

Every Effort

Anabaptism as a Reconciling Movement

Unity Past

Anabaptist Origins and Challenges

1. When have you experienced the tension between your personal conscience and yielding to the community? How did you address it?
2. What relationship do you recognize between shunning and “benevolent admonishment”? Can the Ban be understood as something other than “legalistically coercive”? Why or why not?
3. What fractures or schisms in the past have had the most influence on your own experience of Christian faith?
4. How do we evaluate about some of the issues that drove communities apart in the past (eg. Keeping minutes in meetings, written constitutions, color of women’s stockings, wedding bands, adoption or rejection of technology, etc.)? How might our descendants think about the issues we divide over today?

Unity Present

Social and Cultural Forces of Estrangement

5. Which of the larger cultural forces (social isolation, self-sorting, scarcity, and the sacred secular) do you see playing a role in your own congregation’s unity or disunity?
6. What additional cultural forces would you identify as shaping your congregation’s unity or disunity today?
7. What resources do we have, as Anabaptist Christians, to deepen our unity in the face of intolerant partisanship?

Unity Future

Scriptural Commitments and Communal Practices

8. How does your congregation address difficult issues or disagreements?
9. How often do your worship services or preaching focus on unity, reconciliation, bridge-building, etc.?
10. Does your congregation view internal diversity as a strength, weakness, or something else? Why?
11. Who do you think would be the least comfortable in your current congregation? The most comfortable? Why?