation from the wider world, a surrendering to the congregation and to that obedience arising from the acceptance of the *Ordnung*. In exchange, there is the security of tradition and ritual, a strong sense of place and, of greatest importance, an assurance of a place in God's Kingdom if their life, like the church, is maintained 'not having a spot or wrinkle' (Ephesians, 5:27). This way of living also implies an important freedom, that of being free of as many of the pressures of the outside world as it is possible.

There are many different Mennonite groups spread across most of the States of the United States; far fewer Amish, although both groups are increasing in numbers. The

most generous interpretations of numbers indicate 600,000 Mennonite members and 130,000 Amish members (the respective 'communities' are far larger) in the US, thus their impact on the wider world is limited as the US has a population of c275 million. What then could be the abiding influences of these peoples?

Historically the Anabaptists, in their insistence on the separation of the church from the state, established the concept and the reality of a 'free church' and all that that implies in terms of control and independence. Nonconformist churches can, therefore, trace this fundamental aspect of their organisation and government to the struggles and beliefs of those pioneers who formed the Radical Reformation. The congregation was to become and remains today, especially with the Old Orders, the accepted form of church government.

Voluntary adult baptism was the key to the earliest development of the Anabaptist faith and, by implication, a rejection of paedobaptism. This belief is inextricably linked with the Anabaptist interpretation of the Bible and, as with so many disputes with their opponents, justification for a belief or practice is found *sola scriptura*. Various Confessions of Faith which have appeared throughout the history of Anabaptism have always vindicated beliefs by detailed references to the Bible, particularly the New Testament. This applies not only to baptism, but separation from the world, e.g. in Romans 12:2 and I Corinthians 5:11; the manner in which a sinner is to be reprov'd and encouraged, through confession, to admit sin and rejoin the congregation in Matthew 18:15-18; the acceptance of rulers, their actions and the payment of taxes in Romans 13:1, 3 and 6: what constitutes correct behaviour, in Romans 13: 8 and 9; the holy kiss in II Corinthians 11:13; the length of men's hair in I Corinthians 11:15; simplicity of apparel and non-adornment of the person in I Peter 3:3. Such examples of major and minor (to the outside world) details of a particular way of living are scattered throughout the scriptures. II Thessalonians 2:15 emphasises the importance of 'holding the traditions', of critical importance in Anabaptist history, as is Colossians 3, which again details what is acceptable behaviour and Colossians 3:12, with its reference to meekness, the sign of humility so evident in Amish and Mennonites. This is not to claim that these groups are the only Christians who find justification and solace in the scriptures, but with these minority religious groups the impact of their understanding of the Bible is clearly explicit in

their everyday lives. The congregations' beliefs are truly built on the rock of faith and are a constant light of God's Kingdom to the outside world.

Likewise their acceptance of suffering (Romans 12:1) and their related attitudes to pacifism and non-resistance reveal to others a strong resolve and resignation clearly linked with the words and actions of Jesus. This is another constant in Anabaptist belief and a reminder to a world so marked by aggression and violence of 'what might be' if the words of the scriptures in this regard were heeded and a genuine attempt made to eradicate at least the worst aspects of these inhuman actions.

The Anabaptists unyoked themselves from what they considered to be an un-Christian, evil world and remain separated in that they are in the world but not of it. Contiguity with their neighbours can make for difficulties, but it is only through such a separation, based on a religious conviction, that these groups believe they can fulfil their commitment to establishing their version of God's Kingdom on earth. Demarcation provides a sharp contrast to their neighbours and would be lost if the manifestations of that separation ascribed to faith, practices and general behaviour were weakened through the acceptance of practices and convictions of the outside world – truly the salt would have lost its flavour.

Can the influence of this separate, simpler, slower, Bible-centred way of life with its markedly limited range of choices be of any significance to those who do not share the Anabaptists' beliefs? Modern society has probably progressed too far along the road of materialism and secularism to change in a significant manner unless there is another radical reformation of attitudes, values and convictions, yet the power of prayer and the examples of these religious groups could well affect the wider community. There are satisfactions in a committed way of worshipping and living which emphasise the human scale of a simpler life and could well have an impact upon the causes of so many social ills evident in contemporary society. Neither the Amish nor Mennonites can reverse the historic trends of the outside world but their way of living reveals how a life free of dependence on relativism and high technology can result in a satisfying life for individuals and the community.

This life is predicated not only on the acceptance of the scriptures as the ultimate guide to a particular way of life but also the yielding to a form of order or discipline and it is this acceptance of the demands of this discipline or *Ordung* which is yet another aspect of Anabaptism of considerable importance to the wider community. Could that wider community benefit from the understanding of the *Ordung* and possibly implement some of its requirements? Discipline implies forms of control related to the values an individual accepts – ‘to thine own self be true’ – and the additional acceptance of the role of authority and authorities. The rise of crime in the wider community can be interpreted as a lack of discipline and a challenge to authority that often results in violence and a disregard for the sanctity of the individual. Divorce, drug taking, sexual licence, alcoholism, muggings and graffiti all manifest a lack of commitment to moral standards and a recognisable absence of control and discipline. So much of the contemporary world is enmeshed in moral relativism; there are few if any absolutes and here again the Amish and Mennonites can offer examples of an accepted, disciplined life where clear boundaries of behaviour are drawn, acknowledged and lived. Again the bases for this life are the scriptures.

At the heart of Amish and Mennonite living is the congregation, or community, and, as indicated earlier, the matter of the relationship between the congregation and the individual believer. What, if anything, does this relationship have to offer to the outside world? Does society over-emphasise individualism? Jesus constantly refers to individuals, the woman taken in sin, the lost sheep, the Prodigal Son being typical examples, yet these minority religious groups accept that individualism must take a secondary role to that of the Jesus-Others-Yourself priority). Is this the most satisfactory balance between the conflicting demands of the individual and the community? This must remain an open question unless one of these influences is taken to an extreme when it has destructive consequences, yet the congregations or communities of the Amish and Mennonites in their everyday living create a ‘visible church’ which, to them, is part of God’s Kingdom on earth. They would therefore claim that, to achieve this end, a satisfactory relationship has been maintained and, moreover, the implications of this relationship are fully describe before voluntary baptism is accepted. The kind of requirements made by the community on its believing members have been outlined earlier but additionally members are dissuaded

from amassing wealth in the manner of the outside world; on the contrary, 'wealth' is interpreted in terms of faith, land and children. They cherish the small scale, sharing and helping others (not only members of the congregation), neighbourliness and 'rootedness' (although when pressures from the outside world become too great, a group or groups will migrate to another community or State). They are committed to hard, manual work, frugality and integrity, cast doubt on scientific thinking but use scientific advances in agriculture. There is a toleration of a degree of laxity in behaviour of their younger people during the teenage years ('*rumspringa*') but they defend the purity of the congregation in an absolute manner, more especially towards any manifestation of pride, greed or self-aggrandisement. They show their faith and their faith shows what they are as they have developed, via a number of schisms, the mosaic pattern that is the Mennonite form of Anabaptism today and, with a sympathetic understanding of this faith, a solution to 'the riddle of the Amish'. The priorities which are an integral part of Amish and Mennonite belief, particularly the rite of passage accorded to their young people before they are accepted as full members of the congregation, could have a positive influence on the thinking and practices of the outside world if such practices are adapted to challenge those of the outside world and are sincerely held by those who wish to incorporate them into their everyday lives.

These, therefore, are some of the characteristics of Amish and Mennonite belief that the wider world could benefit from particularly, if the religious bases of these behaviours are fully understood. There is a 'struggle between secularisation and sacralisation; the sacred seemed to be holding its own' (Kaufmann and Driedger, 1991: 252). This research study of Kauffman and Driedger possibly reaches the heart of the matter of the continuity of Amish and Mennonite groups and their possible influence on the outside world in re-emphasising the question of individual and group relationships '...only a meaningful community at the expense of individual freedom? ... or a culture where the individual and community are not pitted against each other as adversaries but where they supplement, complement and enrich each other? A middle ground ... that enriches the individual in a larger body and at the same time applauds choice and creative expression?'

If the modern world accepts any aspects of the wisdom of the Amish and Mennonite ways of living, it must recognise that that life is firmly predicated on the scriptures and the demands of the *Ordnung*. This is reflected as clearly in the most progressive, liberal Mennonites as it is in the most traditional, conservative Old Order Amish and Mennonites, all of whom continue to conserve their age old religious beliefs, primarily because of their deeply held convictions but also, if the world is sufficiently perceptive of these groups' ways of living, because they are a light reflecting God's Kingdom to that world.

GLOSSARY

ANFANGE

Local church authority or congregationalism. In the early days of Anabaptism, Zwingli opposed this and linked his opposition with support for the payment of tithes to the orthodox church. Others would claim this financial support for the civic church. The Anabaptists accepted the authority and role of the congregation or brotherhood. This has always been of particular importance to the Amish.

ANFECHTUNG

‘The salvation path of a person in despair’ (Yoder, quoted in Friedmann, 1998: 131). Believers, even after baptism, could be assailed with inner doubts that could weaken their faith and create uncertainty and anxiety. It is a dilemma when a conflict arises between the longing for faith and the certainty of salvation. This idea is traceable to Thomas Müntzer and his description of the inner difficulties of an individual in attaining faith. This, the ‘theology of cross’ contrasts with but is linked to the ‘theology of martyrdom’, the idea of a suffering church.

ATTNINGSGMEE

Twice-yearly preparatory services held by the congregation to discuss the **ORDNUNG**. Agreement has to be reached regarding the details and working of the order before communion can be taken.

BUSSFERTIGKEIT

Continuous repentance. This is in harmony with the concept of salvation as a process, i.e. believers were saved, are being saved and will be saved. It is also linked with **GELASSENHEIT**, a continued submission and surrender to God – and the community or congregation.

BAN

A form of exclusion from the congregation ensuring the inner purity of the individual (through confession whilst under the ‘ban’) and the congregation. Order was thus maintained in the congregation as the discipline of the ban was accepted at baptism. This discipline *had* to be accepted before communion

could be offered to the congregation. An instrument, when used, of brotherly redeeming love linked with 'the rule of Christ' (Matthew 18:15-19). This form of expulsion was directed at those who caused division, lived in open sin or taught a false doctrine. For minor offences (e.g. not obeying the dress code, hair length, using hostile words) the ban would last two or three weeks; for more serious offences such as adultery, fornication and heresy, there would be a longer period of exclusion and the sinner would confess, kneeling, in front of the congregation. These exclusions were known as the 'small ban', the 'big ban' or 'setting someone back from counsel'. Some sins can be corrected between brothers; others, of a serious nature such as inordinate living or conversation, business conduct of a questionable nature, idleness and a strikingly different outward appearance, could cause the unrepentant 'to be cut off like a branch'. This would result in exclusion from communion, no brotherly greeting or kiss and would continue until full confession was made. A strict application of the ban has caused individuals, families and some congregations to move to other congregations with a more liberal interpretation of the ban (see also **MEIDUNG**).

BED COURTSHIP

Or 'bundling'. The custom of unmarried couples either sleeping together or spending part of the evening or night in bed usually clothed. This is detailed in Folsom (.... p117-127). Children of such a practice were accepted into the congregation and the couples were expected to marry. There was not a clearly defined line recognised by all congregations to this practice of fornication which, in some congregations, led to excommunication. The practice of bundling was strongly opposed by some groups and is said to be a main cause in the establishment of the New Order Amish.

ENGLISH

Or 'the English'. Refers to all non-Anabaptists and is used, particularly in conversation, to refer to outsiders or strangers today.

FROMB

‘God-fearing faith’. Hubmaier admitted ‘and although faith alone makes God-fearing (fromb), it alone does not save man’ (quoted in Friedmann, 1998: 89). This idea or belief is linked with **FROMB-MACHUNG**, ‘the bringing of man into the right or proper relationship to God that makes him a genuine follower of Christ’ (Friedmann, 1998: 88, quoting Hans J. Hillerbrand).

GELASSENHEIT

A sense of yieldedness and resignation in one’s relation to God and to others. Emphasised by Thomas Müntzer as the painful coming to Christ, the ‘bitter’ Christ to which sinners had to yield, an idea said to have developed out of pietism and mysticism. This was a yielding inwardly to God and outwardly to the congregation so that the Holy Spirit could accomplish God’s will. Considered to mark the boundary between the church and the outside world and was characterised by ideals of humility, patience, resignation and selfishness. This resulted in the believer’s and the congregation’s discipline and obedience (‘sin’ was considered to indicate disobedience to God) and re-emphasised the influence of the group over the individual. One of many examples of this discipline was the acceptance of the result of the ‘lot’ when ministers were chosen. Plainness in dress and appearance is another traditional influence, through this discipline, on the Amish.

GEMEINDE and GEMEINSCHAFT

The brotherhood church that attempts to translate the Kingdom of God into everyday living. Only in this can a believer apply Christian love in action and come to God in good conscience only with his brother. A community of the Holy Spirit, of ‘saints’, known for their internal peace, brotherly love and shown in co-operation and sharing, thus attempting to realise the ideal of restituting the primitive, apostolic church. **GEMEINSCHAFT** also manifested a concern regarding the preservation of the congregation’s piety.

HEILSGEWISSHEIT

The personal certitude of salvation as emphasised by the Protestants. This, as Friedmann (1988: 102) claims, meant a complete abandonment of the idea of a

‘second coming’ of Christ, thus leaving no room for a meaningful eschatology, but the idea was maintained by the Radical Reformation of the Anabaptists.

LANDGRAVE or MARGRAVE

A Count or Graf in medieval Germany who was a local ruler, military governor, hereditary Prince of the Holy Roman Empire. Local rulers in Germany who offered protection to the newly developing Lutheran Church against possible attacks on its priests by the orthodox church. Luther accepted the protection of the Elector of Saxony and was kept *incommunicado* for almost a year. In accepting this kind of protection Luther is said to have led a Magisterial Reformation. The Anabaptists would not have accepted such protection from civic authorities or governments although it was never offered and thus the Anabaptists created a Radical Reformation.

LEBENDIGER GLAUBE

A living faith; a concrete, existential faith which was an integral and fundamental part of daily living. Through this faith, the act of baptism made the believer God-fearing (**FROMB**) yet it also betokened a certainty regarding divine truth and the divine call, even in face of death (qv Friedmann, 1998: 32). In this ‘theology of martyrdom’, the Anabaptists were certain that *their* way led to *their* God through this faith.

MEIDUNG

Excommunication, banning and shunning (qv Umble, J S *Excommunication*, in Hostetler, 1992). ‘This remains the symbolic and substantive cornerstone of the Amish church today’ (qv Kraybill, 1989: 116). This is not done out of hatred, but because of the basic Anabaptist pledge at baptism (**TAUFGELÜBE**) implies love for sinners so that they can return to the church if they repented. The process commences with a warning about unacceptable behaviour, then an admonishment and finally a ban which, if the sin was of a serious nature, could lead to excommunication (qv Matthew 18:15-18). Some groups also declared an avoidance of the sinner (no conversation, trade/business, visits, etc.) and the varying degrees of strictness accepted by various congregations in their interpretation or application of the **MEIDUNG** and **BAN** led to schisms. The

acceptance of a 'strong' (*streng*) **MEIDUNG** was the major cause of the emergence of the Amish as a separate Anabaptist group or congregation as Jacob Ammann obtained agreement, in his strict application of **MEIDUNG** to excommunicated members, that they should be banned from communion and ostracised. This was justified in that members of the congregation would not become defiled by intercourse with the sinner and partake of his sins. The Dodericht Confession reinforces this with references to I Corinthians 5:9-11; Romans 16:17; II Thess. 3:14-15; Titus 3: 10-11. The **MEIDUNG** can still give rise to heated debate and contributed to the schisms in 1910 and 1966 (when the New Order Amish was formed). Whilst under the ban members of the congregation do not ride with the sinner, have no business dealings, no direct payments from or to, eat separately and a wife is not to have sexual relations with her excommunicated husband. Brothers and sisters may have to shun one another as the **MEIDUNG** and **BAN** are potential tools for social control. After a period of grace and suitable repentance in front of the congregation, the sinner is re-admitted to the congregation.

NACHFOLGE

A part of God's Kingdom as realised through living in a brotherhood church consequently discipleship is all-important. This is the aim of the spiritual aspect of Anabaptism, the outcome of a living faith. The congregation followed the commitment to Jesus and others before any reference to the individual. This life is predicated on believers' baptism and **GELASSENHEIT** with Scriptures and the Church of the Word as guides to everyday living. This brotherhood is based on a deeply understood faith lived and shared. A Christ-centred faith that leads to an understanding of the Holy Spirit, where the secular and spiritual are not divided but a faith separated from a world dominated by forces that are not Christlike. A faith expressed in loving and serving in word and deed (qv Lederach, 1980: 140), the Christians' response to God's grace. This is the basis of the covenantal community.

METANOIA

A new birth following baptism; a spiritually transformed man (qv John 3:3; 5:6; II Corinthians 5:17) gaining an insight into the world of the Holy Spirit. It was

always assumed (not only by the Anabaptist) that this inner regeneration and the presence of the Holy Spirit must result in visible changes ('the outward fruit' (Snyder, 1972: 234) when one 'promised to die to sin and to the old life of Satan' (Wenger, 1937: 45) in a pledge to God. Again, I Peter 3:21 'Baptism is the answer of a good conscience to God'. This involved continuous repentance (**BUSSFERTIGKEIT**) that is, salvation through baptism is a process wherein believers were saved, are being saved and will be saved. Salvation as a matter of repentance and renewal was not a matter of pardon but as part of the life of a 'community of saints', a dutiful, visible group following Jesus and in this odyssey were influenced by charisma, the inner gift of spiritual vision (qv Friedmann, 1998: 94).

ORDNUNG or ORDNUNGEN

The rule, or rules, order or orders, the practices of the congregation or brotherhood. This defines a division between the congregation and the wider society and, for some groups, this division would be more amorphous, especially at the periphery where changes to the rules would be undertaken by 'fence jumpers'. The outcomes would not affect the faith but would impact on the daily living and labour of Amish and Mennonite groups. The introduction of technical changes, especially gadgetry, would either be slowly accepted or 'put away'. Bishops would often lead in these matters and the congregation would assent or eventually cause a schism. Some changes would be 'on probation', sometimes over many years, for their full impact to be assessed, e.g. artificial insemination of cows and use of telephones would have to answer the basic questions 'Is it needed?', 'Will it corrupt the community?' The 1966 break in the Amish community was due to the refusal by some families to put away farm machinery that had been used for some years. There were more known taboos on the use of man-made power than that of manual labour but 'If you can pull it with horses you can have it' (Kraybill, 1989), thus the horse has come to define the limits of this culture. 'Do it with air or hydraulics, you can do it' was of particular importance to Amish 'shops' or cottage industries. 'Why do that?', 'Let's put a guideline on our faith and say that it's (the tractor) not necessary, it's too worldly' (Kraybill, 1989: 239). Advances in this respect were not considered evil in themselves, but congregations were worried as to what would

come next. The **ORDNUNG** consistently forbids certain behaviour of a moral nature that contradicts the Scriptures; some mechanical and technical devices, e.g. musical instruments (this is especially so with the Amish; the more progressive Orders allow such music); too great a mixing with outsiders was not approved and anything affecting the symbols of the faith such as dress, headwear, the length of hair of men, beards and the horse and buggy. The more progressive Mennonites are far more liberal in their interpretation of the importance of these aspects of their living. Any suggested changes are discussed and approved or not before the twice-yearly communion and agreement must be reached before communion is taken. The Mennonites refer such matters to their Conference organisation; the Amish refer theirs to a meeting of bishops. Changes relating to singing, baptism and worship are usually minor or not accepted.

PAROUSIA

The certainty of the Kingdom to come being part of the 'theology of the Kingdom'. The Second Coming and its imminence. An important eschatological idea of early Anabaptism that convinced the believers in Münster that the coming of Jesus should be prepared for by creating a new Jerusalem there. This ended disastrously but the idea of 'the Kingdom' persists as 'eternal life' or a 'new world' (qv II Peter 3:13) and has been responsible for motivating missionary work in the earliest days and by the Mennonites in later centuries. Such work is almost unknown within the territorial Protestant churches (qv Friedmann, 1998: 102-3).

RUMSPRINGA

The period during teenage years when young people 'kick up their heels' and worldly behaviour is largely ignored by the congregation. A time when the limitations imposed by the expectations of tradition and the **ORDNUNG** are tested. Some youths buy cars, radios, indulge in drinking and, in some instances, drug taking. The 'crowd' (with its own liberal or conservative features) is important as are its other activities such as 'games' (hoe downs in barns), swimming, corner ball, ice skating, sledging, roller skating, rounders or

baseball, visiting cinemas, theatres and the nearest town or city. Rules governing dress are sometimes ignored, as is the length of hair. During this period of social intercourse with its attendant boisterousness and noise, many relationships are developed which may end in marriage. Some groups require young people to be baptised before becoming involved in serious courtship; others expect baptism before marriage can take place. This therefore can be the period when the matter of baptism is seriously considered and discussed as young people are neither in the church nor out of it during this time. More than 80% of the youngsters decide to become baptised members of the congregation, partly as a result of their upbringing and partly as a result of their experiences during **RUMSPRINGA**.

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APPENDICES

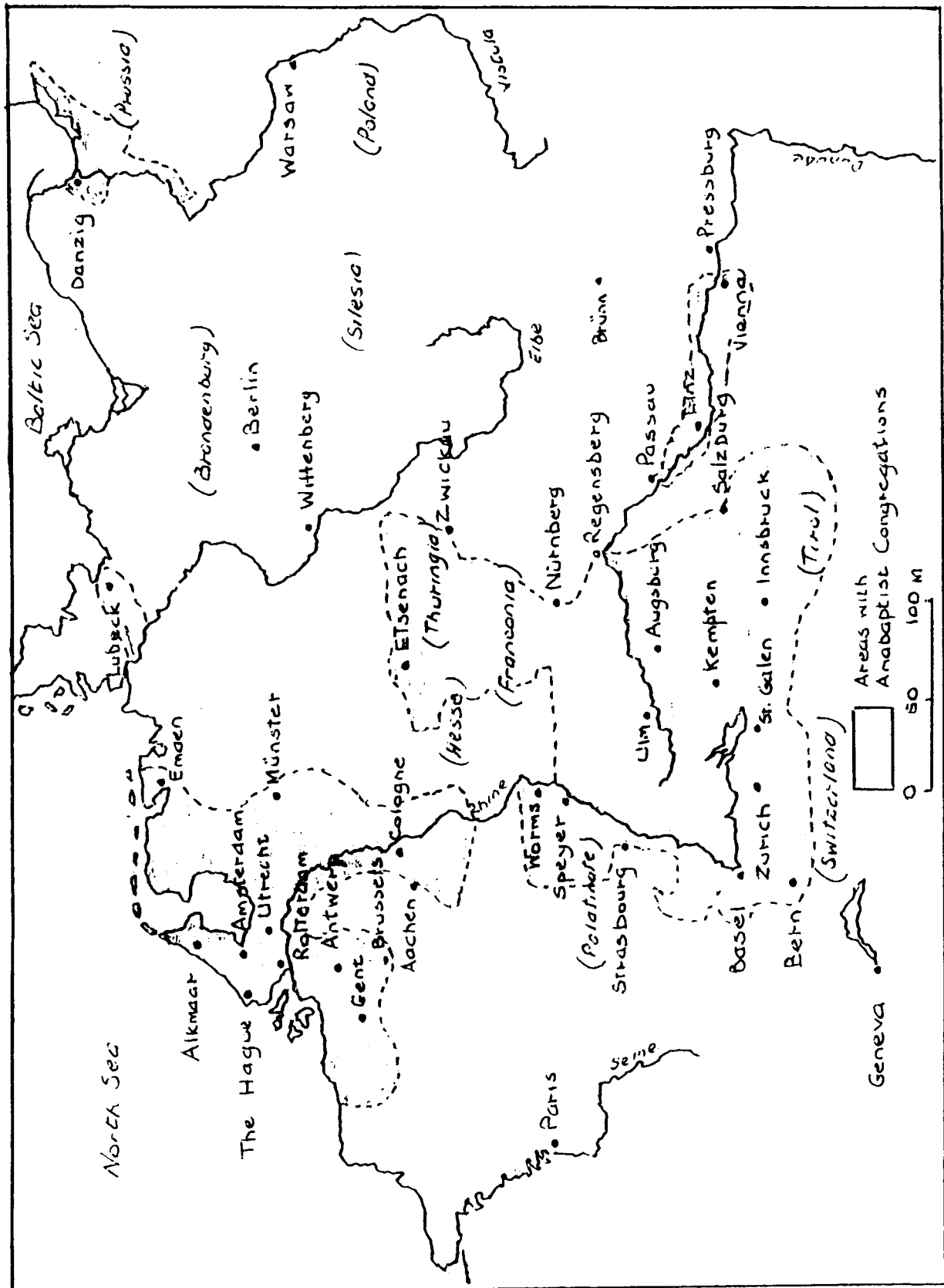
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- B Amish settlements in 18th century Pennsylvania
- C i. 19th century schism in the Amish Church
 - ii. Division and merger among Amish Mennonites and the Old Order Amish
- D Simplified analysis of the divisions of the Amish and Mennonites
- E Plan drawing of an Amish Mennonite Meeting House
- F Amish Church Districts in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania as of 1980
- G i. Amish settlements in Pennsylvania (numbers) 1992
 - ii. Amish settlements in Pennsylvania (mapped)
- H i. Mennonite Conferences in Pennsylvania (numbers) 2000
 - ii. Mennonite Conferences in Pennsylvania (mapped)

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APPENDIX A

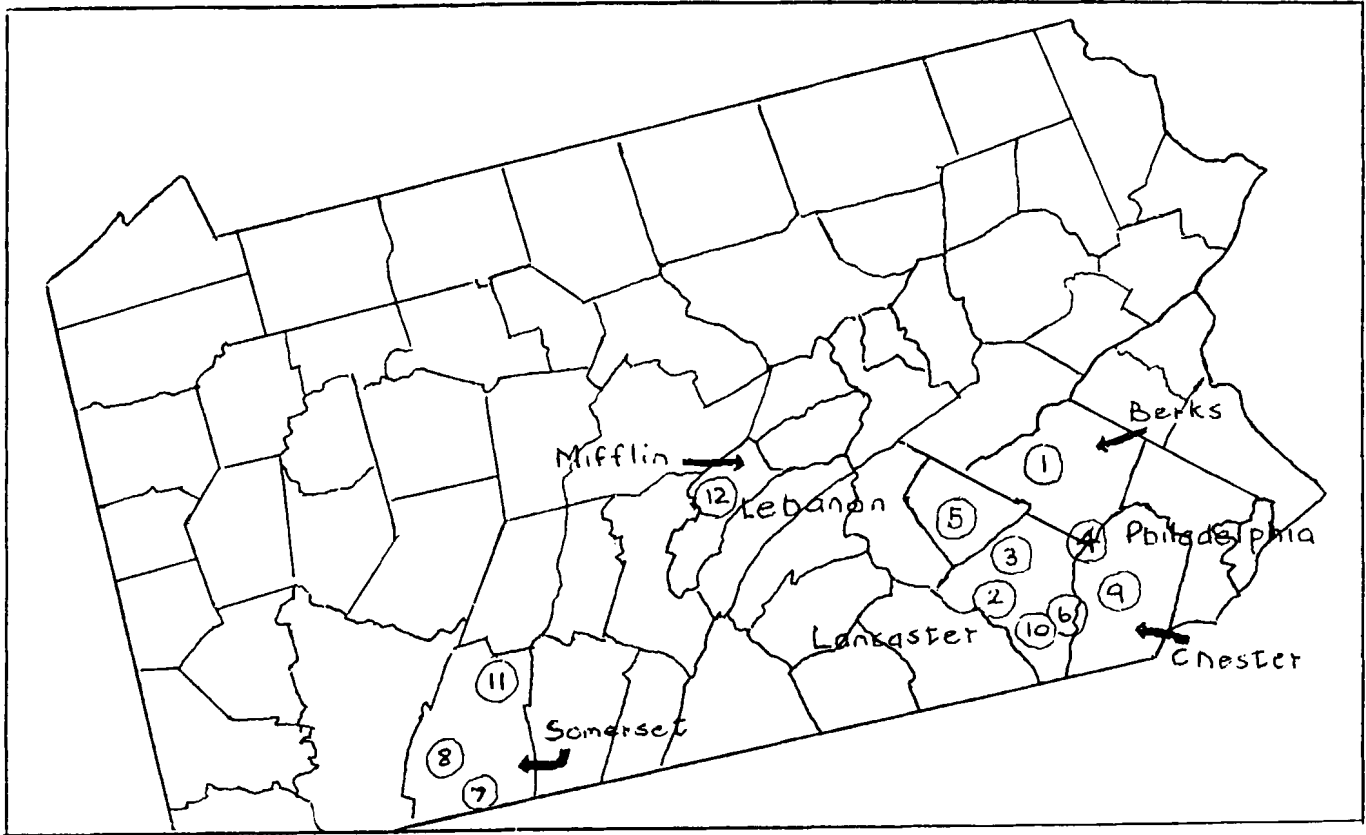
Anabaptists in Europe 1525 - 1560



Adapted from Snyder, C Arnold (1995) Anabaptist History and Theology p. 10

APPENDIX B

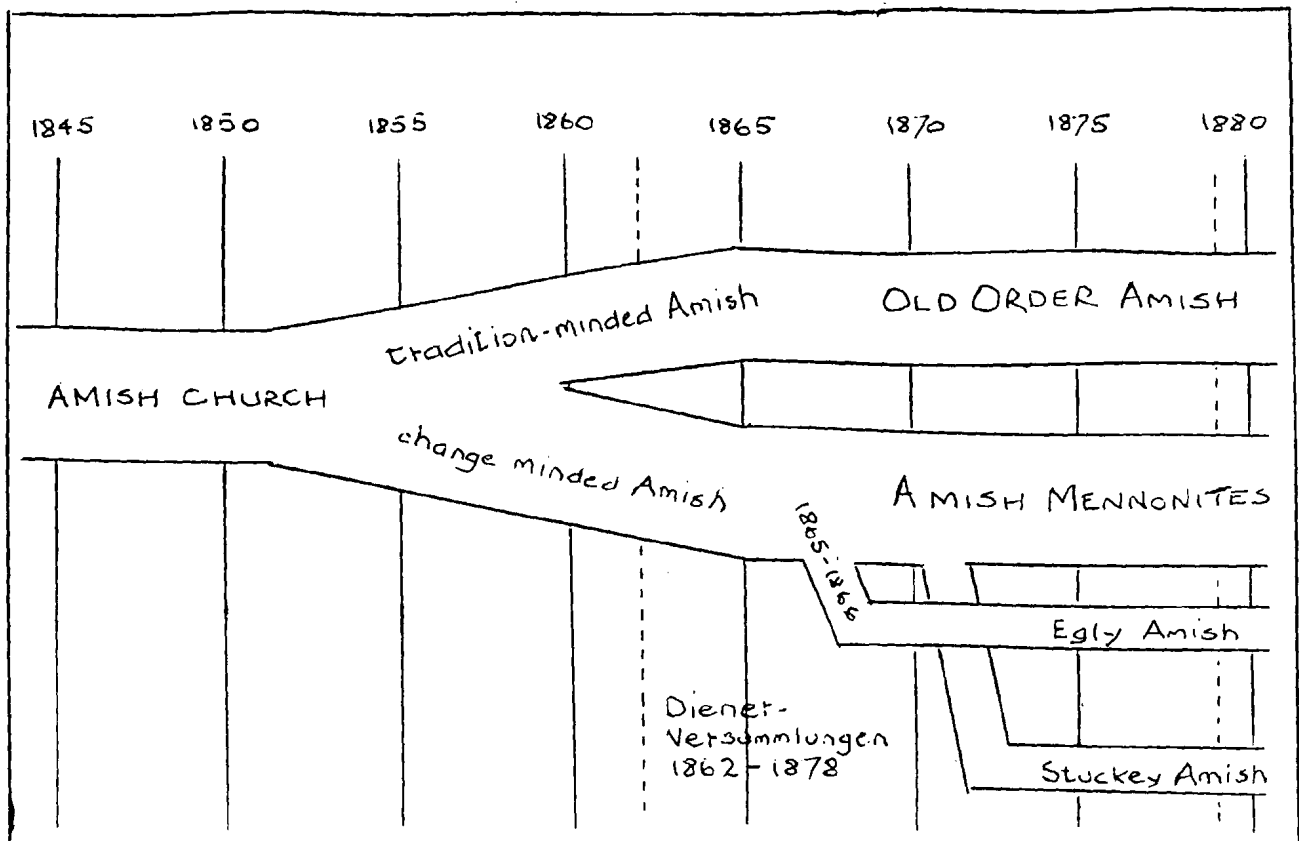
Amish Settlements in Eighteenth Century Pennsylvania



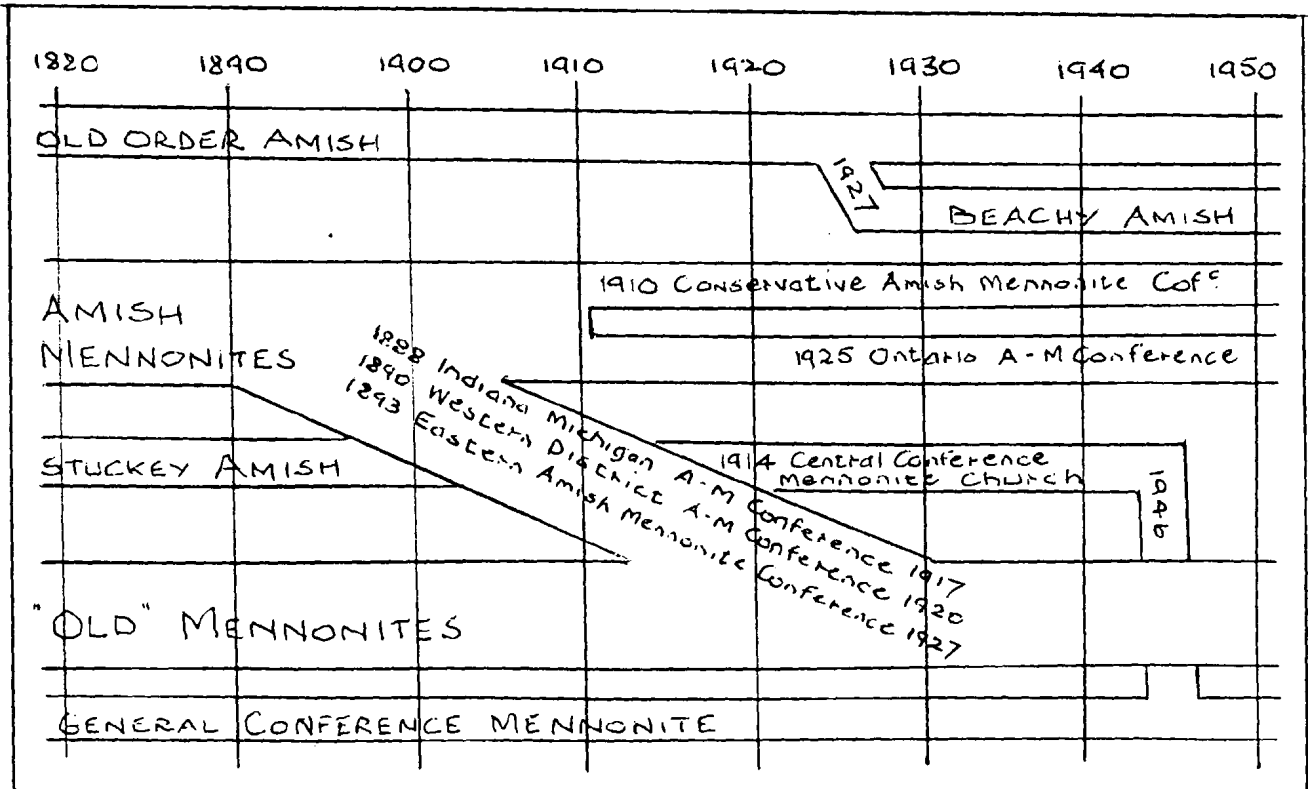
- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| ① Northkill/Maiden Creek | ⑤ Tulpenhocken-Lebanon | ⑨ Malvern |
| ② Old Conestoga | ⑥ Cains | ⑩ Pequea |
| ③ Cocalico | ⑦ Casselman River | ⑪ Conemaugh |
| ④ Conestoga | ⑧ Glades | ⑫ Big Valley |

Adapted from Nolt, Steven M (1992) 'A History of the Amish'
Good Books, Intercourse, PA
p. 62

Nineteenth Century Schism in the Amish Church

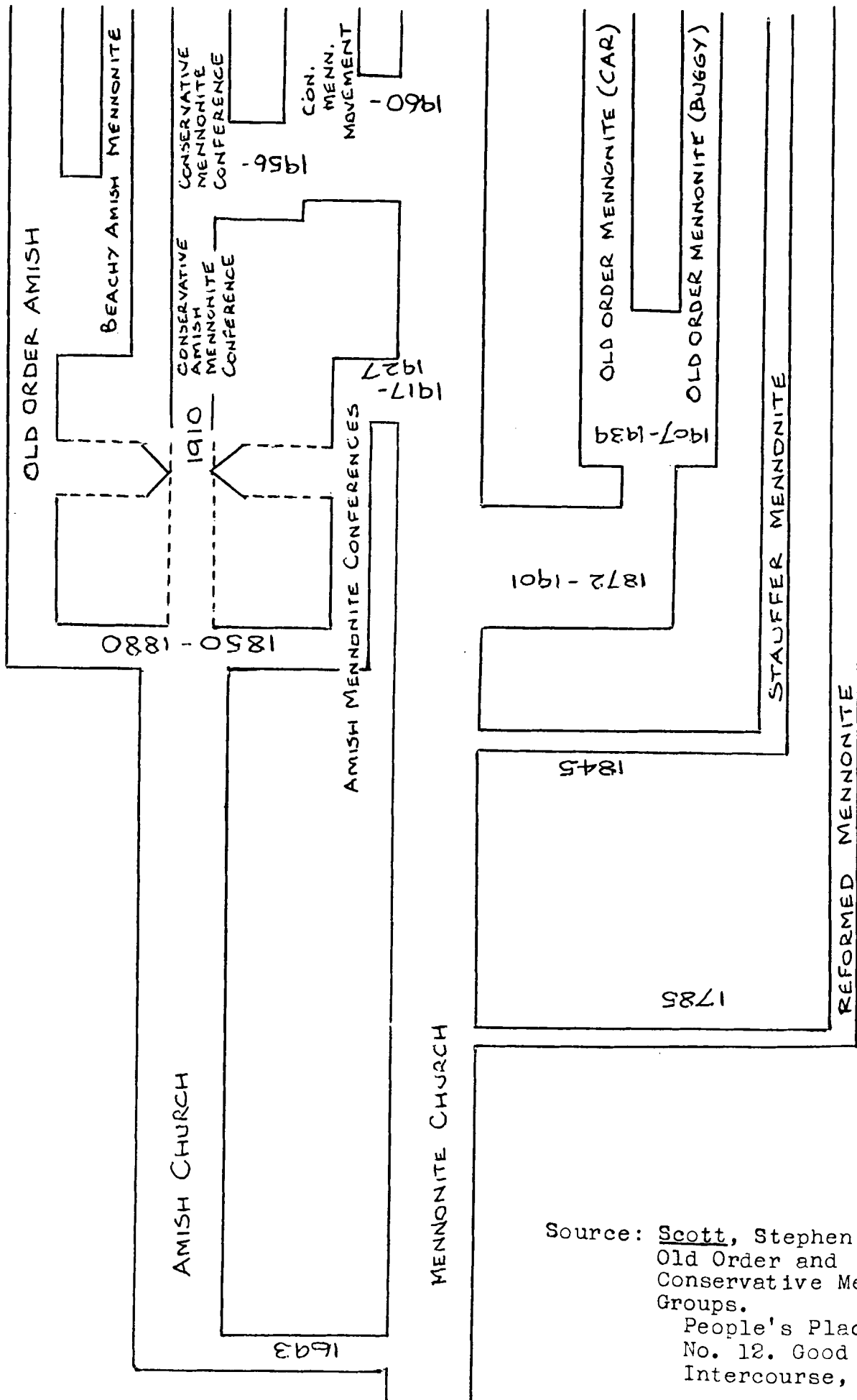


Division and Merger Among the Amish Mennonites and Old Order Amish 1880 - 1950



Diagrams adapted from Nolt, Steven M (1992) 'A History of the Amish'
Good Books, Intercourse, P
pp. 140, 163

Simplified analysis of divisions of the Amish and Mennonites



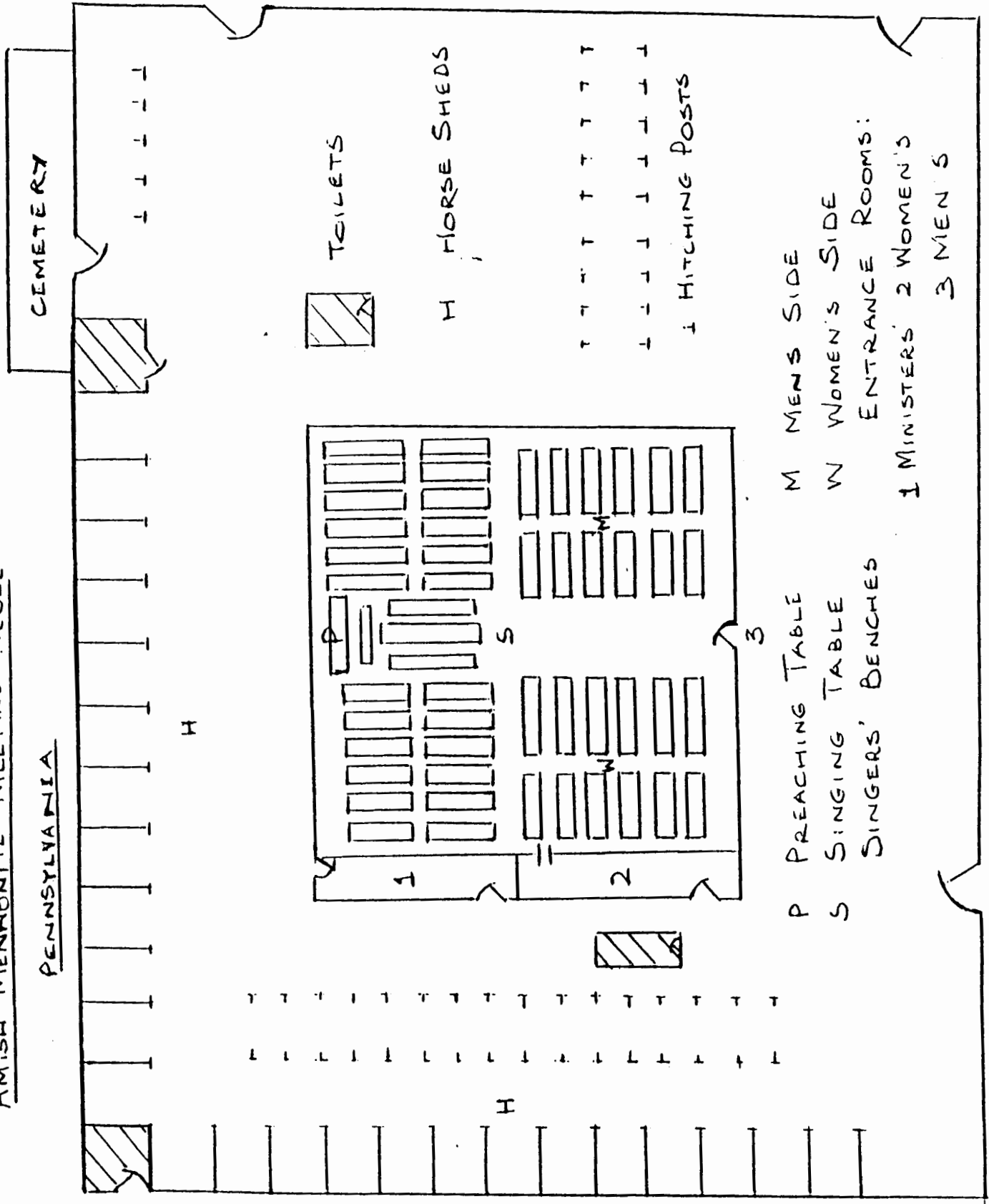
Source: Scott, Stephen (1996)
 Old Order and
 Conservative Mennonite
 Groups.
 People's Place Book
 No. 12. Good Books,
 Intercourse, PA

APPENDIX E

Adapted from Jentsch, Theodore Werner 'Mennonite Americans'
Ph.D. Thesis (1973) Univ. of South Africa
p. 160

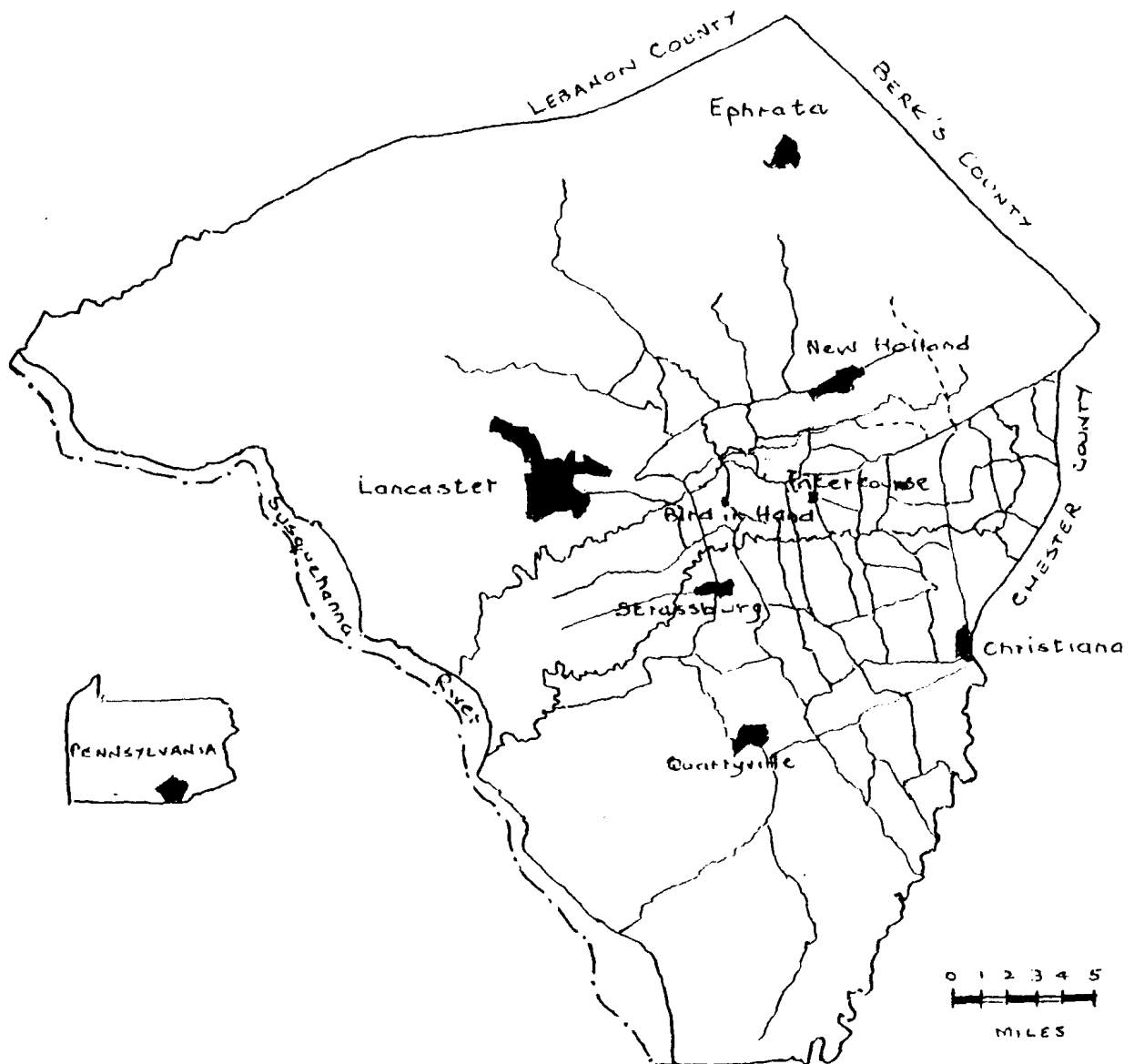
AMISH MENNONITE MEETING HOUSE

PENNSYLVANIA



APPENDIX F

Amish church districts in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania
as of 1980



Adapted from Hostetler, John A (1993) 'Amish Society'
The John Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore

APPENDIX G

AMISH SETTLEMENTS IN PENNSYLVANIA 1992

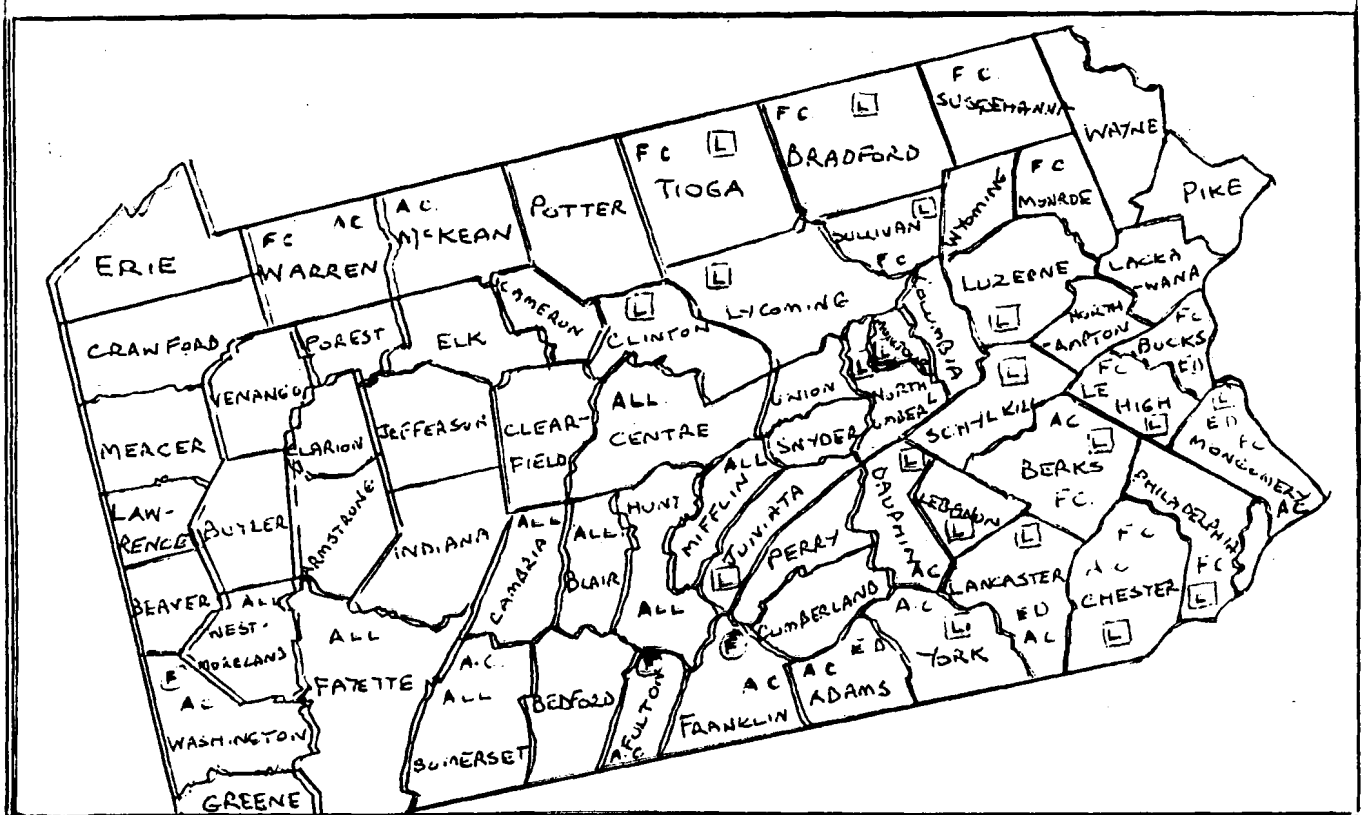
Settlement	Year founded	Congregations
Lancaster-Chester Counties	ca. 1760	103
Meyersdale/Springs (Somerset County)	ca. 1772	4
Belleville/Reedsville (Mifflin County)	1791	17
New Wilmington (Lawrence County)	1847	12
Enon Valley (Lawrence County)	1924	1
Atlantic (Crawford County)	1924	3
Myerstown (Lebanon County)	1941	3
Mercer (Mercer County)	1942	3
Mifflintown (Juniata County)	1950	4
Aaronsburg (Centre County)	1950	2
Winfield (Union County)	1959	1
Smicksburg (Indiana County)	1962	11
Gettysburg (Adams County)	1964	1
McClure (Snyder County)	1965	1
Spartansburg (Crawford County)	1966	8
LeRaysville (Bradford County)	1966	1
Rebersburg (Centre County)	1967	3
Dry Run (Franklin County) Path Valley	1968	3
Lewisburg (Union County)	1968	1
Conneautville (Crawford County)	1969	1
Sugargrove (Warren County)	1969	3
Newburg (Franklin County)	1971	3
Guys Mills (Crawford County)	1972	3
Troutville (Clearfield County)	1972	3
Townville (Crawford County)	1972	1
Loganton (Clinton County)	1972	2
Tionesta/Fryburg (Forest County)	1972	1
Howard (Centre County) Nittany Valley	1973	2
Danville (Montour County)	1974	2
Turbotville (Montour County)	1974	1
Delta (York County)	1975	1
Loysville (Perry County)	1975	1
Montgomery (Lycoming County)	1976	1
Gratz (Dauphin County) Lykens Valley	1978	3
Pocahontas (Somerset County)	1980	1
Union City/Cambridge Springs (Erie County)	1983	1

Settlement	Year founded	Congregations
Clintonville (Venango County)	1983	2
Jersey Shore (Lycoming County)		
Nippenose Valley	1985	1
Linesville (Crawford County)	1985	1
Saegertown (Crawford County)	1988	1
Tyrone (Blair County)	1988	1
Fredonia (Mercer County)	1990	1
Shanksville (Somerset County)	1992	1
Ulysses (Potter County)	1992	1

Ref: Luthy, David 'Amish Migration Patterns: 1972 - 1992' in
Kraybill, Donald B and Olshan, Marc A 'The
Amish Struggle with Modernity' (1994)
Univ. Press of New England, Hanover
pp. 257 - 258

APPENDIX H i. & ii.

Mennonite Conferences in Pennsylvania



Index:

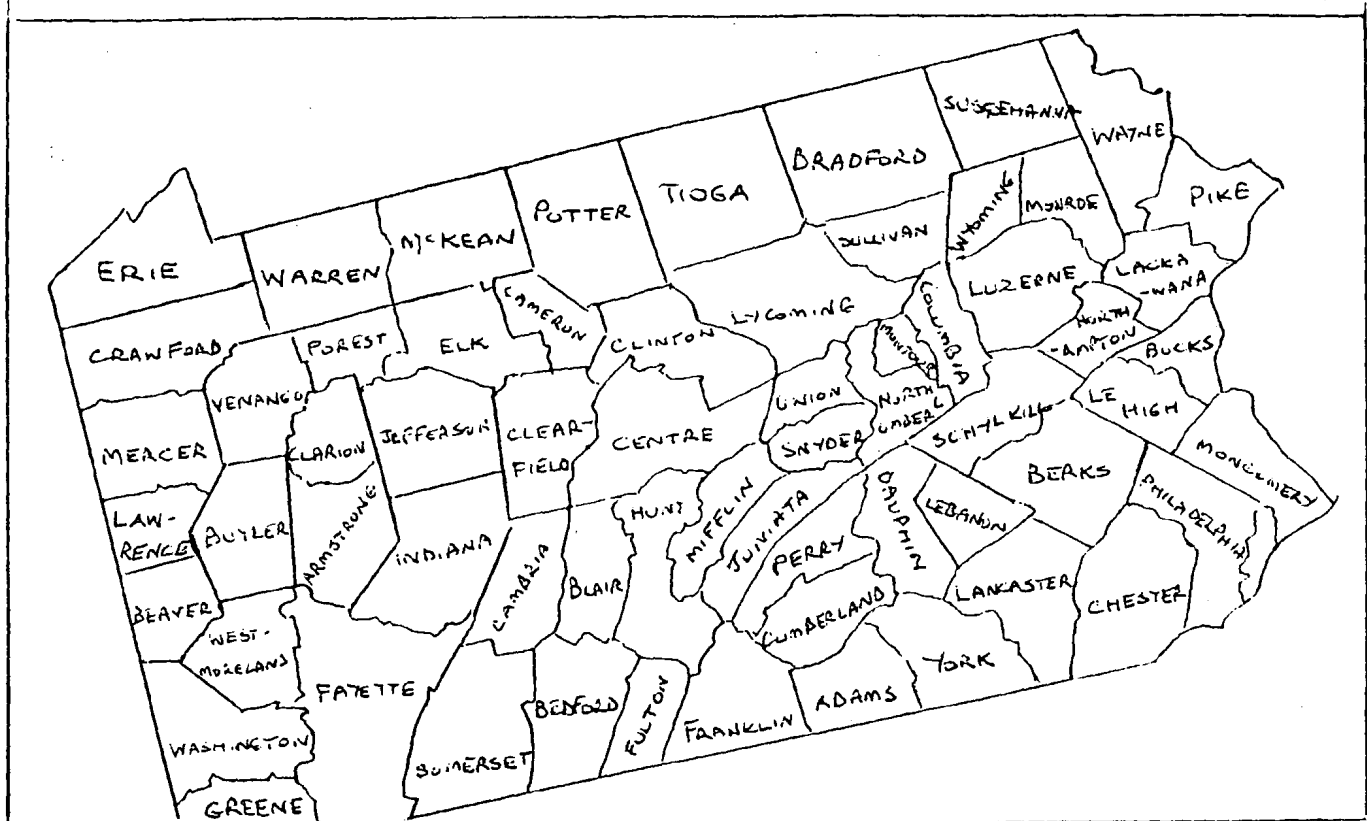
	Area	Numbers	Congregations
ALL	= Allegheny Conference	3685	36 (7)
A.C.	= Atlantic Coast Conference	6043	52 (13)
E.D.	= Eastern District Conference	4615	27 (5)
F.C.	= Franconia Conference	7088	52 (7)
F	= Franklin Conference	1568	18 (4)
L	= Lancaster Conference	19005	220 (54)
		<u>41993</u>	<u>405</u>

Numbers in brackets indicate Congregations outside the State of Pennsylvania but linked to the Conferences

Source: Mennonite Directory 2000 Volume 2 (Herald Press, Scottdale, PA)

APPENDIX H i. & ii.

Mennonite Conferences in Pennsylvania



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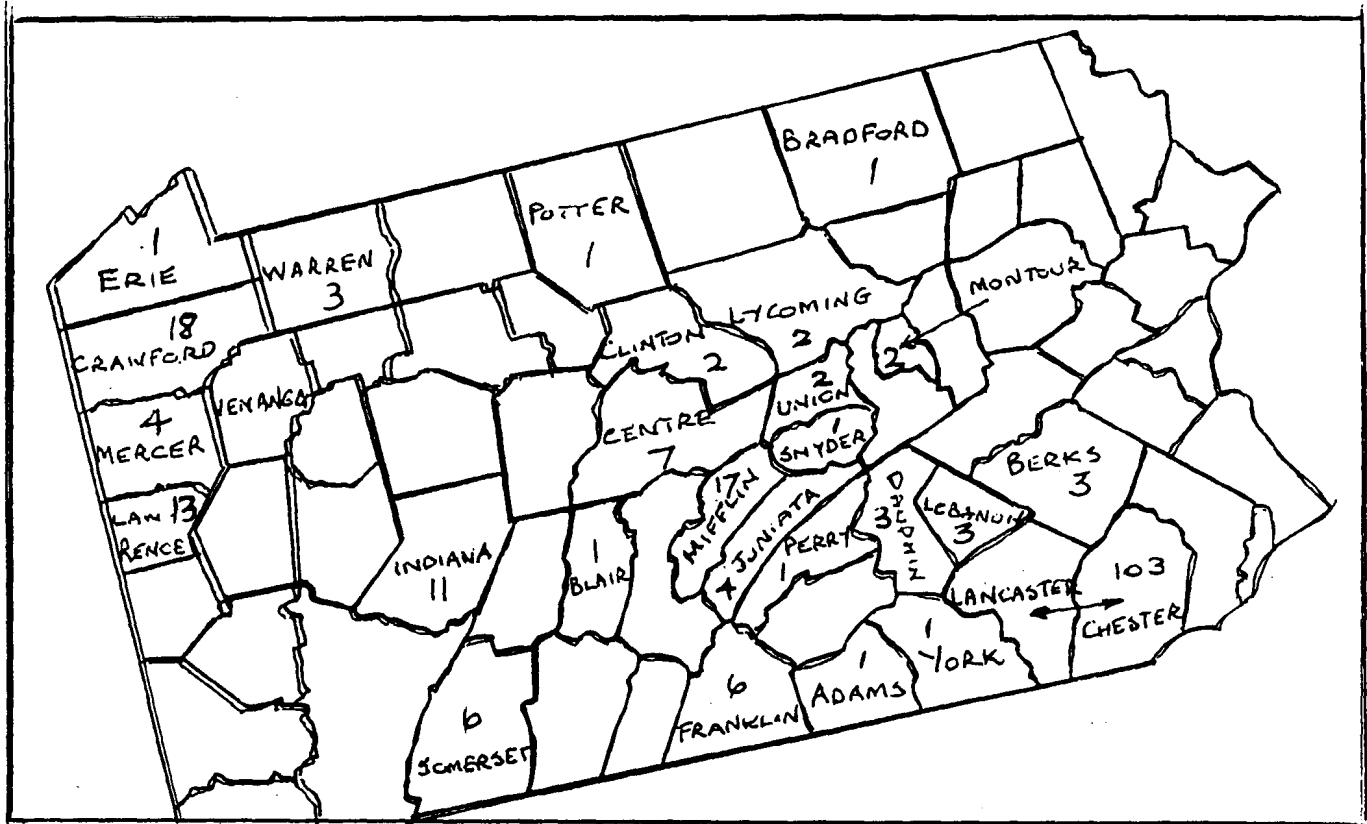
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Source: Mennonite Directory 2000 Volume 2 (Herald Press, Scottdale, PA

APPENDIX G

Amish Settlements in Pennsylvania 1992



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Amish Settlements in Pennsylvania 1992

