

Anabaptism at 500 Discussion:

(in other words, a work in progress)

What does it mean for us to be Anabaptist? How do we aspire to live (and what should we put on our website)?

The word, Anabaptism; does this old word still mean something today? This question has prompted a conversation at Langley Mennonite Fellowship, a conversation which is nowhere near completed.

In the 16th Century, radical reformers who were being baptised as adults were being labeled by the put-down, "Anabaptist" meaning someone who was re-baptised. *Anabaptist* was a label that could get you imprisoned or killed in Europe at the time. 500 years later, the word, *Anabaptist*, still carries a stigma in some parts of the world but here, in Langley, we want to know how the word *Anabaptist* still holds meaning.

We came up with 7 summary statements about what Anabaptism means to us at LMF. These statements are our best version of our aspirations to date. We hope to keep the conversation going and welcome anyone to converse with these statements.



Jesus: the Centre of our faith, community and life.

We pray that our complete and undivided devotion is to Jesus who, in real flesh, wholly embodied God's love for all people and for all of creation in every of its diverse and particular incarnations. Jesus is in all things and was before all things. Jesus is our unity, our friend, our example. Jesus teaches the character and mystery of God.



The Reign of God

We eagerly anticipate the joy and mystery of God's reign not with fear, dread, judgement, or anxiety, but we are motivated to seek and live out the eternal ways of Jesus' peace and love in this world now, day to day, moment by moment. We pray for the immediacy of Christ coming to us and into the world in very real ways.



Peace

Rooted in the love of Christ, we are people of peace, seeking a character of peace evident in a practice of peace in our homes, church, and community. Peace, rooted in love, guides us in our lives, informing our efforts for justice which we also call righteousness. Peace is God's character and desire. Peace is a universal and eternal longing.



Service: Loving our neighbour.

Jesus came to earth as a servant, and explicitly told his followers to be servants too. As a servant, Jesus went to the extremities of society, serving those who needed healing, liberation, acceptance and love. We are tasked with service as followers of Jesus.



The Church: A Caring Community

Jesus initiated a caring community and extended belonging to the utmost extremity of society. As a church, we hope to welcome all in a spirit of love, celebrating a wholeness of flourishing and frailty.

Christ is the head of the church and the church is his body.



Priesthood of All Believers

We strive to honour everyone's voice and we encourage everyone to be active and engaged in the life, operations, worship, service and decisions of the church. There is no privileged access to God who we reach out to together in humble faith.



Diversity in Unity.

We are unified in our desire to be together. We form our community in faith, based on both our agreements and our differences, learning from one another and welcoming change with every new and genuine encounter. We are rooted in the Anabaptist faith tradition which has longstanding and shared convictions and many life-giving expressions.