

Historically, Mennonite Brethren have been known for their commitment to peace-making. We are committed to being peace-makers in all areas of life, beginning at home and extending into all relationships, including those considered enemies. Because peace often has a strong relationship to social and economic justice issues, local Mennonite Brethren churches cooperate in support of denominational and other agencies that support relief and development around the world.

Faith Shown In Purpose And Mission

We strive to fulfill Jesus Christ's mission to proclaim the kingdom of God to all peoples in the world, through leading others into a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We join together in supporting MBMS International, whose workers have been involved in church planting, leadership training, service ministries and development programs in more than 70 countries. U.S. Mennonite Brethren have formed churches among many immigrant groups, so that today we worship in many languages on any given Sunday.

We join in the ministry of the MB Foundation, which serves the constituency in facilitating responsible stewardship. Mennonite Brethren are involved in leadership development, training the next generation of leaders. North American Mennonite Brethren currently work

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together to provide theological training through our seminary with campuses in California, British Colum-

bia and Manitoba. U.S. Mennonite Brethren own and operate Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kan., and Fresno Pacific University in Fresno, Calif.

An Open Story

We are people on a journey. Dependent on God's grace, we strive to be ever more faithful to God's Word and committed to God's purposes. A Mennonite Brethren church in your community invites you to share in our continuing story.

Core Convictions

We are a believer's church: To deal with our human sinfulness, we teach conversion to new life through faith in Jesus Christ and practice baptism as a public sign of personal commitment to Jesus as Savior and Lord.

We are Bible-centered: We accept the Bible as the inspired and authoritative Word of God, seeking to obey its teaching, as illumined by the Holy Spirit and interpreted in the Christian community.

We emphasize discipleship: We seek to live as authentic followers of Jesus in our daily lives, orienting our lives around Jesus' teaching and model.

We value Christian fellowship: We believe the church is a biblical and mutually loyal community that expresses itself in worship, fellowship, accountability and witness.

We are mission-minded: We share our faith by telling others about the good news of Jesus and serving others in our neighborhoods and around the world, in obedience to Jesus' Great Commandment and to the Great Commission.

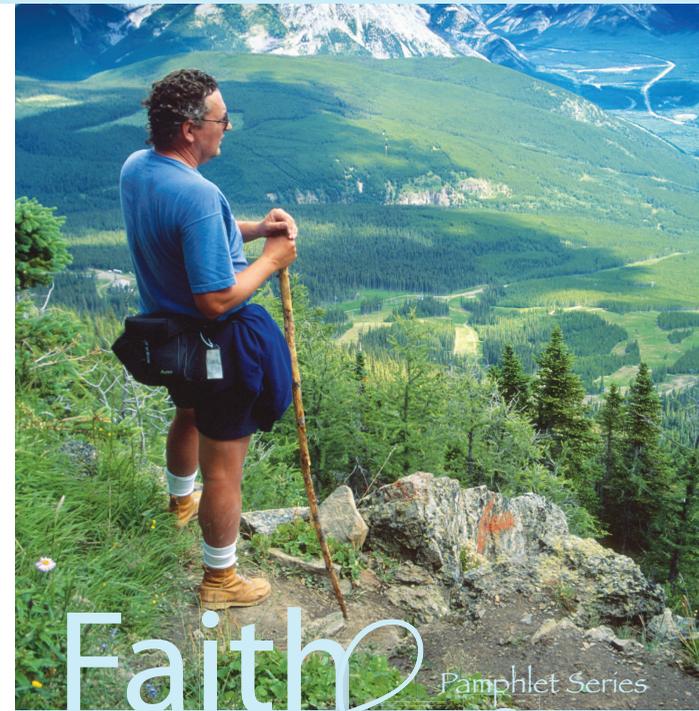
We seek peace: We believe the Bible invites us to be at peace with God and with others, even our enemies.

We cultivate healthy relationships: We are committed to choices that produce wholeness, healing, joy and peace in all relationships.

A full copy of our Confession of Faith is available at the U.S. Conference Web site
www.usmb.org

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Faith
Life
Pamphlet Series

Who Are
The Mennonite Brethren



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U.S. Conference of
Mennonite Brethren Churches

Mennonite Brethren are a people of faith, which is expressed in history, ethics and purpose. We welcome you to join in our continuing journey of faithful living.

People Of Faith

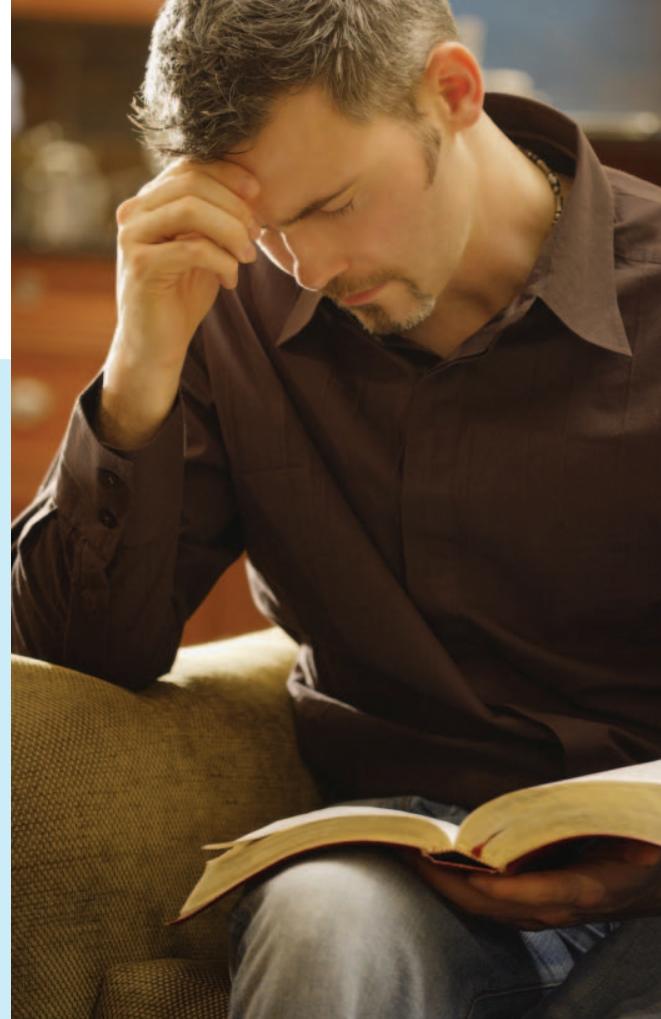
The core of our identity as Mennonite Brethren is belief in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We believe in the one true God, the source of all life, who reigns over all things as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and who lovingly cares for all creation.

People through all history have turned away from God, breaking the relationship God intended with us. In order to bring us back into a right relationship with God, God took on human nature in Jesus Christ, who revealed the fullness of God through his obedient and sinless life.

Through word and deed Jesus proclaimed the reign of God, bringing good news to the poor, release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind. Jesus Christ triumphed over sin through his death and resurrection and was exalted as Lord of creation and the church.

His death and resurrection make it possible for us to be cleansed of sin, made whole as persons and brought back into right relationship with God. He invites all to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, offering peace with God and calling all to follow him in the way of humble and self-sacrificial living.

We believe that as Christians our role is to live in a way that expresses God's presence



and direction in our lives. We do this through personal obedience, joining together as a church and proclaiming what we know of God to all who need to hear. We find our guidance in the revealed Word of God in the Bible and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God in our lives. Mennonite Brethren place a high value and authority in the Bible as the Word of God, trying with all our strength and with the help of the Holy Spirit and fellow believers to conform all aspects of our lives to our understanding of biblical truths.

Faith Shown In History

During the 16th century Reformation a number of Christians became convinced through diligent study of the Bible that an authentic decision to follow Jesus Christ could only be made by people mature enough to have an awareness of sin in their own lives. They understood the Bible as describing baptism as a public sign of this choice and commitment and thus argued against the common practice of baptizing infants. Because of this, they were called “Anabaptists,” meaning “re-baptizers.”

Their commitment to believers baptism, as well as their insistence that their primary allegiance was to the kingdom of God rather than to any governmental authority or church hierarchy, brought great persecution, often leading to death. They found the greatest acceptance and safety in Holland, where Menno Simons became their pastoral leader. It is from Menno Simons that the name Mennonites was used to describe this emerging group.

Promise of religious freedom caused many early Mennonites to flee first to Prussia (present-day Poland) and later to Russia. Years later, in 1860, spiritual renewal among these Mennonites resulted in groups of believers meeting together for fellowship and Bible study. A close spiritual kinship resulted and the group became known as “brethren” and eventually as “Mennonite Brethren.”

From its small beginning in Europe, the Mennonite Brethren Church has grown to include around 300,000 believers around the globe. Mennonite Brethren living in the United

States have played a key role in the growth of a global family of Mennonite Brethren churches. Today we work in partnership with Mennonite Brethren in 20 other countries to impact our world for Jesus Christ.

Faith Shown In Ethical Living

We believe that the choice to follow Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord will be expressed by a changed life. All our thoughts and actions should reflect the lordship of Jesus Christ. This involves turning...

- from ignorance of God to a personal relationship with God.
- from bondage of sin and past mistakes to freedom, forgiveness and healing.
- from individualism to interdependence with others in the local church.
- from lifestyle choices that harm us, others and the earth to choices that nurture wholeness, healing, joy and peace.
- from hating enemies and ignoring neighbors to showing love and justice to all.
- from loving possessions to sharing with all in need.
- from aimless existence to a mission of representing and proclaiming God's kingdom.