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AMERICAN REVIVAL

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AMERICAN REVIVAL:

From the Jesus Club to the Beloved Community

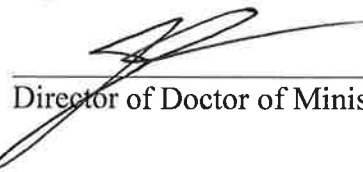
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American Revival: From the Jesus Club to the Beloved Community

A Professional Project Submitted to

The Faculty of Perkins School of Theology

In

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By

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INTRODUCTION

In the Fall of 1986, I was in my late 20s and a struggling business person. I was working for a company in Houston, Texas, that provided relocation services to multi-national companies who moved their employees or their offices to various parts of the world, the United States, or within Houston. I had been out of college since 1980 and worked primarily as a sales person, hoping to one day be promoted to a management position. My wife and I had two young children and lived the life of a typical American family. We were members of the largest United Methodist Church not only in Texas but in the entire United States at that time. I had recently been asked to serve in a leadership position by our pastor for the coming year. Much of my new business came from other sales people who referred me to their clients and I in turn would do the same for them. One such person invited me to the River Oaks Rotary Club of which he was a member. To put this in context is to know that River Oaks was the part of Houston where much of the “old money” resided. I was not familiar with Rotary; however, I could imagine the doors that this particular organization might open for me.

I distinctly remember my first visit to the club. When I parked my car, I encountered several older men driving enormous 20-year-old cars who parked and then walked into the club meeting. Many of them wore very outdated and, what I would consider, shabby suits, I arrived inside the meeting and immediately was welcomed by the club members. I began meeting what was literally a “who’s who” of many of the business magnates of Houston in those days. I met my friend and was introduced to many of the members. I ultimately was invited to join and,

soon, this Rotary Club taught me what it means to be an ethical, smart-working, socially-conscious business person.

I later learned that the gentlemen I first encountered in the parking lot were multi-millionaires who spent their money on philanthropic endeavors instead of clothes and cars. When they passed away, there were full-page or half-page obituaries written about them detailing their business career and what they had done for the City of Houston. However, I came to learn what it meant for me, the grandson of sharecroppers from East Texas and immigrants from Sweden, that these men (and later women) cared for me. They truly made me successful, not just monetarily, they instilled in me a unique sense of community that I had only read about in the Gospels. It was not until working on this project that this sense of community had a name. It was the Greek name given to the earliest Christ followers by the Roman historian Pliny. He referred to this community as a *Hetairia*. Pliny's observation of this community was that it was a club rather than a religion. This particular Rotary Club in Houston Texas, was an excellent example of a modern-day *hetairia*.¹

In developing this project, I believe I have provided some original contributions to the way we understand the church as an institution, as an organization, and as the Beloved Community it has strived to be for over two millennia. I will acknowledge there has been a great amount of scholarship provided in each of these three aspects of the church. Biblical scholars have addressed the original intentions of Christ wanting to differentiate his followers from the legalistic and institutionalized religious system that had guided the people of God before and

¹Pliny the Younger, *Letters* X.96.7, which uses the word *hetaerias*, transliterating the Greek term *hetairiai*. A standard English translation is that of P. G. Walsh: Pliny the Younger, *Pliny the Younger: Complete Letters*, tr. and ed. by P. G. Walsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 278-279, which translates *heteriai* as "secret brotherhoods." The Latin original is given in R. A. B. Mynors, ed., *C. Plini Caecili: Epistularum Libri Decem* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 339. See also Robert L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 34.

during the time of his ministry. In her essay entitled *The Politics of Beloved Community*, the Reverend Amy Allen describes the differences as follows:

Indeed, in a world in which Christianity too often finds itself beset against itself in wars over scriptural authority, denominationalism, separation of church and state, and the like, the advice of the Johannine Jesus continues to be excellent advice – setting aside all our differences, as disciples of Jesus, we are called to *love one another*. In today’s culture, such a command can be read as a cry for ecumenism. But, at the same time, in a world in which Christianity finds itself entrenched in the culture rather than beset by it (even in the face of the growing secularism in Western nations), to stop here, looking only inward at ourselves and our churches, would be to miss the point.²

I likewise began my narrative of this understanding of what Christ instilled in his closest followers and followed the strand throughout the early centuries, including the Monastic period just prior to the advent of the institutional church. I also believe I demonstrate that, as much as has been written about the group known as the Desert Fathers, the evangelization of the Copts during this same period is often overlooked by history and is, in fact, a great example of the Beloved Community that avoided politicization by the Greeks or the Romans. When the Desert Fathers and their followers offered the gospel message in a language they could understand, the Copts became a strong community of believers who are still a committed community of faithful followers to this day. Much has been written about the Mendicant orders, especially Augustine and Francis. I found that in, setting the stage for what was later to occur in the United States, it was important to consider the life and ministry of Francis. Like Christ, Francis lived a relatively short life, yet contributed so much to what is still being realized through the order he originated at a time the institutional church was both at odds with the general *hetairia* of that time and was definitely an obstacle for the realization of anything looking like the Beloved Community.

According to a biography of Francis written by Barbara Becwith of the *St. Anthony Messenger*,

² Amy Allen, *The Politics of Beloved Community*, <https://politicaltheology.com/the-politics-of-beloved-community-read-through-acts-11-18-and-john-1331-35/> (accessed March 13, 2021).

“In 1209, he [Francis] convinced Pope Innocent III to approve [his Rule of life for the Franciscan order] verbally although due to personal and political reasons, Francis’ revised order received papal approval in 1223.”³

To set the stage for the church’s coming to North America, I use the dichotomy between the Anglicans and Puritans in Great Britain. There is also much scholarship here. However, the area of focus for me to find the *hetairia* within these two institutional entities and see what had prohibited them from discovering the Beloved Community. In fact, there were factions within both camps that seemed to harken back to the first century church that emphatically attempted to be the Beloved Community. I believe I uniquely portioned out the *hetairia* in both the Puritans and Anglicans, which turned out to be the very thing that led particular communities such as the Pilgrims and the Methodists to find a new land that allowed them a sense of freedom from the institutional church. The Puritans had an auspicious beginning to their colonization and their version of the Beloved Community. Professor Daniel BaracsKay notes,

The fact that the Puritans had left England to escape religious persecution did not mean that they believed in religious tolerance. Their society was a theocracy that governed every aspect of their lives. Freedom of religion and freedom of speech or of the press were as foreign to the Puritans as to the Church of England. When other colonists arrived with differing beliefs, they were driven out by the Puritans.⁴

So, instead of a Beloved Community as Christ had taught, there was now yet another example of a *hetairia* becoming an institutional church and, as with the case of the Puritans, a theocracy. In my opinion, one of the amazing discoveries during the course of this project was how these original Christian settlers and colonists impacted the attempts made over three

³ Barbara Beckwith, *Francis of Assisi Everybody’s Favorite Saint*. The Priest, 2012,22.

⁴ Daniel BaracsKay, *Puritans*. <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/1372/puritans> (accessed March 13, 2021, 2021).

centuries later that continue to challenge the church and the mindset of the *hetairia* that became the church in America.

The Methodist/Wesleyan movement was almost exactly opposite of that of the Puritans. If the Puritan church was intentional in how it was both established and multiplied, the Methodist/Wesleyan *hetairia* of the Anglican Church was spontaneous according to authors Russell Richey, Kenneth Rowe, and Jean Schmidt,

Similar spontaneous initiatives established small communities that identified themselves with the Wesleyan movement. To term them spontaneous is to locate them alongside other evangelical impulses within the English-speaking orbit and with the Great Awakening generally. It is also to indicate that these beginnings occurred through what Dee Andrews calls ‘Wesleyan migration to a greater middle Atlantic’⁵

rather than through Wesley’s design or appointment. And it is to recognize these as lay endeavors, created out of the religious experience of Methodism’s folk and out of their need for identity and community-forming resources of Pietism.⁶ The interesting dichotomy I will be showing during the course of this project is that these two examples of *hetairia* – the same thing observed by the Roman historian Pliny in the 2nd Century – existed until it became its own institutional entity, which then birthed even more *hetairiai* throughout the latter part of the 18th century and into the entire 19th century in the United States.

There is another unique contribution I add to this project that seems to be somewhat overlooked when we look at the church in this country as either groups of *hetairia* or as *hetairiai* taken as one large conglomeration of churches and/or denominations. There were two additional and important *hetairiai* in the United States that I believe set the tone for how people experienced

⁵ Dee E. Andrews, *The Methodist and Revolutionary America, 1760-1800: The Shaping of an Evangelical Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 31.

⁶ Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, Jean Miller Schmidt, *The Methodist Experience in America: A History Volume I* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010), 9.

hetairia in greater society. The first was the Free Masons. Just like the Puritans and the Methodist/Wesleyans, the Free Masons originated in England. The difficulty of researching and exegiting this organization was and is the secrecy of the organization and finding verifiable data that links the details of the functionality of how the organization functions as a *hetairia*. The Charges of a Free Mason contained in the Constitution of Free Masons 1734, states in the chapter titled “Concerning God and Religion,” states,

A Mason is *oblig'd* by his Tenure, to obey the moral Law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist, nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient Times Masons were *charg'd* in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is, to be good Men and true, or Men of *Honour* and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be *distinguish'd*; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must else have *remain'd* at a perpetual Distance.⁷

This is a passage from the constitution used by the Free Masons of Great Brittan, as it was adopted in the English colonies that eventual became the United States. In this passage it is clear to see a connection to scripture and even a type of Beloved Community. But, again, it was not the Beloved Community Jesus was talking about with his closest followers, nor was it close to what we find in various *hetairiai* that had existed up to that time. There are many stories of the Free Masons taken from scripture where the person mentioned was actually a Free Mason and called by God to serve in some capacity. One such example in the Free Mason Constitution 1784 is Zerubbabel, who was named in the book of Ezra as the one chosen to lead many of the Hebrew people back to Israel. In the Free Mason Constitution, the story is told as follows:

[I]n the 6th Year of DARIUS, the Persian Monarch, when it was dedicated with Joy, and many great Sacrifices, by ZERUBBABEL the Prince and General

⁷ Free Mason Constitution of 1734, <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://en.wikipedia.org/&httpsredir=1&article=1028&context=libraryscience> (accessed March 13, 2021).

Master-Mason of the Jews, about 20 Years after the Decree of the Grand Cyrus. And *tho'* this Temple of ZERUBBABEL came far short of Solomon's Temple, was not so richly *adorn'd* with Gold and Diamonds, and all manner of precious Stones, nor had the *Shechina* and the holy *Relicks* of Moses in it, & yet being *rais'd* exactly upon Solomon's Foundation, and according to his Model, it was still the most regular, symmetrical, and glorious Edifice in the whole World, as the Enemies of the Jews have often *testify'd* and *acknowledg'd*.⁸

I will show that although the Free Masons appeared to be well intentioned in being a *hetairia*, they struggled with becoming institutionalized and their success ended up becoming the detriment of the organization, which became a shell of its former self.

In addition, I believe I have uniquely been able to demonstrate how Rotary International has been an example of a modern day *hetairia*. I will offer a historical perspective for how Rotary International began as an organization or a club to allow like-minded business people to achieve a level of success within their vocational endeavors as well as offering an outlet to provide multiple opportunities for philanthropic programs that benefits both the communities where each individual club or *hetairia* exists, and also provides for individuals within those communities. I have first-hand experience of how Rotary International functioned due to my membership in the River Oaks Rotary Club. In 1985 and just prior to my involvement, Rotary International began a campaign to eradicate the disease of polio from the world. Literally every club or *hetairia* around the world was involved and I now find that, all these years later, they are very close to accomplishing that goal.

In 1985 Rotary launched its Polio Plus initiative with an initial pledge of US\$120m. At that time polio was still endemic in countries all over the world. There were an estimated 350,000 cases of polio per annum, occurring in 125 countries of every hemisphere of the globe including those close to home such as France and Spain. Members of Rotary International in these endemic countries have worked tirelessly to aid and support their governments in their own

⁸ Ibid.

immunization programs as well as ensuring all areas, even if remote, were reached.

Polio Plus was the first organization to provide internationally coordinated private sector support to a public health initiative and has now also become the largest. In 1988, inspired by Polio Plus, the World Health Organization passed a resolution to eradicate polio, paving the way for the formation of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

The project went from strength to strength, with Rotarians and other volunteers immunizing millions of children all over the world. During a single week in 1995 over 165 million children under 5 years old were immunized in India and China, and in 1997 134 million Indian children in a were immunized in a single day.

By 2005 only four countries remained endemic -- Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India -- it seems as though the end is in sight but, as with many challenges, the final mile is often the hardest and this is proving to be the case with polio eradication.⁹

What I found interesting at that time (the late 1980s and early 1990s) was the dichotomy between my membership in this service club or *hetairia*, where I become a leader and was intimately involved in the missional aspects of both its local and international identities, including Polio Plus. At the same time, I was very involved in the leadership of my church, First United Methodist, Houston. My Rotary involvement was much closer to the concept of a *hetairia* that the church was in being the Beloved Community. In my involvement/leadership in the church I found that, in the past, it had been a very effective *hetairia* in the community. It had created and developed Methodist Hospital. It had planted churches throughout the greater Houston area and had developed social agencies that had become large and successful organizations. However, now this particular church had become an institution that was surviving through its television ministry and wealthy members to keep the name and the legacy alive. It appeared to have lost its way, with no plans to become the Beloved Community.

⁹ Lynne Gray, *Eradicating polio with Rotary International*. [Practice Nurse](#). 3/25/2011, Vol. 41 Issue 5, p 32-34.

This is the crossroads where I found myself. The project could have been wrapped up here with a comparison of the institutional church with a *hetairia*. However, my passion in developing this project is bringing in the hope of the Beloved Community. So many people in ministry have stood at the crossroads where I find myself – beginning with Jonathan Edwards during the formative years of this country, to Josiah Royce in the late 19th century, who ultimately coined the phrase “beloved community,” to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who has inspired me my entire adult life. This is the catalyst for my thesis that comprises this project. I will demonstrate how Dr. King showed that the Beloved Community is not something theoretical, it is not just hypothetical, not only a byproduct of a civil rights movement. The Beloved Community is something to be accomplished, to be achieved, and to live in this life on earth. In all of this I will demonstrate as stated in my thesis:

I am studying the history of the church in the United States and the advent of service clubs and organizations. I am studying this subject in order to discover how the mission of the church has been influenced over the years by service organizations such as the Free Masons and Rotary International. I hope to bring to light the church’s original mission in the early days of this country. I will show how, in this country, the early church’s intention was to become more of a movement rather than an organization, and to promote a unique way of life in conjunction with scripture and common objectives such as those found in the Declaration of Independence: life liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. My intention is to use these findings to help my reader see how the church can reclaim that original mission. I believe the ultimate solution is to find our way as a nation to the Beloved Community.

In order to accomplish this goal, the church should focus on the area of hospitality within our communities with an emphasis and spirit of inclusiveness rather than the exclusiveness that sometimes is found in the model of a service club. Another focus should be to find ways to build trust in our communities that would combat the fear that many who do not feel part of the club have. We the church should also find ways to acknowledge our shortcomings in being the welcoming arms of Christ in our communities. In conjunction with this undertaking, we should find ways to avoid conflict by listening, negotiating, and accepting those who have lived on the outside of the standards and procedures of the church and find ways to do justice together. This undertaking is not to welcome those who previously were not a part of the “club”; it is to create a new entity where everyone is welcome.

CHAPTER ONE: HETAIRIA

We share our mutual woes,
our mutual burdens bear,
and often for each other flows
the sympathizing tear.

John Fawcett, “Blest Be the Tie that Binds” 1782¹⁰

Introduction

The first century church had a keen sense of understanding of what being the *Beloved Community* entailed. We find ourselves just a little more than two thousand years later realizing that the concept of the Beloved Community and the actuality of what that concept really means has, in many respects, been lost. Once we get past the various biblical accounts of how the church struggled even under the leadership of first-generation Apostles and move past these accounts to see what secular historians observed and wrote about the church in the first several centuries of its existence, we find that it was seen as more of a club (specifically using the Greek word *hetairia*) than a Beloved Community. As the church emerged out of the shadows of the Roman Empire and under the guidance of Emperor Constantine, we find many of what became known as the “desert fathers” finding their way to the deserts of Egypt, only to find that they were more interested in individual holiness than corporate holiness. At that time, the Coptic people with whom they were able to share the gospel message became the closest thing to the Beloved Community up to that point in history.

¹⁰ John Fawcett, *Blest Be the Tie That Binds*, The United Methodist Hymnal (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), 557.

The church ultimately became more institutionalized under the Holy Roman Empire and established a definitive hierarchy led by the Pope. The mendicant orders were introduced to emulate Christ's ministry to society and these believers strived to become the Beloved Community. Saint Francis established an order that accomplished much of this primary ministry to the poor, however, this again fell to an organizational structure that prohibited the group to rise above and become the Beloved Community it aspired to be. Following the reformation period, the Puritans found a way to purposely be a *hetairia* in sixteenth century England, using a plan of ministry in and around the family. Finally, the Wesleyan Methodists, with their own idea of what societies within the Anglican Church could accomplish, together with John Wesley and his Moravian influences, developed what appeared to be the beginning of a Beloved Community.

What follows in this chapter is an abbreviated history of these different groups and their attempts to become that Beloved Community.

Acts 2—The Early Church

In the Bible, we find the literal creation of the Christian Church presented in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. In the first part of the chapter, we witness the coming of the Holy Spirit as it descends upon the closest followers of Jesus gathered in Jerusalem. It is later in this same chapter – and as a direct result of this Pentecostal event – that a community is created. This community may be considered as the first *hetairia* as it became known by the outside world. It set the stage for something even more profound for generations to come. It is also here that we find the significance of belonging to this newly-founded movement.

In his well-documented commentary concerning the events of that Day of Pentecost, William Barclay noted that this community was defined by the specific qualities noted in verses

22-36. The first quality is learning. “It persisted in listening to the apostles as they taught.”¹¹ The second quality is togetherness, and, to that point, Barclay adds, “It had the happiness to command a band of brothers. ... The Church is a real Church only when it is a band of brothers.”¹² The third quality is praying, which Barclay describes as follows: “These early Christians knew that they could not meet life in their own strength. They always went into God before they went out to the world; they were able to meet the problems of life because they had first met him.”¹³ The next quality he mentions is reverence. Early English translations portrayed this quality as “fear,” however, Barclay says, “It was said of a great Greek that he moved through this world as if it were a temple. The Christian lives in reverence because he knows that the whole earth is the temple of the living God.”¹⁴ The final quality Barclay observed is sharing. Barclay adds, “these early Christians had an intense feeling of responsibility for each other...they felt a real Christian cannot bear to have too much when others have too little.”¹⁵ These qualities set a standard that became the bedrock of the Church. The community that resulted became the template for the Christian community as it began to spread throughout the world.

Later in the account of the Acts of the Apostles we find that, “in the synagogue there was a routine custom. Two collectors went around the market and the private houses every Friday morning and made a collection for the needy partly in money and partly in goods. Later in the day this was distributed.”¹⁶ This is what caused the polemic between the two primary groups of new believers in and around Jerusalem. Barclay explains:

¹¹ William Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles; Translated with an Introduction and Interpretation by William Barclay*. [2d ed.]. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955, 33.

¹² *Ibid*, 33.

¹³ *Ibid*, 33.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 34.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 34.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 34.

In the Christian Church there were two kinds of Jews. There were the Jerusalem and the Palestinian Jews who spoke Aramaic, the descendant of the ancestral language, and prided themselves that there was no foreign admixture in their lives. There were also Jews from foreign countries who had come up for Pentecost and made the great discovery of Christ. Many of these had been away from Palestine for generations; they had forgotten their Hebrew and spoke only Greek.¹⁷

It was recorded that there was a rift between the Aramaic-speaking Jews and the Greek-speaking Jews. Barclay adds, “This contempt affected the daily distribution of alms and there was a complaint that the widows of the Greek-speaking Jews were being--possibly deliberately--neglected.”¹⁸ The apostles realized that this fissure was beyond their abilities to remedy. It was then that they appointed the seven *diakonein* to serve both entities, thereby creating the initial institution that could administer and facilitate the needs of the church and these first two chapters of the organization.

Before we leave this part of the biblical story that is depicted so explicitly for us by Saint Luke, I believe it is important for us to have one more look at these two vignettes of the early church. I specifically want to focus on this first generation of people who had become followers of Christ and, subsequently, began a brand-new organization. In this process of transformation, there is an ominous foreshadowing of things to come, which should by no means be lost on us today. This was a catalyst for what the church was to become in the twenty-first century.

First, as we examine the story at the end of the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, the community begins sharing whatever wealth they had accumulated for the greater good of the community, and we quickly see how the oversight of this undertaking is facilitated by the Apostles. In her book *Wealth as Peril and Obligation*, Sondra Ely Wheeler observes, “The trouble with wealth is that, as a putative source of security, it usurps God’s role as a source and

¹⁷ Ibid, 59.

¹⁸ Ibid, 59.

measure and guarantor of life. Luke undertakes to establish as a horizon or possibility for human life a confidence of ultimate blessing so complete as to free people from compulsion about the material needs of their lives.”¹⁹ When we observe the methods and motives of this first-generation church in giving to the needs of the community, they appear to be completely altruistic. There were no tax exemptions or even religious requirements in this first wave of living life in community. Instead, the people developed a sense of comradeship and banded together in compliance with the primary teaching learned from their previous encounter with Christ both prior to and during the Day of Pentecost. However, an intriguing chain of events soon altered both the mindset and the sense of comradeship within that community. Confidence in the facilitation of the redistribution of wealth became problematic within this early organizational structure. Wheeler observes:

[T]his confidence partly rests on the trust in divine Providence for the provision of ordinary needs; in the language of reference groups established previously, to be a disciple is a matter of belonging to the group of those who know they have a Father in heaven, rather than to the ‘nations’ who must pursue the means of material sustenance. But partly it rests on a different account of security itself, an account that claims that even when they are supplied, material provisions remain continually subject to threat and contingency.²⁰

My hope is that we can develop a nuanced understanding of Wheeler’s deeper take of this dichotomy between the Aramaic-speaking chapter and the Greek-speaking chapter of the new organization. The realization is that there can be a true spiritual reawakening within each group. That reawakening can literally be the same experience – and probably was – as on the Day of Pentecost. However, as the organization moves forward, we see a dual-track progression that broadens the ability to undertake an ecumenical expression of this new faith tradition,

¹⁹ Sondra Ely Wheeler, *In Wealth as Peril and Obligation: The New Testament on Possessions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 71.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 71.

complicating the future need for unity and compliance as each faction and *hetairia* faces challenges and opportunities as it grows and develops within the context of the western world.

Hetairia—The Church and The Empire

Most of what we know about the Early Church is found in scripture and in the writings of those considered the “early church ‘fathers’ or the ancient Christian writers.” This paints for us a picture of a religious organization with a trajectory toward an institution that ultimately would change the world as it was known in the first three centuries. There are other sources of insight into what would come to be known as the Church in the second and third centuries. One such voice was Pliny who, in the early part of the second century, was appointed governor over Bithynia-Pontus, a prominent area of Asia Minor, and had a unique insight into a people known as Christians in that region. His understanding of these people was based on a long history of hearing stories of various regions within the Roman Empire where Christians had settled. Pliny’s need for discernment was key to the task that had been assigned to him from Trajan, the Roman emperor of that time. Pliny’s specific assignments were:

To look into the irregularities in the handling of funds (some cities were on the brink of bankruptcy); to examine the municipal administration of the cities; to put down any political or potentially political disorders; to deal with whatever criminal cases were pending; and to investigate the military situation in the provinces within that region.²¹

Notably, as Pliny was carrying out his administrative assignment in Bithynia-Pontus, he realized that there were major issues related to fire protection, fire safety, and firefighting. Part of the problem dealt with the availability of water. However, the larger issue was the assembly and training of personnel to accomplish these tasks. He decided to establish an organization in Nicomedia, one of the cities in the region. He reported this to Trajan, who replied with concern

²¹ Pliny the Younger, 10-11.

that “we must remember that it is societies like this which have been responsible for political disturbances in your providence, particularly in its cities. If people assemble for a common purpose, whatever name we give them and for whatever reason, they soon turn into a political club (*hetairia*).”²² It is fascinating that geopolitically, historically, and religiously, when groups of people who are called either professionally, altruistically, or spiritually gather together, there is often an element of politics, especially when they function as a club. Author Robert Wilken observes that “the term used in this letter from Trajan for ‘club,’ *hetairia*, is the same word Pliny was to use later when he wrote to Trajan about the Christians. It may seem surprising that the same term used to describe the firemen’s association would also be used to describe a group of Christians.”²³

One encounter Pliny had with Christians who had been functioning as a *hetairia* was in either Amisus or Amastris, both in Bithynia. “Shortly after Pliny’s arrival in the city, a group of local citizens approached him to complain about Christians living in the vicinity...the charge was brought by local merchants perhaps butchers and others engaged in the slaughter and sale of sacrificial meat. Business was poor because people were not making sacrifices.”²⁴ This was nothing new to the Christians. It is documented in the first letter from the Apostle Peter, where the author writes, “Beloved, I urge you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the desires of the flesh that wage war against the soul. Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honorable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge.”²⁵

²² Ibid, 12.

²³ Ibid, 13.

²⁴ Ibid, 15.

²⁵ 1 Peter 2:11-12 NRSV.

William Barclay explains why this early church concept Peter espoused was so crucial, especially for Christians living in places like Bithynia, writing:

These words give us two great truths about the Christian. (a) There is a real sense in which he is a stranger in the world; and because of that he cannot accept the world's laws and ways and standards. Others may accept them; but the Christian is a citizen of the Kingdom of God and it is by the laws of that Kingdom that he must direct his life. He must take his full share of responsibility for living upon earth, but his citizenship is in heaven and the laws of heaven are paramount for him. (b) The Christian is not a permanent resident upon earth; he is on the way to the country which is beyond. He must, therefore, do nothing which would keep him from reaching his ultimate goal. He must never become so entangled in the world that he cannot escape from its grip; he must never so soil himself as to be unfit to enter the presence of the holy God to whom he is going.²⁶

These ideas seem to fly in the face of what Pliny reports experiencing with the Christians he encounters. In his book, Wilken makes the point that, largely due to this teaching found in Peter's epistle, "in most areas of the Roman Empire Christians lived quietly and peaceably among neighbors, conducting their affairs without disturbance."²⁷ Wilken adds that "Pliny was not unfamiliar with Christianity, but there is no mention of Christians in any of his other letters, and knowledge of the new movement must have been slightly and largely second-hand."²⁸ One interesting dichotomy that existed in the dealings of Pliny with the second-century Christians was the fact that they referred to themselves as "ecclesia" throughout the Roman Empire. Wilken adds that "the Romans did not use the term *ecclesia* to refer to the new movement. They simply called it 'Christian.' *Christianus* which would become the characteristic name for the followers of Jesus...Had Pliny heard the name *ecclesia* he would have been puzzled for in the common usage in Greek and Latin *ecclesia* referred to the political assembly of people in a city."²⁹ The

²⁶ William Barclay, *Bible Commentary on 1 Peter 2* <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/dsb/1-peter-2.html> (accessed on July 29, 2020).

²⁷ Pliny the Younger, 16.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 16.

²⁹ Pliny the Younger, 33.

early church referred to itself as “a called people” – *ecclesia*, the original idea of Aristotle – which gives insight that helps us realize the origins of that name.

However, Wilken continues to delve into another name by which Pliny recognized the Church and would also prove to be an identity that has remained with the Church to this day: “besides the specific name *Christiani*, Pliny also used the general term *hetairia* to identify the Christian group...the term *hetairia* is a transliteration into Latin of a Greek word, [it] is usually rendered as a ‘political club’ or ‘association.’”³⁰ This name proved to be problematic for several reasons. First, it obviously was something that the Roman government would see as political and, possibly, subversive. The name was discovered in correspondence between Pliny and Trajan. The other reason this name proved problematic was that, when Christians interacted with another *hetairia*, there was always a chance for them to be ostracized or worse when it was known who they ultimately were in a religious context. A good example was the aforementioned complaint by butchers to Pliny. However, it appears that this designation of *hetairia* actually became a blessing for these early Christians as they discovered a new way to live in community with one another. Wilken observes the benefits of being a *hetairia*.

From people such as these the associations drew their members. They knew they did not have the respect of the wealthy and powerful; but they could get together with friends and neighbors on a regular basis to share a meal, spend an evening in each other’s company, or comfort a grieving friend when his wife died. The associations gave men and women a sense of belonging. Individually weak and despised, they were finding the means of developing an organization, which at once cultivated social feeling, heightened their self-respect, and guarded their collective interest.³¹

³⁰ Ibid, 34.

³¹ Pliny the Younger, 36.

This would set the stage for the church for centuries to come. It was imperative for them to maintain that sense of community as they transitioned from a loose network of *hetairia* to an actual organization and, eventually, the institutional church.

Ascetics and Anchorites — Reinvention in the Desert

In his book *Men Possessed by God*, Jacques Lacarrière describes the state of the church as it moves out of the overarching shadow of the Roman Empire, writing, “when the first monks and anchorites settled in the Egyptian deserts in the fourth century, Christianity had in fact become the official religion of the Roman Empire. The persecution of the Christians had ceased, the number of conversions was rapidly increasing.”³² The church, although maintaining its sense of *hetairia*, now found itself in a new position with regard to direction and leadership. The church had evolved from its humble origins in Jerusalem as a movement of primarily Jewish members; however, as it found its way throughout the Roman world, it was now experiencing an identity crisis. Lacarrière continues, “[T]he famous Edict of Milan, proclaimed some years earlier by the Emperor Constantine, allowed Christian’s freedom to practice their religion.”³³ It was now evident that Christianity was replacing the previous pagan religions. However, two prominent ideas were in the minds of many Christians and their leaders. The first was what the ultimate mission of the church would be as it now existed and, secondly, whether there should be a centralized leader or leaders as was the case with the pagan religious organizations and groups it was replacing.

With regard to the current mission of the church, we find that “the purpose of the new religion, as preached by Jesus and propagated by the Apostles, was not to conquer the temporal world and establish a place for itself in History, but rather to announce that the Kingdom of

³² Jacques Lacarrière, *Men Possessed by God* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1964), 21.

³³ *Ibid.*

Heaven was at hand, bringing with it the end of the world.”³⁴ The next challenge was, now that the Edict of Milan had freed the church from its more hidden agenda and the Emperor himself alleged to be a follower of Christ, how this might affect the fourth century leadership and how that might impact the mission of the Kingdom of Heaven’s being realized in this new context. It soon proved to be evident that in this new world deemed “‘the new Christian Empire’ by Basil of Ancyra,”³⁵ it was thought that all the seeming human struggles were over, and it was time for Christ to return. Until then, all people would flourish and there would be no need for war and no desire for corruption. In light of this new understanding, the church in large part began a practice of asceticism.

The church learned that the ideal place to put this new asceticism into practice was in the deserts of Egypt. Lacarrière writes, “traveling far from a world condemned by God, the old ‘God possessed’, without being aware of it merely resumed the old, original dream of Christianity: living for ever remote from the world and History, while awaiting the new Kingdom of Heaven.”³⁶ So the pilgrims went to Egypt, living lives of anchoritism. Both ideologies stressed a strict sense of anti-socialism. Lacarrière describes the anchorite life as “a strict asceticism and lived under conditions which were, in a material sense *inhuman*...the forbidding of speech, for instance—very frequently in the desert—or even the invention of an artificial language for the purpose of communicating with his followers, clearly indicate this concern to break with the aggregate of habits and relationships which made up secular social life.”³⁷ This behavior was meant to distance them from what surely awaited the church that was once exposed to the secularism of the world, but was now freed from Roman tyranny.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid, 24.

³⁶ Ibid, 27.

³⁷ Ibid, 28.

In a sense, these “Desert Saints,” as they are sometimes referred, seem to be making the attempt to find their way to becoming a *beloved community* that would have been imagined before the events of Pentecost and realized briefly following the Day of Pentecost. Taking a deeper look at this practice, Lacarri re explains:

[A]sceticism is a physical and mental training by which man may achieve greater self-control. The word has always held something of its original meaning: an attempt of self-mastery, acting first upon the body and through the body. An ascetic is one who ‘exercises’ his body like an athlete, and the fourth century Christian writers, in describing the asceticism of the anchorites of Egypt made use of sporting terms, speaking of performances, feats, records, and quite properly naming the desert saints *athletes in exile*.³⁸

In preparation for these coming desert fathers/athletes in exile, Egypt had been impacted by Christianity late in the second century by Pantaenus, a stoic who had converted to Christianity. The organized Christian communities taught the early Christian community, who were primarily “Greeks, Jews, Romans, and Hellenized Egyptians and were members of the cosmopolitan, cultured society of Alexandria.”³⁹ The problem was that most of the population of Egypt were Coptic-speaking and had no way of understanding the teachings introduced by the early Church. This gave way to syncretism, a mixture of many pagan religions and teachings, and a massive rise in Gnosticism, particularly in the second century Egyptian Christians.

In the second half of the third century, an important transition occurred. “Christianity had been preached in Coptic and was spreading rapidly and substantially among the purely Egyptian population.”⁴⁰ Now the gospel message could be heard and understood by people of all socio-economic statuses. This brought about a major transformation of the entire country of Egypt, both geographically and culturally. Lacarri re goes as far as to say that, “by winning over the

³⁸ Ibid, 29.

³⁹ Ibid, 39.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 42.

bulk of the Egyptian fellahin, Christianity was to make great strides and become in practice the religion of Egypt.”⁴¹ This led to a great surge in the number of practicing Coptic Christians, which was unusual for that time and place as it was occupied and so heavily brutalized by the Roman emperor Diocletian. The amazing thing was how resilient the Coptic Christians were. They found a way to survive in the desert where no civilized person would want to go or care to live.

It was practically by default that the Coptic believers found a way to be that Christian community in the midst of oppression, showing the way to a new set of Christ followers who had known their own oppression and remained in community despite the adversity. Lacarri re describes this movement as follows:

The Christianization of Egypt could appear to be a rational process, the logical—one might say calculated—reaction of a population enslaved for hundreds of years and determined to have done with the pagan forces and values of the foreign Authority. But this was true only in a collective sense. Individually considered, the attitude of the Coptic peasant—whether it was a question of his conversion to Christianity, his becoming a Monophyte or leaving for the desert—was in the first place a spontaneous impulse, contrary to all rational principle.⁴²

The Copts became so enamored with the Christian faith that it ascribed to the new realization of what community was to become in the near and the not-so-distant future. Lacarri re adds;

[T]here was a strangely irrational atmosphere which persisted in the East for three centuries: belief in the imminent end of the world, the need for ascetic rivalry, the distress felt by men faced with the chaos of a universe in its death-throes and a society deemed corrupt for all time. Who knows whether, in this general confusion in the minds of the third century, the final persecution by Diocletian, which followed so closely upon the Egyptian uprising...did not appear as the obvious sign of the collapse of the world, the last chance offered to humanity to break with a reality to be henceforth unlivable?⁴³

⁴¹ Ibid, 42.

⁴² Ibid, 45.

⁴³ Ibid, 45.

This new community of passionate and faithful believers became the heart of the fourth century church. It is in this context that the Christian teaching, the new-found freedom from persecution for their faith, a post-Pelagian understanding of who Christ really is, and an ongoing practice in Egypt of asceticism associated with their practice of interaction with God all brought about a unique calling to the desert places.

It must not be forgotten that the teaching and the propagation of the Gospel in those days were undertaken wholly by the word of mouth, especially among the thousands of ignorant Coptic peasants converted to Christianity, and that for that reason the words of Jesus, his talks with the disciples, assumed greater significance than if they had been written in the third person. For all who, in those times became monks or hermits, it was *the very voice of Jesus speaking to them*. It was therefore not surprising to find the great hermits—setting out for the desert just as the result of a phrase from the Gospels, a phrase in which Jesus spoke directly to them.⁴⁴

I have two final observations of this move to the desert. The first observation would be, what did the desert symbolized to the Coptic hermits in general and to Saint Anthony, the father of Egyptian asceticism more specifically. Lacarri re notes:

The desert was, first and foremost an unwelcoming, sweltering place, where nobody could lead a normal human existence. There, a man was naked, caught between earth and sky, exhausted by the day and chilled by the night, the prisoner of an abstract landscape, which bore no similarity to the familiar world...In the desert no man could live unless helped by God.⁴⁵

My final observation on this community widely referred to as the Monastics, is to see the very heart of the followers of Christ who retooled the movement that began at Pentecost and survived many years of persecution and infighting. Lacarri re observed:

Just when the ‘resistant’ elders of the era of persecutions accepted the gratification of collaboration with authority, there was a move in the opposite direction, toward the deserts and the ascetic existence by a great number of

⁴⁴ Ibid, 55.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 57.

Christians in all walks of life: first peasants, outlaws, slaves and workmen, and then wealthy townsmen, ‘men of the world’ and even highly praised dignitaries of the Empire....while one part of the Church acceded to history, another part was violent in its rejection and took refuge in the timeless life of the desert.⁴⁶

The remaining question for most of us looking back many centuries later—Why did the Copts ultimately adopt the Christian faith so readily and become so steadfast? Lacarrière suggests, “before the Emperor Constantine’s conversion, to remain a Christian meant to risk losing everything: life, possessions, employment. After his conversion, one could be a Christian and lose nothing. The movement to the desert was therefore a response to this new allurements, the temptation of the world and temporal authority.”⁴⁷ It also shows that, in the midst of even the harshest conditions, that state of *hetairia* is still a primary focus of the church as it existed at the time.

Francis and the Mendicants — A Reimagined Community

As the church found its way out of Egyptian ascetism, the European Church quickly moved to a place that would have been unimaginable to the first century church. At the same time, however, it held on to the nature of *hetairia* that was observed by outsiders in the second century and was now being realized in a new context.

In the fourth century Christianity became the recognized religion of the Roman State, and the first Christian emperor, having built a city on the Bosphorus, made it the center of his government...in the eighth century the Roman Church, harassed by the Lombards, called the Franks to its aid; and on Christmas Day, 800 A.D., he who claimed to be the ecclesiastical heir to St. Peter bestowed the imperial crown on the alleged successor of Augustus...it appears that the strongest king, [Charlemagne] in the West accepted the symbol of imperial power from the hands of a priest of the Church of Christ.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ibid, 88.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 89.

⁴⁸ John Herkless, *The World’s Epoch-Makers Francis and Dominic and the Mendicant Orders* (London, FB &c Ltd., 2015), 2.

The Church of the ninth century, after several hundred years of persecution and with its very existence contingent on being a tight-knit community, considered by outsiders to be a club/*hetairia* and eventually reimagining itself in the deserts of Egypt, now found itself to be a religious institution – the very thing Christ had freed them from 800 years earlier. One historian observed, “Rome had conquered, yet the victory was gained at the expense of religion...heresy was rampant, because the church had turned from Christ to the world, and her servants had gone forth...to teach the people the orthodox creed and to lead them into truth.”⁴⁹ However, there arose yet another people who continued that search to become a community of God’s people and who remembered the foundations for which they had been called.

When the Mendicants appeared and offered, though they were not all priests, to instruct the people in the knowledge of the Bible and the doctrines of theology...thus it happened when religion was impotent in the hearts of the people, the friars arose and stirred it into life and strength; and when the Church was a worldly institution and her priests had departed from the spirit of Christ, these friars devoted themselves to the missionary labour to which He had consecrated Himself.⁵⁰

The founder and leader of this movement, Francesco (Francis) Bernardone, was born the son of a wealthy cloth merchant who financed Francis’ exploits as a young man. Francis worked as a mercenary for regional wars until he was captured and ransomed. However, his perspective changed upon his return, when he began developing a sense of compassion for the less fortunate. An encounter with a leper transformed Francis’ perspective on life and led to his abandonment of the material life his father offered. Francis even found a priest in need of rebuilding his chapel in the outskirts of his hometown of Assisi. When his father learned of Francis’ actions he went to the bishop of Assisi and demanded he convince Francis to rebuke his new-found philanthropism

⁴⁹ Ibid, 13-14.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

and return to the employ of his father. Francis officially renounced his father and the family business and emphatically proclaimed he now only had one Father, who art in heaven. Francis soon developed a following of others who were willing to abandon their material lifestyles and sell off all that they had to benefit the work of the Lord.⁵¹

In 1209, Francis heard a homily based on Matthew 10:7-19. In that moment, he realized that this passage was going to be the embodiment of his mission and all those who would join him in understanding that “freely you have received, freely give.”⁵² It was in this understanding that Francis developed the community that would eventually be an order within the church as it existed in the early thirteenth century. In many ways, Francis was looked at by his contemporaries as a reformer. At that time, there were two primary orders open to those called to a special ministry of caring for society: there was the Order of the Holy Ghost, which was primarily tasked with establishing hospitals and caring for the sick and indigent across Europe, and there was the Order of the Most Holy Trinity and of the Captives, which was based on the Augustinian Rule and dealt primarily with people who were prisoners being held for ransom, prisoners of regional wars and even prisoners of holy wars.⁵³ It was obvious to Francis that his calling was to the poor who might include both those who are in need of healing and those in need of being set free. Francis saw a much larger need and set out to plead to the pope, Innocent.⁵⁴

Francis went to work on his Rule of 1221 that would spell out the purpose and mission of this new order in twenty-one steps. It begins by following Christ’s example to live in obedience,

⁵¹ Barbara Beckwith, *Francis of Assisi Everybody’s Favorite Saint*. The Priest, 2012, 20.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Charles Moeller, *Order of Trinitarians*. The Catholic Encyclopedia. (New York: Robert Appleton Company), 1912.

⁵⁴ John Herkless, *The World’s Epoch-Makers Francis and Dominic and the Mendicant Orders* (London, FB &c Ltd., 2015), 32-33.

in chastity, and without property; how to receive new members into the order, stressing the importance of daily devotion based on the offices of the Church and practice the discipline of fasting. Then Francis lays out the understanding that anyone who would be part of this order needed to understand: that they are to be the servant of one another in all circumstances, Francis includes an element of accountability to help those who have struggled in their faith get back on track without judgement, adding an additional aspect of humility by referring to themselves as “Friar Minor” and thinking of each other as the washers of each other’s feet. Francis then includes elements that impact the everyday life of a member of the order beginning with Employment, which is to be no different when a member joins the order with the hope being that God is glorified in all that each member accomplishes. Francis adds that no money is to be received by a member of the order and a healthy separation needs to occur with any member within the order; however, when occasion calls, any member should be willing to both solicit and receive alms as a way of helping the poor and sometimes for the sake of the order. It is also imperative that the members of the order take care of the sick and ill among them. Again, this goes back to the teachings of Christ on healing both inside and outside the ranks of his faithful followers, Francis insisted that there be no dissention among the members of the order; even anger among the members was prohibited and silence was suggested when there were disagreements. Association with women was forewarned in both the administration of the sacrament and in spiritual counseling. Francis’ idea was to ensure the purity of each member of the order and to eliminate the chance of having the witness of the order diminished in the eyes of the Church or the local parish. Likewise, fornication results in expulsion from the order and the community. In addition, the Church dealt with the penance for the action.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Charles P. Carlson, Jr. *St. Francis and the Early Government of the Franciscan Order* Illif Review 31 no 1 (Winter 1974), 15-19.

Francis includes a section within the rules on how the members should live out their Gospel Mission. The first of these requires the members of the order to travel with no material possessions including money or food or anything to hold it with and including a staff that may be misconstrued as a means of protection. No member of the order is to possess animals, including horses for riding. This was more a sign of Francis' love for God's creation. Francis takes as an important stance on members of the order to be discerning when "going among" unbelievers.⁵⁶ However, the purpose is ultimately for them not to argue with the unbeliever and yet to agree to present an example of Christ to the outside world. Francis also saw this as an opportunity to demonstrate Christ's great commission as found in Matthew's gospel. Francis saw that this would be impossible to accomplish without interaction with those who did not believe, and warned about members of the order preaching in public. They were encouraged to preach only if a minister asked them specifically to do so. However, according to Francis, all the members of the order should preach with their actions. This would have far more impact on the world around them, to both believers and non-believers.⁵⁷

In this original Rule of the order, Francis encourages all members of the order to meet once a year on the Feast of Michael the Archangel. He gave provision for members who are farther away a three-to-five-year window in which to meet. This was to encourage fellowship and a sense of comradery specifically to share as Francis insisted in "the things that have to do with God." Francis additionally insisted that all members of the order remain Roman Catholic. They should have no other ideology or be a member of any sect within the faith, as this would result in immediate expulsion. Francis believed it was a very important function of the order to

⁵⁶ Capuchin Friars Australia, *A Brief Account of the life of St. Francis*, <https://www.capuchin.org.au/about-us/st-francis-of-assisi/> (accessed January 8, 2021).

⁵⁷ Carlson, 21.

remain penitent to God. This could be accomplished through any Roman Catholic priest who receives their confession and issues words of penance and absolution. The final component of this rule is that Francis encourages exhortation and praise be given by any and all members of the order. Francis states exhortation be given to “the Lord God almighty in his trinity and unity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, creator of all.”⁵⁸

In many ways, this rule established yet another example of the Beloved Community that has been attempted again and again throughout the history of the Church. In every case and example there is always something that thwarts the movement or augments the ability to be that Beloved Community and be another *hetairia* or club, similar to what Pliny described. The order that Francis began had much promise to be the exception. However, in 1229, the order moved to Rome and was approved by Pope Innocent III. It then was given to papal administration and Francis soon resigned from leadership. Soon, a new Rule was written that was more in line with the Church in Rome. Francis only lived a short while longer; however, the order still exists to this day and many aspects of the original Rule of 1209 still exist and are still important ideas as we consider what it might look like to be the Beloved Community in the 21st Century.⁵⁹ The Franciscan order had become yet another example of how the *heteria* allowed the church to both grow and strengthen in size and stature.

The Puritans—A Beloved Community of Family

Following the Protestant reformation of the sixteenth century, several expressions of Protestantism began to arise. To be sure, the Franciscans were still a very active order in Roman Catholicism and were still very effective in seeking and serving the poor in the various parishes in which they found themselves. They also had become more of a *hetairia* and less like the

⁵⁸ Carlson, 23.

⁵⁹ Beckwith, 22.

Beloved Community Francis had aspired for them to be. However, within the various Protestantism expressions, there were regional groups that were formed upon various ideas and methods on how to be the church and how one might come to grow in personal holiness.

The first was Lutheranism, which was founded and largely based on the teachings and guidance of Martin Luther. This group was found primarily in the Germanic states of central and eastern Europe. There also was Calvinism that was founded by John Calvin and was originally founded in Switzerland, yet it had many expressions throughout Western Europe. Two primary distinctions of Calvinism were the importance it placed on the doctrine of Predestination and its understanding of God's elect. A third expression of Protestantism was Anglicanism that was found in England and had resulted from a direct split with the Church of Rome. The expression of Calvinism found in England was "Puritanism" and was fraught with politicization between the Anglican hierarchy that in many ways was reminiscent of Roman Catholicism, with the King/Queen being the head of the church. The Puritan model was more autonomous for each congregation.⁶⁰ However, within that context there still existed a sense of *hetairia* that allowed the Puritans to grow and exist even in an environment that was often as hostile as that of the first century church.

Puritanism, as it existed in late sixteenth century England, is described by Church historian William Haller as having some of the tenets of the faith that previously had been espoused by poet Geoffrey Chaucer:

[T]he chief concern should be with the welfare of his own soul, that he must not let his life be swallowed up in the immediate and material affairs but must dedicate it to spiritual ends....he must set forth upon a pilgrimage, make war on despair, and pride, and expect thus to arrive at the heavenly city, there to dwell in triumph and glory forevermore.⁶¹

⁶⁰ William Haller, *Rise of Puritanism* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1938), 88-98.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 5.

The idea and the belief system of Puritanism should not be confused or misconstrued by the geo-political nature of what was going on in England at that time. In fact, many of the Puritan clergy and laity had a much more grandiose endgame, which led them to yet another attempt at a Beloved Community and ultimately led many of them to make the journey to North America.

Puritanism began, however, as we have seen throughout the history of the Church, as a kind of *hetairia*. Two basic ideas emerged with regard to the Puritan community. The first was to have a pastor who was not only autonomous to the community he was leading, but also a captain who is responsible to raise up other leaders within the ranks – to be a conduit for God to the people within their community and to ensure that they were continually growing in their faith so they could be a lifeline to the community they served.

One metaphor for this leadership model can be seen in modern air travel, when flight attendants relay the safety instructions to the flyers that if a person is traveling with children and the oxygen masks are deployed, that person should put their own mask on first so that they will have the necessary clarity of mind to help the children with their masks. In his instructions to reformed and, specifically, Puritan pastors, Richard Baxter breaks down several categories of people who need to be brought into the Puritan community of faith. Baxter names the unconverted, whom he labels as inquirers. He additionally makes note of the great importance of helping “Declining Christians” find the love they have lost for the Lord. Finally, Baxter touches on the catalyst for what makes this Puritan movement unique and successful, writing, “we must have a special eye upon the families to see that they are well ordered...the welfare of the Church and the State, depend much on family government and duty. If we suffer neglect of this, we shall undo all.”⁶²

⁶² Richard Baxter, *Reformed Pastor* (Glasgow: W. Collins and Company, 1829), 77.

The Puritan movement ultimately derived its strength from families. Every Puritan father is set up as a captain of his home and every member is schooled in every aspect of the faith, including scripture, prayer, other outside inspirational readings, and a means to serve the poor within their communities and societies. This insured that, generation to generation, another strong group of leaders would emerge, and that the continuance of this community would be realized. This was in fact a new development in a Christian movement aspiring to be the Beloved Community and without a doubt an example of the *hetairia* within the family unit as well as within the movement's corporate structure as it existed in that day.

People Called Methodists—Societies, Classes, Hetairiai, and Beloved Communities

The Anglican Church found its way through the minefields that plagued England throughout the seventeenth century, both politically and ecumenically. One area that grounded the new-found success of the Anglican Church was the formation of societies, described as “small groups of laity who represent[ed] an almost spontaneous fusion of moralism and devotionalism, with zeal for the promotion of ‘Real holiness of heart and life.’”⁶³ These societies were a modern-day version of what the Greek-speaking pagan culture referred to as *hetairia* – yet another example of how the church finds ways to continue to recreate itself in a sense of community.

The culmination of the movement came together in a centralized organization named Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK). This organization became a model for people within the Anglican church to grow in their faith and find a sense of accountability that had been previously absent. This was brought about by the misgivings of the church in the past that was thought by the Puritans to be too inwardly focused. The Anglicans had been accused of

⁶³ Ricard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 21.

being self-serving in the way they realized salvation and in how they experienced God's grace. Within the Reformist circles, it was thought that Anglicans saw this as a "universal atonement"; that salvation was a conscious decision made by the individual, rather than being something preordained by God. The SPCK provided Anglicans with the opportunity to grow in their faith and be able to articulate to others the precepts and teachings of the church based on the Bible, prayer, and other important elements of the doctrine of faith.⁶⁴

One of the early adopters of the SPCK was an Anglican priest in Epworth named Samuel Wesley. Samuel Wesley's son John was impacted by his father's involvement in the SPCK and after completing a degree plan at Oxford University, John Wesley began studies to be ordained as a deacon. It was during this process that the younger Wesley realized a whole new perspective on holiness and a nuanced understanding of how grace and salvation work together. Following his ordination, Wesley was elected a fellow at Lincoln College at Oxford. He began leading a band of students that would come to resemble what he had learned from his upbringing in and around the SPCK, his formal education, and his recent theological revelations. The group became a society like no other that had existed at Oxford at that time. This society was ultimately unique for all of England at that point in the eighteenth century.⁶⁵

Many referred to this society as a club, which bothered Wesley, who did not like this characterization and insisted that they should remain a society. Subsequent to this, both John and Charles Wesley traveled to Georgia in the American colonies to try and establish his brand of society. The trip proved unsuccessful. However, upon his return to England, John Wesley discovered that the societies begun at Oxford were now growing, and the name Methodist had been accepted to describe participants who had adopted this society as their means of growth in

⁶⁴ Ibid, 18-21.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 33-37.

personal holiness. Wesley's return to England proved to be exponentially fruitful. Within weeks of his return Wesley met Peter Böhler, a Moravian who led Wesley to satisfy his concern over a lack of assurance of faith.⁶⁶

In May 1738, Wesley was invited to join a non-Anglican society and, by the twenty-third of that same month, he had a conversion experience at a Moravian Church. There, he heard clearly the salvation message that God's unmerited grace was available to all of us...even him. So, taken with the Moravian church, Wesley travelled to Germany to learn more about its traditions. There, he learned how classes were the catalyst for the continuance of the faith. When Wesley returned to England, he was invited by fellow Holy Club member George Whitfield to oversee the societies within Bristol because Whitfield was moving on. It was in Bristol that Wesley developed what would transform not only his ministry and former ideas, but would impact an already growing revival within England.

Wesley learned from Whitfield the power of "open air preaching," and how many souls can be brought to salvation through that medium. Wesley then incorporated the ideas he had most recently learned from the Moravians, that within the societies there would be bands of few people in means of both accountability and spiritual growth. The basic rules of the band were: "1. Have you the forgiveness of your sins? 2. Have you peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ? 3. Have you the witness of God's Spirit with your spirit that you are a child of God? 4. Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart?"⁶⁷ In this moment, the various *hetairiai* that Wesley had established (a loosely-held group of societies) were able to maintain and grow in holiness. They also succeeded with t open-air preaching to all people and the social ministry that found its

⁶⁶ Ibid, 77.

⁶⁷ John Wesley, *Rules of the Band Societies, The Works of John Wesley* (December 25, 1739), 9.

way into these societies. This movement created yet another attempt of that Beloved Community that Christ ascribed and had been attempted so many times since the beginning of the Church.

* * *

The purpose of this chapter has been to lay the groundwork for what is my primary thesis in determining how service clubs and fraternal organizations have impacted the church in this country. The observations of the Roman historian Pliny and his determination of the second century church as a *hetairia* seems to follow throughout the centuries until the Puritans, the Wesleyan Methodists and the colonization of North America by England. The reasons individuals and groups migrated to a new land primarily was to go all the way back to the early Apostles wanting to be the Beloved Community Jesus had commanded them to be. The colonists had the same passion to find a place to live out this experience of being the church as did the Desert Fathers and the Copts of third century Egypt. The new land offered new opportunities for ministry as practiced by the Franciscans and other Mendicant orders. In all these historical examples, they were expressions of the Church and saw themselves at times as the Beloved Community, yet most who encountered them found they actually functioned as a *hetairia*. As I will show, that history continued to play out in what was to become the United States.

CHAPTER TWO: THE EARLY AMERICAN CHURCH

Thy love divine hath led us in the past;
in this free land with thee our lot is cast;
be thou our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay,
thy Word our law, thy paths our chosen way.

Daniel C. Roberts, “God of the Ages” 1876⁶⁸

Introduction

Chapter one of this dissertation addressed the history of the church from the biblical account of the Acts of the Apostles to the events of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. The research and history discussed the various *hetairiai*, or clubs, that surfaced within the church body in direct response to the complex socio-political climate of the times. In each faction of the faith there can be seen attempts by individuals to separate their party from the overarching political structures that sought to contextualize the teachings of Jesus into a co-opted system rather than the story the gospels tell of Jesus’ desire to have his followers be a Beloved Community, where all believing Christians can live in love and peace, and where material wealth and temptation are rejected in search of the truth. This pattern can be observed in the circumstances surrounding the Great Migration of Puritans to New England, which was a fundamental event in the foundation of the United States of America. Puritan opposition to the Anglican’s religious domination of England, which led them to create a society that was intended to preserve the freedom of religion for all its occupants. However, we will see the various ways in which this *hetaeria* necessarily failed.

⁶⁸ Daniel C. Roberts, *God of the Ages*, The United Methodist Hymnal (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), 698.

The Great Migration

Chapter One includes a brief discussion of the circumstances surrounding the Puritan English community; however, more detail is needed on the circumstances surrounding their departure from the motherland to seek religious freedom in the new land. From the time of the Protestant Reformation to the early 17th century, Puritans had been persecuted in England as outsiders of the religious institution of The Church of England. Tensions increased to a breaking point, which led many Puritans and other religious minority groups to flee from England in search of a place they could freely practice their religion while maintaining their native culture. This mass exodus of the mid-17th century would come to be known as the Great Migration and it spurred the colonization of North America.⁶⁹In each expression of faith tradition, the *hetairia* that existed among its followers at the time came along for the journey to the new land. In fact, it played an important role as they established new norms and religious practices with a nuanced way of worshipping God.

The creation of The Church of England by King Henry VIII was a highly significant event in the history of Christianity. It was seen as a break from the domination of Roman Catholicism as the hegemonic church authority and this endeavor led way to what is also known as Anglicanism. During this period of the Protestant Reformation, there were a number of other denominations that broke with the institutional Roman Catholic church – Lutherans and Puritans, to name a few. In its essence, the Calvinist Puritan perspective was that Anglicanism and Lutheranism – two of the most widespread Protestant ideologies of the time – did not go far enough in their rejection of Roman Catholic practices toward the “true” Christian ethic.

⁶⁹ Daniel Baracskey, *Puritans*. <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/1372/puritans> (accessed January 19, 2021).

However, as time progressed, the Church of England became increasingly hostile toward other Protestants, especially Puritans.

The decision by King Charles I to dissolve Parliament in 1629 was a very significant event that can be seen as a catalyst for the Great Migration.⁷⁰ This decision was made due to political dissent from members of Parliament who opposed his authority, and a number of these members were Puritans. This event was a final straw for many British Protestants, who now felt completely unrepresented in their government. This, among other reasons, led thousands of Puritans and other religious minorities to flee from England in pursuit of a land where they could freely practice their religion. In the following two decades approximately 80,000 people moved to English colonies around the world, including Ireland, New England, the West Indies, and the Netherlands.⁷¹ The Puritans usually left in family groups of men, women, and children, and approximately 20,000 souls found their way to the New English colonies of Massachusetts and Virginia. For their decision to defect from mainland Protestant and Anglican church traditions, these groups were known as Separatists.⁷²

Separatist beliefs also aligned with the teachings of Robert Browne, or Brownist Christianity. Robert Browne was “the first seceder from the Church of England, and the first to found a Church of his own on Congregational principles.”⁷³ In 1572, Browne received his Master of Arts degree from Cambridge University, which at the time was noted for its Puritan-leaning theology and “spirit for reform.” Over the following decades Browne, would endure resistance

⁷⁰ V.D. Anderson, *New England's Generation: The Great Migration and the Formation of Society and Culture in the Seventeenth Century*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press (1991), 53.

⁷¹ R.L. Ashley, *American History*. New York: Macmillan. 1907, 52.

⁷² Patrick Sherry, *Problem of Evil*, Encyclopedia Britannica (Nov. 2017) <https://www.britannica.com/topic/problem-of-evil>. (accessed January 19, 2021).

⁷³ Robert Browne, *Lilford Hall Robert Browne*. <http://www.lilfordhall.com/ElmesFamily/Robert-Browne.asp>. (accessed January 19, 2021).

from the Church of England for preaching non-conformist material against the practices of the Church and in support of a Congregational church structure, wherein each congregation independently and autonomously governs its own business. The Lilford Hall estate writes, “rather than reforming the Church from within, Browne sought out a new ‘true church’ ethic”⁷⁴. This foreshadowed the abolition of Parliament in 1629 that would lead the Separatists to embark on their freedom-seeking journey across the Atlantic. Furthermore, in Browne, but especially so in Puritan Separatists, there is a notion of a corrupt or misaligned governing Church body that their *hetairia* perceived as straying from the teachings of Jesus Christ.

One group of Puritans fleeing England in this period were originally from Scrooby, Yorkshire. This community experienced anti-Puritan sentiment as well, and a firsthand account from a Scrooby Puritan recalls, “some were taken & clapt up in prison, others had their houses besett & watcht night and day, & hardly escaped their hands; and the most were faine to flie & leave their howses & habitations, and the means of their livelihood.”⁷⁵ In 1608 this company moved to Holland to follow a Separatist pastor, John Smyth, who fled there only a few years before after facing persecution from the Church of England. The townspeople of Scrooby settled in Leiden, outside of Amsterdam, and participated in society there for nearly a decade. The Scrooby Puritans, however, were disillusioned with their new residence, as Dutch society was less chaste than their Puritan morals called for and certain young members were having trouble finding employment. More than anything, Scrooby Puritans found that their decision to emigrate to Holland threatened the sanctity of their *hetairia* as an independent, autonomous Anglo-Puritan society, as their children became assimilated into Dutch culture and dialect.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 1981, 114.

Finally, the Scrooby Puritans made the decision to move to the New English colonies in America. Bradford cites the previous issues as impetus for the move, as well as the opportunity for missionary work to remote, unsaved souls. The group reached out to England to find available land in the colonies, and eventually their representatives returned with a patent for land just north of the existing Virginia colony. The king granted trade rights with the prospective colony; however, he specifically noted that the former Scrooby inhabitants would not receive “official recognition” for their religion, which further displays the schism between the religious groups. In September 1620, the Mayflower sailed from England, and in November the Puritan Separatists arrived in Massachusetts.⁷⁶ Although this was not the area agreed upon in the patent, the group had difficulty reaching the Hudson river and eventually decided to settle in Provincetown Harbor.⁷⁷

It is evident that in their effort to separate themselves from the perceived debased Church of England, the Mayflower Puritans were striving toward the Beloved Community that Christian societies emulate. This *hetairia* was a closed, exclusive group of believers who stringently arbitrated the conditions of their faith and rejected the overarching church structure they originally inhabited. Through the Great Migration, thousands of Separatist individuals were thrust into the world, with the intention of creating their own Beloved Communities that functioned in the original intention of Christ. Once these settlers finally found a location for their new Congregationalist societies, they found themselves in the opposite situation, now creating rules and regulations for others to abide by, which of course caused strife and tension between those in power and those without. Through this lens, we can see how even the “purest” *hetairia*

⁷⁶ History.com Editors, *The Puritans*. History.com October 29, 2009.

<https://www.history.com/topics/colonial-america/puritanism> (accessed January 19, 2021).

⁷⁷ Nathaniel Philbrick. *Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War*, (New York: Penguin Book, (2006), 37.

can stray from the ideals of the Beloved Community and become an oppressive structure, not unlike the one against which Jesus rebelled.

The Mayflower Compact

Having docked in a location far from the original land patent of Virginia, the secular passengers (so-called “strangers”) of the Mayflower considered abandoning the contract that had been drawn up with the Virginia Company, which was written and financed by London stockholders. Fearing anarchy, the Puritan Separatist families set out to create a doctrine by which their new colony would function to help establish a new society. This new society would function as yet another *hetairia* that would guide them in both maintaining the faith traditions established in Britain and establishing a new covenant relationship in seemingly difficult, unknown surroundings. They knew that without the cooperation of all Mayflower passengers, their chances of survival would become slim. Their intention was to set laws and statutes by which their own people and the “strangers” would adhere to, ones that affirmed loyalty to the crown of England (for trade, cultural, and military reasons) and that set their interpretation of Christianity into rule.

To this end, the Mayflower Compact was drafted. It was a social contract, one that functioned on a majority-rule system.⁷⁸ The Compact was poised to create offices for political infrastructure and militaristic self-defense, as well as ensure cooperation of all individuals in order to sustain a healthy society. They elected a governor to lead them and the colonists settled in what was to be known as Plymouth. The first winter in Plymouth was brutal, and half the colonists died, as did their first elected governor; however, in the months following, the Plymouth colony began to grow and thrive. It has been argued that the Mayflower Compact

⁷⁸ Avalon Project, *Mayflower Compact : 1620*. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/mayflower.asp (accessed January 20, 2021).

provided the structure necessary for the colonists to cooperate and establish a society that endured through that first harsh winter.⁷⁹

The Mayflower Compact is the earliest-known successful self-governing contract in the New World. It paved the way for the perceived religious freedom and independence that American society has come to represent. However, some fallacies can be observed in the structure of this society, and even more will be seen as the Plymouth colony multiplied in size and population and became more diverse in religious identities and culture. The Mayflower Compact was intended to unite all free-thinking individuals, Puritan Christians or otherwise, under a uniform rule of law in the name of Christianity. However, there is an inherent hypocrisy in Christian *hetairia* that cite religious persecution in their succession from a larger Church body only to delineate a social contract that establishes their interpretation of Christ as law.

Plymouth Colony after its founding

Colonial Maryland was conceived and fostered in an environment of religious and spiritual uncertainty on both sides of the Atlantic (Burgess, 2012). The Puritan inhabitants of Plymouth were very devout and dogmatic and, as their society became stronger and more established, they worked out the *hetairia* that they put in place at the signing of the Mayflower Compact. The hierarchical structure of their theocracy became oppressive to the multitude of Christian denominations being practiced in this area. Puritan Congregationalism meant that each church was its own autonomous entity, however, this setting was ripe for ecclesiastical fragmentation. In the period following colonization, communities of Christian denominations came to American colonies due to the promise of religious freedom.

⁷⁹ Philbrick, 41.

The Plymouth colony, which can be seen as an attempt to formulate the Beloved Community of the gospels, strayed farther and farther from their goal of religious freedom in the New World and instead oppressed these incoming groups. Even other Puritans who pushed back on the authority of the ruling religious establishment were punished.

Massachusetts was a distinctively Puritan commonwealth. The church was not only closely connected with the affairs of state, it was the foundation on which the political and social organization rested. ...[F]or this reason... [and] because the Puritans were by nature intense, sincere, but narrow, the government of Massachusetts exercised a very strict supervision of church affairs.⁸⁰

First and foremost, a significant victim of divergent religious persecution is Roger Williams, a Puritan who emigrated to Boston in 1631. Williams wrote and disseminated a pamphlet asserting that the king had no right to issue land patents, as all the land rightfully belonged to the Native American inhabitants they were displacing. In this doctrine Williams also asserted that no governing body should exercise control over religious affairs, rather that there should be a separation of church and state. This claim was quite groundbreaking, as the only Western country that operated by these beliefs at the time were the Dutch, and Williams was tried and banished from Massachusetts in 1636. Williams found his way south and eventually founded Providence, Rhode Island, where freedom of religion, separation of church and state and peace with Native American inhabitants were reported to actually have been practiced for the first time in the modern world.⁸¹ Williams also reportedly left Puritanism in favor of what became known as the Baptist movement. Williams founded the first Baptist church in America in 1639. Williams truly understood the failures of Puritan ideology in its rebellion from the Church of England and in its exclusive, dogmatic ideals.⁸² Williams can be seen as an arbitrator

⁸⁰ R.L. Ashley, 50.

⁸¹ C.E. Neumann, *Roger Williams*, The First Amendment Encyclopedia, <https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/1231/roger-williams> (accessed January 20, 2021).

⁸² *Ibid.*

of true Christian ethic, away from the *hetairia* of Massachusetts Puritan society and toward an egalitarian Beloved Community.

In addition, three religious minorities sought emancipation from the Church of England in American colonies: the Quakers, the Antinomians, and the Baptists. Each group believed in the authority of a believer to govern their own faith and rebelled against ministry as an obstruction of the will of Christ.⁸³

Anti-Quaker Sentiment

In the years following the colonization of Plymouth by the Puritan Pilgrims, Quaker communities formed in the newly-established body of Massachusetts (specifically, Boston) and these two groups clashed over their religious beliefs. This is one of many examples of how the concept of the church as a *hetairia* can become troublesome. When two denominations or *hetairiai* have much different missional priorities within their respective faith communities, there is often a breakdown in the quest to become the Beloved Community. There are a number of recorded anti-Quaker incidents in the decades following the formation of the Plymouth colony. In 1656, two Quaker women, Mary Fischer and Ann Austin, arrived in Boston as a stop on their Quaker mission to the New World. Following a successful trip to Barbados, the two Quaker women were ill-received in Boston, as news of their travels and views had preceded them, and they were immediately “imprisoned, stripped, and searched for signs of witchcraft.”⁸⁴ Their personal belongings were confiscated, and their books were burned. Fischer and Austin only survived in prison thanks to the righteousness of a Puritan by the name of Nicholas Upsall, who bribed their guard in order to feed them. The two were deported to Barbados, and from there sent

⁸³ Ahlstrom, Sydney E. *A Religious History of the American People*. (Binghamton, NY: Yale University Press, 2004), 126.

⁸⁴ Baltzell, E. (1996) *Puritan Boston and Quaker* (Philadelphia., Transaction Publishers, 1996), 53.

back to England. However, in a sense their mission was successful: they had managed to convert one Puritan to Quakerism – Upsall, their savior. Even at an advanced age, Upsall abandoned the Puritan Church and was subsequently banished from Boston. He is credited with founding the first American Quaker meetinghouse in Sandwich, Massachusetts.

Following this ordeal and the arrival of other Quakers to Boston, the Massachusetts government enacted a law in 1658 that was specifically meant to persecute Quakers. Upon pain of death, Quakers were to be imprisoned and banished, thus anti-Quaker violence became rampant. Due to this legislation, Quakers from all over came to Boston in protest. This ordeal led to what is now known as the Boston Martyrs, four Quakers that were executed for preaching their beliefs in Boston.⁸⁵ In addition, a 1661 pamphlet protesting the Quaker persecution notes that “22 have been banished...30 have been martyred, 30 have had their right ears cut [off], thirty-one had received six hundred and fifty stripes administered with extreme cruelty, £1044 of property had been taken from them.”⁸⁶ Anti-Quaker violence persisted in New England and in England proper until Parliament passed the Toleration Act of 1689, which legalized nearly all nonconformist Christian denominations, including Quakerism, and allowed an opportunity for the individual *heteria* to coexist and possibly even prosper.

Antinomian Controversy

At this time, several Puritan nonconformist individuals and ideologies began to surface, each of which was dubbed “antinomian” in their resistance to status-quo institutional beliefs of Puritan theology. This was yet another form of a *hetairia* that was established with negative

⁸⁵ Margery Post Abbott. *Historical Dictionary of the Friends (Quakers)*. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2011), 48.

⁸⁶ Augustine Jones, *Nicholas Upsall*. Milton, MA: Press of David Clapp & Son, 1880, 72.

intentions toward another faith tradition. It was becoming evident that coming to the new world was not the panacea that was hoped for to avoid these adverse relationships. The word “antinomian” was first coined by Martin Luther who, similarly to the Puritans in Massachusetts, disapproved of Protestant fragmentation and the variety of viewpoints it allowed. Specifically, his use of “antinomian” was in reference to anonymous pamphlets that rejected any use of the law within the church, though they did see the need for the law in the civil realm⁸⁷. This idea is seen in later centuries as being related to the doctrine of “separation of church and state.” However, in Puritan Massachusetts, any nonconformist Protestant preacher could be deigned antinomian based on their defiance to the overarching church body.

By definition, antinomianism is considered to reject laws or legalism, as well as social, moral, or religious norms⁸⁸. In short, antinomianism means “against laws,” however, this is a misnomer in its weaponization against Free Grace preachers in Puritan Massachusetts. The Massachusetts antinomian controversy occurred between 1636 to 1638, in which a number of Puritan dissidents were persecuted due to their criticism of the governing Puritan authority. At the center of this controversy were Anne Hutchinson, John Wheelwright, and Henry Vane, the then-governor of Massachusetts Bay.⁸⁹

These individuals were heavily influenced by the teachings of Puritan preacher John Cotton, who was forced to flee England to the colonies. Cotton preached a Free Grace theology, wherein an individual achieves salvation the moment they recognize Jesus Christ as the son of God, and this view was highly influential among certain Puritan Separatists. Hutchinson and

⁸⁷ The Lutheran Cyclopaedia, *A Model of Christian Charity By Governor John Winthrop* 1899, https://www.winthropsociety.com/doc_charity.php (accessed January 21, 2021).

⁸⁸ “The Antinomian Disputations.” Lutheran Reformation. October 17, 2017 <https://lutheranreformation.org/history/the-antinomian-disputations> (accessed January 21, 2021).

⁸⁹ History.com Editors. “*Anne Hutchinson*.” HISTORY. Last modified November 9, 2009. <https://www.history.com/topics/colonial-america/anne-hutchinson>. (accessed January 21, 2021).

Wheelwright's families emigrated to America after Cotton and Hutchinson specifically became very involved in colonial social life.⁹⁰

Hutchinson hosted bible meetings in her Boston home in which she criticized the Massachusetts ministries for not involving the grace espoused by Cotton into their teachings⁹¹. As her popularity and influence grew, Governor Vane became increasingly involved in these bible meetings. The mounting tensions spearheaded by Hutchinson culminated in Vane's being voted out of office and Hutchinson and Wheelwright being accused of antinomianism. Hutchinson and Wheelwright were subsequently jailed and eventually sentenced to banishment due to these charges. Hutchinson went first to Providence, a truly religiously tolerant settlement, and eventually settled in New Netherlands, now known as the Bronx.⁹²

By defying the authoritative rule of the Puritan orthodoxy, Hutchinson and the alleged antinomians exposed the hypocrisy and oppressive nature of the governing Christian ideology. These *hetairiai* fought for emancipation from oppression and freedom of expression not unlike Jesus of Nazareth many centuries before. Each community that splintered from this initial Puritan colony further explicated the lack of theological cohesion in the larger church body as Christianity strayed away from the concept of the Beloved Community as first conceptualized by Christ.

City Upon a Hill

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid.” (Matthew 5:14)

⁹⁰ John R. Vile, *Anne Hutchinson*. <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/1216/anne-hutchinson> (accessed January 21, 2021).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² John Denison Champlin. *The Tragedy of Anne Hutchinson*. (New York: William Henry Eldridge, 1913), 12.

This passage was included in the 1630 sermon by John Winthrop, a governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony. His speech, which is called “A Model of Christian Charity,” was recited either directly preceding or following a voyage of Puritan settlers to America from England.⁹³ His speech includes many various themes that are evident in Puritan ideology as can be determined from the aforementioned incidents, and spoke to the 17th century concept of the Beloved Community. However, this speech did not take into consideration the *heteria* that had already been established beginning with the Mayflower Compact.

In fact, one essential concept to this sermon is the idea of communal responsibility, and for each individual to accept their role in the creation of a new society. The Puritan Separatists were given a unique responsibility to create a society of their own design to uphold their principles, and Winthrop strongly encouraged his followers to work together in their own jurisdictions for the greater good. He writes: “All the parts of this body being thus united are made so contiguous in a special relation as they must needs partake of each other’s strength and infirmity, joy and sorrow, weal and woe. (1 Cor. 12:26) If one member suffers, all suffer with it; if one be in honor, all rejoice with it.” In this example, Winthrop is both imploring his followers to accept their role in society as dictated by God and to work together to create a Godly “Beloved Community.”⁹⁴ As can be seen in this chapter, the rhetoric employed by Christian leadership at this time spoke of love but, in reality, their actions were cruel and segregationist toward other viewpoints. This is not uncommon for *hetairiai* throughout the history of the church. The irony in this sermon is that Winthrop is utilizing the Christian ideal of love and grace to both form a

⁹³ The Winthrop Society: *Descendants of the Great Migration*.
https://www.winthropsociety.com/doc_charity.php
(accessed January 21, 2021).

⁹⁴ Ibid.

Beloved Community but also to implore his poorer subjects to blindly cooperate in society, rather than rebel against it.

This sermon was meant to inspire the passengers of the Winthrop fleet, as they saw themselves as uniquely chosen by God to undergo the pilgrimage to America and create a perfect Puritan society. Winthrop not only wants his followers to understand their position in history, but also encourages them not to act in any nonconformist way. The phrase “a city upon a hill” as used by Jesus was meant to denote his followers as exceptional, that to follow Christ is to be singled out and held to a high standard of scrutiny, which of course speaks to the ideal of the Beloved Community. The Beloved Community is to be a model to the world and is lifted high as a holy light on the world. Winthrop evokes this imagery and symbolism and equates it to the new lives of American settlers. To Winthrop, the colonization of a previously unexplored area of the world provides him and his followers with a unique opportunity for ministry but also for glory in the eyes of God. The reality was that the Puritan society that been established was succeeding at being a *hetairia*. The Beloved Community was a much higher and more difficult goal to achieve.

First Great Awakening & Sectarianism

The first two chapters of this dissertation have covered in detail many events and individuals that retroactively have been placed in the historical context of the First Great Awakening. This was another great example of how many of the various splinter groups that had come to the New World seeking refuge and asylum now found themselves as new expressions of a *heteria*. The Great Awakening is a period of Anglo-American Christian revival in the mid-18th century that had a profound impact upon the formation of the United States and the Protestant denominations against the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches in Britain. The First Great Awakening was seen to be a religious response to Enlightenment-era rationalism and declining

church membership.⁹⁵ The First Great Awakening was characterized by passionate, spontaneous evangelical preaching and an emphasis on personal salvation pursuant to the teachings of George Whitefield, John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards.⁹⁶ Historically, the First Great Awakening has been linked to the rise of sectarianism within the Christian church, especially in the North American British colonies and continuing into the formation of the United States of America.⁹⁷

One highly significant figure of the First Great Awakening is George Whitfield, who is a later figure in the First Great Awakening. His ministry began with his arrival in America in 1738 and his influence lasted until the mid-1740s, when the cultural impact of the First Great Awakening was dwindling. Whitfield was a Congregationalist, who was known for his passionate, public sermons which garnered much attention and led to many of conversions. Whitfield first preached in Georgia, then later Philadelphia, where he moved from an Anglican church to preach on the steps of the courthouse to the public, and from there his ministry became a traveling operation.⁹⁸ Whitfield traveled from Pennsylvania to New York, then back down to the southern colonies, then to Connecticut, then finally “a solid week of amazing activity in Boston” (which, considering the militant nature of its Puritan inhabitants, was a significant achievement). Whitfield is reported to have preached to over 30,000 individuals in this week in Boston alone.⁹⁹

Whitfield’s style is emblematic of the greatest characteristics of the First Great Awakening – public, charismatic preaching and an uproarious evangelical response. His efforts inspired two others – Gilbert Tennent and James Davenport, who continued in his steps and

⁹⁵ Smith, John Howard. *The First Great Awakening: Redefining Religion in British America, 1725–1775*. (Lanham, MA: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2014), 43.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Ahlstrom, 129.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

traveled throughout the thirteen colonies to varied public response. The latter, Davenport, received the most anti-revivalist backlash, as he was the most extreme. Davenport called for the burning of wigs, cloaks, rings, and even books of opposing Christian theologians.¹⁰⁰ In response, he was charged under an “itinerant preaching” law in Connecticut and was declared mentally disturbed and deported. The same happened in Boston, and Davenport eventually retreated from the public eye. However, his efforts were hugely significant to the First Great Awakening, and Whitefield, Davenport, and their contemporaries are credited with the conversion of 20,000 to 50,000 souls during their period of activity.¹⁰¹

The First Great Awakening is also seen as highly influential to contemporary American Christianity as it led to further sectarianism between different Christian denominations, even within existing denominations. At the time, the most significant division was between “New Lights,” who were Protestants that saw the enthusiastic and often extreme positions of the new movement as productive and positive in their success at converting new individuals to Christianity and “Old Lights,” who rejected this movement on the same grounds: as being too divergent from traditional Protestant values.¹⁰² In Congregational churches, Old Light congregations identified themselves as “Strict Congregationalists”; New Light separatists were denied the religious tolerance that had become available to Quakers, Anglicans, and Baptists by this point.¹⁰³ In Presbyterian churches, the split from the First Great Awakening became known as the Old Side-New Side Controversy.¹⁰⁴ The only denomination that was generally unified throughout the First Great Awakening were the Baptists, as many alienated New Light

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Smith, John Howard, 52.

¹⁰³ Ahlstrom, 132.

¹⁰⁴ Balmer, Randall Herbert., Fitzmier, John R. *The Presbyterians*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), 42.

Congregationalist separatists adopted Baptist doctrines and joined the Baptist church.¹⁰⁵ The Baptist Church in many ways became a *heteria*, and also created various expressions of that same doctrine that would become various other *hetairiai*.

Second Great Awakening

The Second Great Awakening was similar to the first as it was a period of ecclesiastical growth in the newly formed United States of America. The period after the First Great Awakening had left many religious leaders feeling defeated and that God had “withdrawn” from the churches in New England.¹⁰⁶ However, certain religious movements and *hetairiai* were sweeping Europe such as Pietism and evangelism, and these ideals popped up independently in various regions throughout middle America, specifically Tennessee, Kentucky, and southern Ohio. The Second Great Awakening is outlined by scholars to have occurred in the late 18th century up to the mid-19th century, which was around the time of the American Civil War. Barry Hankins, a religious historian, writes “the revivals of the Second Great Awakening stemmed the tide of declension and ensured that America’s dominant religion would be evangelical Protestantism and not some form of Enlightenment deism.”¹⁰⁷ The Great Awakenings were seen as a direct result of God’s influence in America, which contributed to the intensity of the response from the religious population.¹⁰⁸ However, this passion was not met with vicious opposition or public spectacle as was the First Great Awakening; rather, individuals were overwhelmingly silent as they listened to preachers. The character of the Second Great Awakening was seen as sober, pious, and a reaffirmation of morality.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Ahlstrom, 134.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Barry Hankins. *The Second Great Awakening and the Transcendentalists* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), 21.

¹⁰⁸ Ahlstrom, 140.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

This holy attitude was further promulgated by the spread of Revivalist preachers throughout the country. Hankins defines Revivalism as “a preaching method, primarily within Protestantism, which is geared towards eliciting immediate conversions to the Christian faith.”¹¹⁰ The efficacy of this passionate, public display was first realized during the First Great Awakening; however, the Second Great Awakening saw this style of preaching spread to many different denominations. Methodist and Baptist preachers made the most out of this preaching style, and the Presbyterian church also saw some lesser success. Specifically, the Methodist Episcopal church saw the rise of “circuit riders,” which were traveling preachers that would travel through a “circuit,” or a geographical area where church congregations needed a preacher.¹¹¹ Often these “traveling clergy” (as they were also called) would travel through the underdeveloped frontier to rural villages and unorganized settlements and would preach daily wherever they could find listeners. This endeavor proved to be highly successful and launched Methodism to become the largest Protestant denomination in America at the time – by 1839 749,216 members were served by 3,557 traveling preachers and 5,856 local preachers.¹¹² Methodism, with its class meetings, became a prime example of *hetairiai* along with the western expansion of the country.

Restoration Movement

The Second Great Awakening saw a rise of a number of new Christian movements, one of the most significant and influential of which was the Restoration Movement. The Restoration Movement sought to return the church to its “primitive” ideals, that of Jesus of Nazareth, with an

¹¹⁰ Hankins, 23.

¹¹¹ Edwin Scott Gaustad, *Historical Atlas of Religion in America*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 73.

¹¹² James Porter, *A Compendium of Methodism*. (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1851), 234.

emphasis on uniting the church and dissolving denominational sectarianism.¹¹³ However, this did not change the way the church functioned as a *hetairia*. The organizational structure had no bearing on the concept of a *hetairia* as originally observed by the Romans. It had more to do with the relationship and camaraderie. There were two groups that formed independently and later joined forces to form a larger “Restoration” coalition (although this movement never had a centralized structure) – Barton W. Stone’s congregation, from Cane Ridge, Kentucky, and Thomas and his son Alexander Campbell, from Virginia and Pennsylvania. Both saw the division into various denominations as antithetical to the church of the New Testament and sought to return the worldwide church to the structure of the first century. Furthermore, each group saw many of the teachings of Presbyterianism and Calvinism as not in accordance with the actual teachings of Jesus in the Bible.¹¹⁴ The two groups came together in 1832 and couldn’t agree on a name; however, their efforts were fruitful and eventually their movement became known as the Restoration Movement. By the time the junior Campbell died, over 200,000 souls belonged to his Disciples of Christ movement, but his death saw the fragmentation of the once-unified Restoration Movement. Although this movement was relatively successful, Campbell and Stone’s attempts at ecumenism fell short, and even the Restoration churches began dividing into factions and fell victim to sectarianism. However, the overall Restoration Movement, although segmented, continued to grow, and by 1906 there were a recorded 1,142,359 Restoration Christians in America.¹¹⁵ However, this had little effect on the *heteria* within those churches impacted by the Restoration Movement.

¹¹³ Hankins, 23.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ William C. Hunt, *Religions Bodies: 1906, Part 1, Summary and General Tables*, (Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census, Government Printing Office, 1910), 236.

Mormonism

Perhaps the most significant new church to appear during the Second Great Awakening was the Latter-Day Saints movement, which is also known as Mormonism. Currently, there are over 16 million Mormons in America, and the largest church body of this movement is The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints.¹¹⁶ Mormonism views itself as a Restoration Movement, similar to that of Campbell and Stone, however, Mormonism contends that the New Testament is missing a revelation, namely, the book of Mormon, from which the denomination gets its name. Therefore, Mormons seek to “restore” Christianity to its original church structure with the book of Mormon.¹¹⁷ This is the basis for categorizing Mormonism as a *hetairia* in that, although there are many congregations, there is one primary relationship and expression of faith with many different components.

The founder of the Latter-Day Movement was Joseph Smith, a western New York resident during the Second Great Awakening. Smith purported to have discovered a hidden gospel on golden plates in 1823, as directed to him by the angel Moroni.¹¹⁸ The new gospel tells of a family of Jewish-Christians that left Jerusalem in 600 BCE, traveling across the ocean to the continent now known as America.¹¹⁹ Nephi, the patriarch, is said to have received a vision from God that detailed his journey, and due to this, his family was persecuted by the Jewish authorities. Upon arrival in America, the family of Nephi multiplied and spread out across the land, and eventually formed two factions: the Nephites and Lamanites. The Nephites were

¹¹⁶ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *15 Million Member Milestone Announced at Church's General Conference*, <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/15-million-member-milestone-announced-at-churchs-general-conference> (accessed January 25, 2021).

¹¹⁷ Barry R. Bickmore, *Restoring the Ancient Church: Joseph Smith and Early Christianity*. (Redding, CA: FairMormon, 2013), 19.

¹¹⁸ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days Volume 1* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 2018), 14

¹¹⁹ Book of Mormon, *The First Book of Nephi*, <https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/bofm/1-ne/1?lang=eng> (accessed January 25, 2021).

righteous Jewish-Christians, that built a temple and lived the laws of Moses and taught a Christian gospel. All of the aforementioned events are supposed to have occurred before the death of Jesus Christ in Palestine around 30 AD. In the 4th century, a military leader and historian by the name of Mormon was commanded by the prophet Ammaron to redact his people's history in ancient America onto golden plates. Mormon was killed in battle before he could finish his life's work, and the plates were finalized by his son Moroni in 400-420 AD and buried in Wayne County, New York.¹²⁰

Joseph Smith, upon uncovering these golden plates with the Book of Mormon, spread his newfound faith throughout America. The first Mormon church was in Smith's home of New York and the church garnered a few hundred followers. The church of the Latter-Day Saints then spread to Ohio, where its membership nearly doubled, and Smith moved there in 1831.¹²¹

Another significant location for early Mormonism was Jackson County, Missouri, where Mormon believers claimed to have discovered the "New Jerusalem," a city established by the Nephites in the Book of Mormon. Smith eventually moved to Missouri in early 1838 to flee a warrant for his arrest for banking fraud.¹²² Mormonism in Missouri was met with extreme intolerance and persecution, eventually leading to the 1838 Mormon War. At first, this conflict was strictly between new Mormon settlers in Missouri and intolerant Missourians; however, before long the Missouri state militia became involved, Joseph Smith was jailed, and the Mormons were driven from the state. Smith and his companions escaped custody and fled to Illinois, where they founded the city of Nauvoo.¹²³ Nauvoo was an autonomous Mormon city,

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: (Rough Stone Rolling, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 17.*

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

and for five years Smith and his Latter-Day Saints lived in Nauvoo, and it was here that Smith introduced polygamy into the practice of Mormonism.

In 1844, the Mormon population of Nauvoo became fractured when Smith excommunicated a number of influential members of the community. These individuals sought revenge, and soon the government of Illinois came to arrest Smith on charges of perjury and polygamy and, eventually, treason. Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were held in a Carthage jail and on June 27, 1844, an angry mob broke into the jail and killed them both. They were buried in Nauvoo, and Smith is remembered as a prophet and a martyr.¹²⁴

Following his death, Mormonism became segmented and various groups broke off from the city of Nauvoo. The largest denomination called themselves The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, led by Brigham Young. Young and his church emigrated west to an area that would soon be known as Utah. The new denomination would practice polygamy until 1890, when it was abolished from the church's doctrine, though certain smaller Mormon fundamentalist churches still practice plural marriage today.

Mormonism is a uniquely American denomination of Christianity that posits that the Garden of Eden was in North America, that Jesus himself appeared on American soil, and that "New Jerusalem" would be built in Missouri. Leo Tolstoy described Mormonism as the "quintessential 'American religion,'" most likely due to its American exceptionalism and subscription to Manifest Destiny.¹²⁵ Utah is a primarily Mormon state, and there 16 million practicing Mormons worldwide. Dissenters call it a religious cult, but most mainstream anti-Mormon sentiment was assuaged in 1890 when the majority of Mormons relinquished their

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Gary L. Browning and Dr. Melvin K. Richardson, *Tolstoy and Mormonism*, <http://jur.byu.edu/?p=10319> (accessed January 25, 2021).

doctrine of polygamy so that Utah could become a state.¹²⁶ Mormonism was hugely significant to the Second Great Awakening and to the future of Christianity in America. Overall, there is a sense that this could be seen as a hope of the Beloved Community. However, there is not a synonymous relationship within the broader Christian community. This leads us to understand that, at closer look, it is a *hetairia*.

Freemason Society

The Freemason society is an insular fraternal order that dates back to at least 14th century England. If there was ever an ideal example of a successful *hetairia* outside of the example of the church it would be the Free Masons. Although its origins are unclear, Freemasonry has a rich history that spans centuries and cultures, with various influential members and with an untold impact on modern society. As with any institution of its size, it is organized into chapters called “lodges,” with local membership and with representatives that convene in a larger structural body. Masonry is highly ritualistic, with manuscripts that detail its practices and ideals over centuries. Similar to the Christian church, Masonry has become sectarian, with many different clubs declaring the “true” Freemason ethic and separating from others due to interpersonal dissent. Freemasonry has historically had an adverse relationship with the Catholic Church, which at a time denoted its practices as “Deist” or even cultish, although its relationship with Protestant Christianity, the Church of England and Mormonism has been overwhelmingly neutral. Freemasonry has a complex stance on religion, as it requires its members to profess a monotheistic theology, although it does not specify any singular preferred religion and in fact discourages religious conversation between its members.

¹²⁶ Bushman, 22.

Origin of Freemasonry

The exact origin of the Freemason Society is unclear. The oldest confirmed Mason manuscript is the Regius Poem, which scholars date to 1390, and it details a history of the Freemason society that goes back as far as Euclid and ancient Greece.¹²⁷ Other later Masonic manuscripts, such as *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons*, written in 1723 and printed by Benjamin Franklin (a mason) in 1734, tells the history of the Freemasons as antediluvian, as beginning with Adam, the first human, and outlines exactly how its ideals were passed down the biblical chain of forefathers.¹²⁸ In much of Freemason literature, the art of masonry is equated to “geometry,” and it discusses the study of geometry as masonry as it is passed down through the generations. According to the Regius Poem, the first official order of Freemasons was organized by King Athelstan (924–939) of England (generally recognized as the first King of England) along with “all the masons of the craft,” and together they detailed fifteen articles that would shape the creed of the Freemason Society.¹²⁹ It is important to note that this manuscript wasn’t published until 1840, when the Freemason Society was well established and had undergone many changes and controversies. Furthermore, it is important to note that this manuscript is specifically Christian, as the poem details that “the good lord loved this craft (masonry) very well,” and the articles specify that “who will know this craft and come to estate/ He must love well God and holy church always.”¹³⁰ It has also been speculated that the author of the Regius Poem was a Roman Catholic priest.

¹²⁷ James Orchard Halliwell, *The Regius Poem*, <http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/regius.html> (accessed January 25, 2021).

¹²⁸ James Anderson, *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons 1723*, <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://en.wikipedia.org/&httpsredir=1&article=1028&context=libraryscience> (accessed January 25, 2021).

¹²⁹ Halliwell, *The Regius Poem*.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

According to Mackey's Encyclopedia of Masonry, the official creation of the Freemason Society can be credited to King Athelstan's youngest son, Edwin, in 926.¹³¹ This knowledge can be attributed to various manuscripts that were uncovered since the Regius Poem, and oral histories passed between Masons, and is referred to as "the York Legend." Although there are various speculative histories crafted about the origin of the Freemasons, none are credible enough to mention. What is known is that the Freemason Society was originally a trade society for the apprenticeship and development of mason artisans. The "lodge" initially referred to a workshop at a build site where masons (at the time, functionally the same as modern architects) would lead their projects.¹³² Most likely, the original Freemason Society was a guild of artisans who organized to protect their labor and secure living wages against the ordinances of the Crown and the Church, the primary employers of stone masons.¹³³ In this way, medieval Freemasonry is almost reminiscent of a modern-day labor union.

Freemasonry in England

The first Great Lodge of Masonry dates to 1717, when three English lodges and a Westminster lodge gathered to form the Grand Lodge of London and Westminster, also known as The Premier Great Lodge of Britain. At this point, Freemason lodges existed throughout Great Britain, including England, Ireland, and Scotland. Over the following five years, various lodges joined this Grand Lodge, and a nobleman (the 2nd Duke of Montagu) presided as Grand Master (the leader of the lodge), which led to the Grand Lodge's status as an authoritative figure in

¹³¹ Albert G. Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry: Extended Annotated Edition, Volume 1*. (New Orleans: Cornerstone Books, 2013), 22.

¹³² G.P. Jones and Douglas Knoop. *The Genesis of Freemasonry: An Account of the Rise and Development of Freemasonry in Its Operative, Accepted, and Early Speculative Phases*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1947), 73.

¹³³ Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon, *British ordinance of Laborers, from 1349 until 1562*, <http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/history/statutes/ordinance.html> (accessed January 26, 2021).

Masonry. In 1723, the first Constitution of Masonry was published under the authority of the Grand Lodge which outlined certain practices, ideals, and ethical principles for current and new Masons.¹³⁴

The articles of the Constitution included the Lodge's commitment to non-denominationalism, although it does detail that members of the society must believe in a religion. It also details the progression of Masonic membership, from Apprentice to Journeyman to Master, and it specifies that Lodge Grand Masters should be chosen based on their merit. It affirms the Mason creed of peace and goodwill between its members and specifically notes that conversations about religion and politics are strictly prohibited between members attending meetings at their lodge. For its time, the constitution was a uniquely egalitarian endeavor and it stressed that the members should conduct themselves "without Wrath and Rancor (not in the common way) saying or doing nothing which may hinder Brotherly Love... that all may see the benign Influence of Masonry."¹³⁵ Although explicitly not Christian in its construction, this constitution evidently has many similarities to Jesus' ideal of the Beloved Community, and the remnants of Christianity that were present in the original doctrine of Freemasonry can be seen in its later, areligious composition.

Following the formation of the Grand Lodge of London and Westminster in 1717, other Grand Lodges in Scotland and Ireland formed. Over the years, members of these Lodges visited the London Great Lodge. These groups felt alienated from the aristocratic London Lodge, and further decided that they had deviated from the ancient Masonic craft.¹³⁶ In 1751, these groups

¹³⁴ Anderson, *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons* 1723.

¹³⁵ First Masonic District of New Jersey, *The Ancient Records of Lodges beyond the Sea*, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110722054921/http://www.2be1ask1.com/library/anderson.html#dieu> (accessed January 26,2021).

¹³⁶ Bernard E. Jones. *Freemasons' Guide and Compendium*, (London: Harrap Ltd., 1956), 61.

came together to form The Grand Lodge of England According to the Old Institutions.¹³⁷

Members of the new Grand Lodge became known as “the Ancients” and members of the older London Great Lodge became known as “the Moderns” (which, at the time, was considered a pejorative). This time period saw the rise of other Grand Lodges around the world, including in America and other British colonies.¹³⁸

In 1809, the Moderns decided to reach out and join with the Lodges in Scotland, Ireland, and the Ancients. Over the next few years, negotiations were made between the two groups and in 1813 the United Grand Lodge of Britain was officially formed.¹³⁹ Aside from a few divergent factions, this group remains the largest Freemason Lodge in Great Britain, and there is even a Freemasons’ Hall in London where the United Lodge was first constituted. Since then, The United Great Lodge of Britain has shifted its focus to various charitable and volunteer efforts. According to the official website for The United Great Lodge of England, the institution has contributed £42 million to deserving causes in 2019 and undertook over 18.5 million hours of volunteer work in 2018.¹⁴⁰

Freemasonry in America

Freemasonry also has a longstanding American tradition. There are reports of American Masons meeting as early as 1715.¹⁴¹ Pennsylvania’s governors from 1717-1736 were Masons. Although no Grand Lodges had been constituted yet, many prominent Americans were Masons, and Masonry was most likely guided by the “Ancient” forms as practiced in Great Britain at the

¹³⁷ Mackey, 27.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Pietre-Stones Lodges of Instruction, *Yasha Beresine*, <http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/beresiner1.html> (accessed January 27, 2021).

¹⁴⁰ The United Great Lodge of England. *Masonic Charitable Foundation*, <https://www.ugle.org.uk/charity>.

¹⁴¹ Francis Vicente, *History of the Lodge in Pennsylvania*, http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/pennsylvania_freemasonry.html.

time. The Premier Great Lodge of Britain recognized the Great Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1731, the first North American Freemason Lodge, and Benjamin Franklin was admitted the same year at the age of 25.¹⁴² From this period to the end of the American Revolution, various Grand Lodges appeared until each state had its own Grand Lodge. Some Lodges were immediately recognized by The Grand Lodges of Scotland or Ireland, others formed before requesting authorization.

During the American Revolution, Masons were divided on both sides of the conflict. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Paul Revere were all Masons, of course all were in favor of Revolution. Being a British tradition, there were also many Loyalist Masons, the most notable of which was Samuel Seabury. The British army had many Lodges, mostly chartered by the Ancient Lodge in England, and before they left America, 15 African Americans had been initiated into a British Army Lodge. It wasn't until 1784 that this group, led by Prince Hall, obtained a charter from the Moderns to form the first African American Lodge.¹⁴³ It grew in size and welcomed other Lodges, and it would come to be recognized as the African Great Lodge in 1808. This title referred to the Black members of the Lodge, not the geographical location, as there were other African Lodges formed by white British colonialists prior to the formation of the African Great Lodge. To clear up this confusion, the Lodge renamed itself the Prince Hall Lodge in 1847, in honor of their founding Grand Master.¹⁴⁴

In the years following the American Revolution, Masonry was known throughout America. Due to the secretive nature of the practices and rituals of Masonry, many Americans (and Britons, for that matter) started to become weary and skeptical of the club. In 1826, these

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, *African Lodge 459*, <https://www.princehall.org/african-lodge-459/> (accessed January 27,2021).

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

concerns would come to a head and reach a national stage during what is now known as the Morgan Affair. William Morgan was a bricklayer and stonecutter from Virginia, who briefly lived in Canada before settling in Batavia, New York.¹⁴⁵ Morgan was a Freemason in Canada, Rochester and Le Roy, but was unsuccessful in joining any Lodges in his resident town of Batavia. Morgan eventually became disillusioned with the Freemason Society and decided to publish an expose on Freemason practices, titled *Illustrations of Masonry*.¹⁴⁶ The book was supposed to propel him out of poverty and he anxiously awaited publication, however, the public repercussions to the announcement of the book were extreme. There was an attempt to burn down the publisher's office, and Morgan was twice on somewhat dubious grounds. During his second incarceration, Morgan was taken from the jail by an unidentified group of men, and he was never seen again.¹⁴⁷

This ordeal led to the widespread proliferation of Anti-Masonic sentiment. Many members of the public were rightfully indignant at the circumstances surrounding his disappearance, which the publisher capitalized on by publishing the book posthumously (although Morgan wasn't officially declared dead until years later). Many Masons were affluent and influential members of society, so the Anti-Masonic movement was also a form of anti-elitism. This Anti-Masonic sentiment would fester in the American public mind and reach an apex during the presidential election of 1832. The Anti-Masonic political party was formed in 1828 and won a number of down-ballot elections, and it is considered the first third-party in the

¹⁴⁵ Universal Co-Masonry, *The Morgan Affair*, <https://www.universalfreemasonry.org/en/stories/morgan-affair> (accessed January 27, 2021).

¹⁴⁶ Lee S. Tillotson, *Ancient Craft Masonry in Vermont, Vermont Freemasons*, <http://www.vtfreemasons.org/history/twoforgotten.php> (accessed January 27, 2021).

¹⁴⁷ Universal Co-Masonry, *The Morgan Affair*.

United States.¹⁴⁸ Inspired by this victory, the party ran a candidate to oppose the incumbent President Andrew Jackson, a prominent Mason, in 1832, but the party eventually failed at usurping Jackson's presidency and eventually dissolved by 1840.¹⁴⁹

Christian Dissent to Freemasonry

There is a history of religious dissent, particularly Christian dissent, to Freemasonry. The most notable critic of Freemasonry is undoubtedly the Roman Catholic church, which rightfully saw the ideals of the Freemason Society (as outlined in The Constitution of the Freemasons in 1725) as indifferent to religion.¹⁵⁰ Due to its hegemonic status in society, the Catholic church saw this stance as antithetical to its existence:

It is evident, however, that even in this restricted sense of "unsectarian" Christianity, Freemasonry is not a Christian institution, as it acknowledges many pre-Christian models and teachers of "Humanity." All instructed Masons agree in the objective import of this Masonic principle of "Humanity," according to which belief in dogmas is a matter of secondary importance, or even prejudicial to the law of universal love and tolerance. Freemasonry, therefore, is opposed not only to Catholicism and Christianity, but also to the whole system of supernatural truth.¹⁵¹

The first published Catholic Anti-Mason decree was in 1738, titled *In eminenti apostolatus specula*. This papal bull officially banned Catholics from becoming Masons, and since then, the church policy increased their policy to include the excommunication of all Catholic Freemasons and the banning of books that were favorable to Freemasonry.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Martin Stezano, *One Man Exposed the Secrets of the Freemasons. His Disappearance Led to Their Downfall* <https://www.history.com/news/freemason-secrets-revealed> (accessed January 27, 2021).

¹⁴⁹ Universal Co-Masonry, *The Morgan Affair*.

¹⁵⁰ Anderson, *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons 1723*.

¹⁵¹ Gruber, Hermann Gruber Masonry (Freemasonry) in Germany, 1910, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09771a.htm> (accessed July 27, 2021).

¹⁵² E. N. Peters, *The 1917 Or Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law: In English Translation with Extensive Scholarly Apparatus*. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001), 337-338.

There is also a history of Protestant dissent to Freemasonry. Most of this opposition is on the grounds of occultism and Satanism, due to the quasi-religious, secretive, and often elitist elements of its practices. Anti-Masons who cite this as the reason for their criticism often point to the writings of Albert Pike, an influential Freemason in the Southern Rite Scottish Jurisdiction.¹⁵³ Although he was a racist, Confederate judge and a member of the Ku Klux Klan, Pike was no Satanist. The charge is due to a completely fabricated quote by author and prankster Marie Joseph Gabriel Antoine Jogand-Pagès, much better known by his pen name Léo Taxil. Taxil published a number of books detailing fictitious eyewitness accounts of Freemasons engaging in occult practices. Most of the claims were quite fanciful and spoke of demons and such, and he fabricated a quote by “Albert Pike, Sovereign Pontiff of Universal Freemasonry, [who] addressed to the 23 Supreme Confederated Councils of the world” wherein he says, “The masonic Religion should be, by all of us initiates of the higher degrees, maintained in the Purity of the Luciferian doctrine.”¹⁵⁴ In 1897, Taxil publicly announced that his works were entirely fictitious and were rather meant to satirize both Freemasonry and the Christian church, and he thanked the latter for its assistance in the publicity of his works.¹⁵⁵

It is quite evident that Freemasonry is an overwhelmingly benign organization, which at its worst was an aristocratic and elitist club, and at its best is a humanitarian and charitable organization. The influence of Freemasonry is yet another example of a heteria in greater history, however, under observation its members and its ideals can be seen in every level of society from the early 18th century onward. Although it is a specifically areligious organization, it was

¹⁵³ The Scottish Rite of Free Masonry The Supreme Council, 33°, *History of The Rite*, <https://scottishrite.org/blog/virtualtour/albert-pike-museum> (accessed January 28, 2021).

¹⁵⁴ Arturo DeHoyos and Brent S. Morris, *Albert Pike and Lucifer. Is It True What They Say About Freemasonry?* (Silver Spring, Maryland: Masonic Information Center, 1998).

¹⁵⁵ Mikul Pepper, *The Confession of Leo Taxil (April 25, 1897)*, <https://shrineodreams.wordpress.com/2012/05/30/leo-taxils-confession/> (accessed January 28, 2021).

founded within the Christian society of medieval England and the Christian ideals of love and charity are evident in its doctrine. Freemasonry can be seen as a parallel to the church, with small chapters that elect officials to convene at large international conventions, and with many factions within it that dispute the “true” nature of how to best practice it. The Free Masons have been a great example of a *heteria* throughout the centuries of its existence. It would appear that many faith traditions in this country have at times learned both leadership and basic organizational skills from the Free Masons to better their proficiency and become a well-run *hetairia*. In its most basic form, Freemasonry can be seen as contributing to the Beloved Community as it requires its members to believe in a higher God, and it wholeheartedly disseminates the ideals of brotherly love, charity, and peace.

CHAPTER THREE: THE CHURCH IN THE 20TH CENTURY & SERVICE CLUBS

We've a message to give to the nations,
That the Lord who reigneth above
Hath sent us his Son to save us
And show us that God is love...
For the darkness shall turn to dawning
And the dawning to noon day bright;
And Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth,
The kingdom of love and light.

H. Ernest Nichol, "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations" 1896¹⁵⁶

Introduction

As the Christian Church entered the 20th century, the institution was met with a number of difficulties. The intense fracturing the institution experienced over the previous centuries, along with post-Enlightenment religious skepticism, authoritarian anti-religious sentiment and rapid scientific discovery led to a rise in secularism in the modern world. The *hetairia* that comprised the institutional church began to proliferate by subdividing within Christian denominations and along socio-economic lines. Christian denominations such as the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant sects saw a decline in conversions and the weight of the different forces threatened to cause the church body to crumble under its own weight. There was a schism in the worldwide church community that saw individuals rallying around their perspective of the "correct" Christian church. Most ecumenical divisions in this period are along the lines of Traditionalist (or, Fundamentalist or Restorationist) and Modernist (or, Progressive, Liberal)

¹⁵⁶ H. Ernest Nichol, *We've a Story to Tell to the Nations*, The United Methodist Hymnal (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), 569.

perspectives. The former perceives the church as straying from its original ideals and dogmas while the latter advocates for increased equity among marginalized communities within the church and malleability of the Gospel in order to reach the most souls.

In order to adapt to the unprecedented cultural shifts, church leaders organized ecumenically, in an attempt to reunite the church as a singular international entity, one that allowed for differences of opinion and perspective but also encouraged cooperation from its many appendages. This model of organization is similar to that of service clubs/modern day *hetairiai* in the 20th century, secular institutions that generally were constructed with a Christian code of conduct for philanthropy and community development. Both the Ecumenical Movement and the service club movement occurred near the turn of the 20th century and saw rapid growth for many years, only subsiding around the end of the millennia.

20th Century Church

The 20th century church faced a number of obstacles that the world had never seen before persecution – under authoritarianism, as well as an increasingly educated and literate populace that was influenced by secular philosophy and scientific discovery. Technologies from the previous century such as the telegram, telephones, the printing press, and automobiles connected individuals from all corners of the earth and all walks of life in an unprecedented manner, so much so that dissident religious ideologies, or *hetairiai*, proliferated among the international community and challenged the hegemony of Christian cultural dominance. In an attempt to keep up with this ever-changing world, the various *hetairiai* of the Christian church drifted closer together, each no longer perceiving the other as competition in the “correct faith,” but rather appreciating their similarities in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and saving souls in love and

grace. This can be seen as a great stride in the realization of the Beloved Community on earth, as intended by Jesus in the gospels.¹⁵⁷

Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue

One of the many schisms that church authorities attempted to remedy is the Catholic-Eastern Orthodox schism of the 11th century. In 1054, there was an official separation of the Western Catholic church and the Eastern denominations, namely that of Greece and Slavic countries. The two traditions, which were the *heteriai* of that day, had strayed from a unified perspective of Christianity and of Jesus' gospels, and, in 1053, Greek Orthodox churches in Italy were forced to close, and in retaliation, Catholic churches in Constantinople were forced to do the same.¹⁵⁸ This tit-for-tat ordeal snowballed until the heads of each respective church excommunicated the other, formally dividing the two Christian traditions. In 1204, the fourth crusade saw the defeat of Constantinople to the Latin church, and Roman Catholicism reigned dominant throughout England and the Middle East.¹⁵⁹ Although the Eastern Orthodox tradition remained, the administration of Latin hierarchies meant that it was no longer culturally dominant or significant.

During the Second Vatican Council in 1965, efforts were made, principally by Pope Paul VI, to support ecumenism and reconcile the two churches. The Pope nullified the excommunications of 1054 and many Popes since then have made strides to bridge the gap between these two large Church communities. In 1980, both churches founded the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the

¹⁵⁷ Ahlstrom, 147.

¹⁵⁸ Anthony Dragani, *Adrian Fortescue and the Eastern Christian Churches*. (Piscataway, New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2005), 112-113.

¹⁵⁹ Frank Leslie Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 223-224.

Orthodox Church, an ecumenical movement designed to organize a dialogue between the two denominations. Unfortunately, to this day the attempts at reconciliation have been largely unsuccessful, due to strong ecclesiastical and theological differences between the two church traditions. Most significantly, the schism is along the issue of papal primacy. The Eastern Orthodox church views its leaders as equals, wherein religious leaders only possess the honor and respect of their congregation. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic church views the power of the pope as “full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.”¹⁶⁰ It is unclear whether the two church traditions can come to a compromise on this issue, or on the myriad of differences that ossified during their millennia-long schism and subsequent development.

Uniate Churches

According to the Encyclopedia of Religion,

Uniate is the name given to former Eastern Christian or Orthodox churches that have been received under the jurisdiction of the Church of Rome and retain their own ritual, practice, and canon law, the very description of a *heteria*. The term carries a strong negative connotation and is seldom used by these churches to describe themselves.¹⁶¹

The pejorative history of the signifier is due to its perceived renunciation of Eastern Orthodoxy in the face of Catholic persecution. By acquiescing to Latin authority, these churches were perceived as undermining the autonomy of the Eastern Orthodox traditions. The term itself is centuries old and was addressed by the Joint International Commission for Theological

¹⁶⁰ Vatican —Catechism of the Catholic Church, *Christ’s Faithful - Hierarchy, Laity, Consecrated Life* https://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p123a9p4.htm (accessed February 2, 2021).

¹⁶¹ “Uniate Churches.” Encyclopedia of Religion. Encyclopedia.com. (January 12, 2021). <https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/uniate-churches> (accessed February 2, 2021).

Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church in 1993 as no longer valid in the ongoing ecumenical effort.¹⁶²

Protestantism

Protestant Christianity became even more diverse during the 20th century and a number of new church movements, or *hetairiai*, emerged. Most of these movements are divided among the Fundamentalist-Modernist line, with some advocating for restoration of the original church dogmas and others advocating for philosophical inquiry and dialectic processes within the church body. Each church movement was firm in its affirmation that the church in its current state was insufficient in engaging with the modern world, and that it should evolve in ways that each movement saw fit.¹⁶³

Azusa Street Revival

One of the most significant events in Protestant Christianity was the emergence of a new *hetairia* that became known as the Azusa Street Revival of 1906. It occurred in Los Angeles, California, when a one-eyed Black preacher named William Seymour moved his mission to an abandoned building in downtown LA, after a series of failures preaching and finding a location for his church. However, once he and his congregation moved to Azusa Street, “strange phenomena” began occurring.¹⁶⁴ Attendance at the church grew rapidly. Seymour and his congregation began speaking in tongues, a phenomenon that is still highly important to the Pentecostal tradition, as it was seen by Seymour as evidence for one’s reception of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶⁵ Services were disorganized; there was never a formal beginning or end, as believers would wander in and out of the house and pray as needed. Theologian David Cloud writes,

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ahlstrom, 178-179.

¹⁶⁴ D.W. Cloud, *Azusa Street Mission*, <http://www.tribwatch.com/azusa.htm> (accessed February 3, 2021).

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

People sang at the same time but “with completely different syllables, rhythms, and melodies.” The services were characterized by much confusion: dancing, jumping up and down, falling, trances, slaying in the spirit, “tongues,” jerking, hysteria, strange noises, and “holy laughter.” One visitor described the meetings as “wild, hysterical demonstrations.” The seekers would be “seized with a strange spell and commence a jibberish of sounds.” A Times reporter noted that the participants “work themselves into a state of mad excitement in their peculiar zeal.”¹⁶⁶

Within months of its foundation, the Azusa Street mission, known as the Apostolic Faith Mission, was the largest congregation in the city, with as many as 1,300 attending the services, and this momentum continued for a number of years.¹⁶⁷ The shabby and unkempt presentation of the church space meant that many different individuals felt welcome and found their faith at Azusa Street, and the Mission is noted for its inclusion of women into leadership positions as well as the diversity of its congregation. Members of the church were not discriminated against based on their race, social class, or literacy as they might have been in other denominations. In 1906 the Apostolic Faith was created, a newsletter published by the Azusa Street Revival. A 1907 edition noted, “One token of the Lord’s coming is that He is melting all races and nations together, and they are filled with the power and glory of God. He is baptizing by one spirit into one body and making up a people that will be ready to meet Him when He comes.”¹⁶⁸ When phrased like this, one can see the distinctive role that the Azusa Street Revival had in working toward the Beloved Community of Jesus’ gospels.

It is difficult to understate the impact that the Azusa Street Revival had on contemporary American Christianity. When believers, skeptics, and media alike came to the Apostolic Faith Mission on Azusa Street, they departed with stories of the strange and powerful things occurring

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ International Center for Spiritual Renewal, *Azusa History* (May 11, 2007) <http://www.tribwatch.com/azusa.htm> (accessed February 3, 2021).

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

there. Many took the charismatic style of preaching and the spiritual environment that was nurtured at Azusa Street and brought it across the globe with the intention of evangelizing others into their new denomination. The revival persisted until around 1913, as the movement became strong across the country and as the spectacle of Azusa Street lost its appeal.¹⁶⁹

Pentecostalism

The Pentecostal movement has its roots directly in the Azusa Street Revival. Taking from Seymour's bizarre and charismatic approach to Christianity, various Pentecostal churches began springing up, primarily in immigrant communities. The foundations of this new movement were very appealing to Wesleyan-Holiness Christians, who were already forming churches named "Pentecostal," and who likewise believed in sanctification, baptism, and intense spirituality. To Wesleyan-Holiness Christians and Pentecostals, one could be instantly sanctified and converted to Christianity upon a "second work of grace," or an interaction with God. For all these reasons and more, early Pentecostals saw themselves as Christian outsiders, who alone possessed the secret to true salvation and Christ's return.¹⁷⁰

As Pentecostalism proliferated throughout the globe, it underwent certain changes. At its start, it was an interracial endeavor, standing apart from the Jim Crow laws of the era. Though it never entirely disappeared, interracial worship within Pentecostalism would not reemerge as a widespread practice until after the civil rights movement.¹⁷¹ In 1914, 300 white Pentecostal ministers and laymen from all regions of the United States gathered to create a new, national Pentecostal fellowship—the General Council of the Assemblies of God. This chapter would

¹⁶⁹ International Center for Spiritual Renewal, *Azusa History* (May 11, 2007) <http://www.tribwatch.com/azusa.htm> (accessed February 3, 2021).

¹⁷⁰ Ahlstrom, 181-183.

¹⁷¹ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*. (Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 189-191.

grow to become the largest Pentecostal body in the world, although its origin was a schism along racial lines.

Furthermore, speaking in tongues was incredibly important to the burgeoning Pentecostal movement, and although that practice persists today, it was not an effective tool for evangelism. Immediately after the Azusa Street Revival, contemporaries of William Seymour brought their new religion to Africa, Europe, and the rest of the United States.¹⁷² Missionaries to exotic regions of the world believed that they wouldn't have to learn the languages of their targeted communities, as the Holy Spirit would come to them and allow them to communicate as they had while "speaking in tongues."¹⁷³ The efficacy of this claim was obviously dubious, and "speaking in tongues" was seen as a personal expression of faith, not as a method of evangelism. Other Christian denominations also ridiculed this practice, calling it "demonic" and "satanic gibberish."¹⁷⁴ It remains highly prevalent in Pentecostal congregations as well as very alienating to some who witness it.

Pentecostalism was at first rejected by mainline American Protestantism. In 1928, the World Christian Fundamentals Association (a Protestant-Baptist organization) labeled Pentecostalism "fanatical" and "unscriptural." However, this rejection of Pentecostals subsided, and gave way to a new *hetairai*, a new cooperation between Pentecostals and leaders of the "new evangelicalism" movement. American Pentecostals were involved in the founding of the 1942 National Association of Evangelicals.¹⁷⁵ To this day, Pentecostalism is one of the world's fastest-growing religions. A writer for the Pulitzer Center notes that "an estimated 35,000 people join

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Vinson, 201-205.

¹⁷⁵ Ed van der Mass, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements: Revised and Expanded Edition*. (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 2010), 783-785.

the Pentecostal church each day. Of the world’s two billion Christians a quarter are now Pentecostal—up from 6 percent in 1980.”¹⁷⁶

Evangelicalism

Contemporary Evangelical Christianity began as a Fundamentalist rejection of evolving liberal Christian theology. Evangelicalism is a cross-denominational phenomenon, spanning Reformed, Baptist, Wesleyan, Pentecostal, and charismatic churches.¹⁷⁷ Each of these churches or movements became yet another *heteria* in the American Christian landscape. According to Pew Research, in 2016, there were an estimated 619 million evangelicals in the world, meaning that one in four Christians would be classified as evangelical. The United States has the largest proportion of evangelicals in the world, and American evangelicals are a quarter of the nation’s population.¹⁷⁸

The history of the term “evangelicalism” goes back to before the Protestant Reformation. By the time Martin Luther was spurring his movement, the term had become widely used, as Martin Luther referred to the “evangelische Kirche” (evangelical church) to distinguish Protestants from Roman Catholics. Historically, “Evangelicalism” has been used to mean “of the gospels,” and many churches during the 17th century are seen as contributing to the rise of evangelicalism through the Pietism of Puritan churches. Historian Mark Noll adds that Evangelicalism has a legacy of “rigorous spirituality and innovative organization.”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Bregtje van der Haak and Richard Vijgen, *Atlas of Pentecostalism*. (Pulitzer Center. December 27, 2013) <https://pulitzercenter.org/projects/atlas-pentecostalism> (accessed February 3, 2021).

¹⁷⁷ R. Albert Mohler Jr., *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 69-73.

¹⁷⁸ David Masci and Gregory A. Smith, G. A. *Following Rev. Billy Graham’s Death, 5 Facts about U.S. Evangelical Protestants*. (Pew Research Center. July 27, 2020). <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/01/5-facts-about-u-s-evangelical-protestants> (accessed February 4, 2021).

¹⁷⁹ M. A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys*, (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2004), 262-271.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Evangelical Christianity spread to America and England, as Evangelicalism became more structured and defined. Evangelical preachers emphasized personal salvation and piety more than ritual and tradition, which is humorous considering how the movement has evolved to the present day. The First and Second Great Awakenings are seen as pivotal to the rise and development of Evangelicalism, as they prioritized a personal connection to God, fostered a deep sense of spiritual connection, and supported spontaneous preaching and conversions. Engrained in this spontaneity is an affinity for “diving outpourings of the Holy Spirit,” which would later relate to the Pentecostal tradition of “speaking in tongues.”¹⁸⁰

In order to understand how Evangelical Christianity has impacted contemporary America, it is necessary to delve into the spectacle surrounding it. For over a century, Evangelicalism has taken the concepts of the “charismatic movement” to the extreme with its use of mass media and megachurches. Evangelicalism, and its high-energy style, belief in spontaneous conversion, and use of mass media has allowed for the accumulation of large numbers of individuals into a single church. The first to synthesize all of these concepts was Aimee Semple McPherson, a pioneer who used the radio to reach a wide audience for her evangelicalism, and eventually built one of the first megachurches in Los Angeles. During her sermons, McPherson would employ props, costumes, animals, cinema, and engage in general theatrical frivolities in order to engage her audience. She also led large faith healing presentations where she would “heal” churchgoers of their ailments and encouraged speaking in tongues. McPherson was wildly successful and, according to church records, her megachurch received 40 million visitors within its first seven years.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, *Bridal Call Foursquare, Vol. 13: No. 5* (Los Angeles: Foursquare Publications, October 1929).

McPherson, and 20th century Evangelicalism, was seen as a response to “Modernist” and liberal approaches to Christianity. By the 20th century, Evangelical Christianity was an entirely Restorationist Fundamentalist movement, which advocated the inerrancy of the Bible and called for a “restoration” to “traditional” Christian values. McPherson was ideologically opposed to teaching evolution in schools and opposed secularism, social reform, and mainstream culture.¹⁸² McPherson was hugely influential to the Evangelical movement, and her methods inspired countless other megachurches and televangelists who have modified her approach in the 21st century. A highly notable post-McPherson Evangelist is Billy Graham, who went on to achieve international success and recognition as a televangelist. Graham was a spiritual adviser to U.S. presidents, and he provided counsel to every president from Harry S. Truman (33rd) to Donald Trump (45th).¹⁸³

Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses developed in the Third Great Awakening from the teachings of Charles Taze Russell. Russell was a minister from Pennsylvania, and from 1886 to 1904 he published a six-volume Bible study series now named *Studies in the Scriptures*.¹⁸⁴ In 1881, Russell co-founded the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, which is still functioning to this day, currently as the international organization that disseminates the doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses. Russell was highly influential and at the time of his death, he had approximately 50,000 followers of what would be called the “Bible Student” movement.¹⁸⁵ Following his death

¹⁸² Daniel Mark Epstein, *Sister Aimee: The Life of Aimee Semple McPherson* 1993 (Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1993), 202-219.

¹⁸³ Russ Busby, *Billy Graham: Pastor to Presidents*, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, <https://billygraham.org/story/billy-graham-pastor-to-presidents-2/> (accessed February 4, 2021).

¹⁸⁴ M. James Penton, *Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses* (2nd ed.) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 13–46.

¹⁸⁵ Samuel M. Jackson, *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (Volume VII)* (London: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1910), 226-229.

in 1917, this movement saw a great schism and a large number of students either left entirely or started their own churches. All of the factions that emerged cut their ties with the Watch Tower Society, except one, which would eventually become Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931.¹⁸⁶

Jehovah's Witnesses profess a number of beliefs that fall outside of mainstream Christian thought. In their own unique belief system, they had become yet another stand-alone *hetairiai*. They do not observe holidays or birthdays, as they are seen as having pagan origins. They consider secular society to be morally corrupt and under the influence of Satan.¹⁸⁷ Witnesses also refuse blood transfusions and military service, which has led to the conflict over civil liberties in a number of countries.¹⁸⁸ Jehovah's Witnesses are best known for their door-to-door style of evangelicalism, where they distribute Russell's writings along with their own magazine (published by the Watch Tower Society) and their own translation of the Bible.¹⁸⁹

Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy

The Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy is a division that occurred in the American Presbyterian church in the early 20th century. This became a *heteria* as adopters in an already-established *hetairiai* adopted a unique belief system. The roots of this theological schism go back as far as the Old-Light New-Light division of the First Great Awakening. Essentially, the crux of the issue was whether the church should acquiesce to developing scientific and moral pressures, or to adhere rigidly to its "original" construction and intent. Modernist scholar Shailer Mathews

¹⁸⁶ Alan Rogerson, *Millions Now Living Will Never Die: A Study of Jehovah's Witnesses*. (London: Constable, 1969), 113-115.

¹⁸⁷ Penton, 13-46.

¹⁸⁸ Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, *Flag Salute, Anthems and Voting, School and Jehovah's Witnesses*, <https://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/1101983034#h=17> (accessed February 5, 2021).

¹⁸⁹ Linda Edwards, *A Brief Guide to Beliefs* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 438.

wrote that “the use of scientific, historical, and social methods in understanding and applying evangelical Christianity to the needs of living persons, is Modernism.”¹⁹⁰

One event that further spurred the controversy was the sermon delivered by Harry Emerson Fosdick in 1922, entitled “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?,” in which he presented both Presbyterian and Baptist theological liberals as sincere Christians who were attempting to reconcile their faith with the shifting historic and scientific discoveries of the time.¹⁹¹ Fundamentalists, he argued, were denying their Christian values of loving their fellow man and of accepting others by stubbornly maintaining their antiquated perspective of the faith. “Has anybody a right to deny the Christian name to those who differ with him on such points and to shut against them the doors of the Christian fellowship?”¹⁹² The sermon was published in religious journals and sent to Presbyterian congregations around the country.

The General Assembly of 1923 pitted these two opposing Presbyterian intellectuals, Fosdick and Bryan, against each other in a theological convention. Bryan posed that the Presbyterian denomination should cease giving money to any school, church, or university that taught evolution. Bryan’s motion lost, considering that many devout Presbyterians were in fact theologically liberal and did not dispute evolution as being antithetical to biblical Christianity. In addition, Bryan’s motion to have Fosdick prosecuted by the assembly failed, but he was successful in having the denomination reaffirm their commitment to the “Five Fundamentals” as

¹⁹⁰ Edward J. Larson, *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America’s Continuing Debate Over Science and Religion*. (New York: Basic Books, 2020), 89-95.

¹⁹¹ Henry E. Fosdick, *Shall the Fundamentalists Win? Defending Liberal Protestantism in the 1920s*, <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5070/> (accessed February 6, 2021).

¹⁹² Ibid.

established in 1910, which was generally the rallying doctrine for theologically conservative Presbyterians.¹⁹³

Persecution under Authoritarianism

The Third Reich

The 1930s saw the rise of the Third Reich in Germany. Following the fragmentation of the Roman Catholic church during the Reformation, Christian denominations in 19th century Germany were primarily Protestant, at about a 2:1 ratio with Catholicism.¹⁹⁴ Although the Nazi party itself did not have an officially recognized-religion, the German nationalist ideology strongly favored Lutheran Protestantism. Nazism became its own *hetairia*, in a sense going back to the pre-Constantinian days of Rome when the church existed and survived solely as a *hetairia*. In this case, both German Lutherans and Roman Catholics persevered during Nazism, although many within their ranks were taken in by the movement and changed to a different sort of *hetairia* in the process. The founder of the German Empire, Otto van Bismarck (1815-1898), strongly disavowed the Catholic Church, and launched what would later be known as the *Kulturkampf*, or, “Battle for the Culture,” in which Roman Catholics were persecuted in larger German society and Lutheran Protestantism was viewed as the proper German Nationalist religion¹⁹⁵. This measure ultimately failed politically, however its ramifications can be seen decades later during the rise of the Third Reich.

¹⁹³ Bradley J. Longfield, *Presbyterians and American Culture A History* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2013), 28-30.

¹⁹⁴ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *The German Churches and the Nazi State* <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-german-churches-and-the-nazi-state> (accessed February 6, 2021).

¹⁹⁵ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, *Kulturkampf*, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Kulturkampf>.

The divide between German Catholics and Protestants reached a head in 1939 when Pope Pius XI published *Mit Brennender Sorge* [“With Burning Concern”] *On the Church and the German Reich*. This piece of literature is considered the first published opposition to Nazi Germany,¹⁹⁶ and it was read at every German Catholic church on Palm Sunday in 1937. In it, Pope Pius XI condemned the Jewish persecution by the Nazi government, affirmed the validity of the Old Testament in Christian Theology, and disputed racism on Christian grounds:

Whoever exalts race, or the people, or the State, or a particular form of State, or the depositories of power, or any other fundamental value of the human community – however necessary and honorable be their function in worldly things – whoever raises these notions above their standard value and divinizes them to an idolatrous level, distorts and perverts an order of the world planned and created by God; he is far from the true faith in God and from the concept of life which that faith upholds.¹⁹⁷

Predictably, Nazi response to this proclamation was unfavorable. Hitler was reportedly furious, and “vowed revenge against the Church,”¹⁹⁸ and Nazi-Catholic relations quickly deteriorated. The Catholic-Nazi divide took on two fronts: the intensification of Nazi prosecution of Catholic religious leaders, and the ability to assist Jewish refugees by Catholics.

In the years following *Mit Brennender Sorge*, Catholics were persecuted by the Nazi regime. From 1940 until the end of the war in 1945, nearly 2,600 German Catholic priests were imprisoned in Dachau prison camp, and more than a third died due to inhumane conditions.¹⁹⁹

Other Catholic priests spoke up against Nazi ideals of eugenics and against the euthanasia

¹⁹⁶ Carlo Falconi and Muriel Grindrod, *The Popes in the twentieth century: from Pius X to John XXIII*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967), 311-314.

¹⁹⁷ PIUS XI, *Mit Brennender Sorge* (March 14, 1937) http://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_14031937_mit-brennender-sorge.html (accessed February 6, 2021).

¹⁹⁸ Frank Coppa, *The Papacy, the Jews, and the Holocaust* Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 162-163.

¹⁹⁹ Guillaume Zeller and Michael J. Miller. *The Priest Barracks: Dachau, 1938-1945*. (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2017), 113-123.

program, wherein physically disabled and mentally ill persons were killed in Nazi murder camps. The most vocal Catholic dissident to the euthanasia program, Clemens August von Galen, was never thrown into a camp; however, he was held under house arrest until the end of the war, at which point he was declared a Cardinal by Pope Pius XII.²⁰⁰

The Soviet Union

Christianity also saw persecution and unrest during the Russian Civil War and during the reign of the Soviet Union. The church in the Soviet Union survived solely as a *hetairia*. There was no official institutional church allowed to exist. In many ways this showed the strength of the church as a *hetairia*. Russian Orthodoxy has a long history in the Eastern Church tradition, and in 1914 there were 55,173 Russian Orthodox churches, 29,593 chapels, and a total of 95,259 monks and nuns in Russia.²⁰¹ During the Russian revolution, the Eastern Orthodox Church supported the anti-Soviet White army against Vladimir Lenin's Bolshevik party. Lenin, in alignment with Marxist ideology, believed that "religion is the opiate of the masses," and was therefore in opposition to a revolutionary communist agenda.²⁰²

After the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1923 under Lenin, Orthodox Christians were persecuted, tortured, executed, or sent to prison camps.²⁰³ The Soviet Union was the first state to be fundamentally opposed to religion, and practicing any religion under communist rule was strictly prohibited. According to religious reporter and historian Richard N. Ostling, "In the

²⁰⁰ Encyclopedia Britannica Online: *Blessed Clemens August, Graf von Galen* <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Blessed-Clemens-August-Graf-von-Galen> (accessed February 6, 2021).

²⁰¹ Decani Monastery in Kosovo, *A History of the Orthodox Church, The Church of Russia (1448-1800)* <http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/history5.aspx> (accessed February 7, 2021).

²⁰² Karl Marx, translated Joseph J. O'Malley and Annette Jolin *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 129-137.

²⁰³ Alexander, Translated by Vera Bouteneff, *Father Arseny 1893-1973 Priest, Prisoner, Spiritual Father* (Yonkers, NY, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998), 96-103.

Bolsheviks' first five years in power, 28 bishops and 1,200 priests were cut down by the red sickle. Stalin greatly accelerated the terror, and by the end of Khrushchev's rule, liquidations of clergy reached an estimated 50,000."²⁰⁴ Soviet state-sanctioned atheism caused the displacement of many Christians, who fled Russia in search of religious freedom.

Communist China

The Catholic Church made great strides to connect with Chinese believers in 1939, when Pope Pius XII announced a change in Catholic religious policy that would allow certain Confucianist customs to be permissible in Christian Catholicism.²⁰⁵ Specifically, this decree allowed for the veneration of deceased family members, a practice that was previously seen as “superstitious” and incongruent with Catholic dogma.²⁰⁶ This decree allowed for an expansion of Catholicism in China after decades of little to no ecclesiastical activity. The following ten years would see a rapid increase in Chinese Christianity, as the current Nationalist Government of China established diplomatic relations with the Vatican, and Pope Pius established an archdiocese and an archbishop.²⁰⁷

After World War II, about four million Chinese were members of the Catholic faith. This was less than one percent of the population, but numbers increased dramatically. In 1949, there existed 20 archdioceses, 39 apostolic prefectures, 3,080 foreign missionaries, and 2,557 Chinese priests.²⁰⁸ However, there was a rapid change of heart when Mao Zedong came to power in 1949 and established the People's Republic of China. Similar to Lenin in 1923, Zedong was strongly

²⁰⁴ Ostling, Richard, “Cross meets Kremlin,” Time magazine, 2001-06-24

https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Russian_Orthodox_Church (accessed February 7, 2021).

²⁰⁵ Peter Hoffman, *The Christian Church in the Cold War* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 240, 591-592.

²⁰⁶ Holy Spirit Study Centre Publications, *Tripod* hsstudyc.org.hk (accessed February 7, 2021).

²⁰⁷ Hoffmann, 591–592.

²⁰⁸ Gutenberg Project, *Pope Pius XII and China*

http://www.self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/Pope_Pius_XII_and_China (accessed February 7, 2021).

influenced by the ideology of Marxism and, therefore, had a strong negative response to organized religion, especially the Catholic Church in China. Catholics in Communist China were harshly persecuted; religious leaders were subjected to increased supervision and had to perform manual labor in order to earn their wages.²⁰⁹ Thousands of missionaries were expelled from China, and in 1950, legislation was passed that would allow churches to function in China as long as there was no “foreign influence” or ties to foreign groups. This was yet another example of the church’s survival as a *hetairia*. The institutional church was not allowed to exist during the reign of communist China. Protestant Christianity was largely unaffected by this decree, although it affected the Catholic Church greatly. Pope Pius XII, although once heavily involved in the formation of a Chinese Catholic church, acknowledged in 1954 that a “national” church (as was established in lieu of connections to the Vatican), would never be Catholic, and in 1955, there were mass arrests of the Shanghai diocese, clergy, and faithful.²¹⁰

In 1957, the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association was established, and the remaining functioning Catholic churches and clergy were subjected to “re-education” programs. Slowly but surely, all “revolutionary” Catholic priests were arrested and replaced with “patriotic” ones, and the church became an arm of the state. Since then, there has been no significant improvement in China’s religious policies nor any connection between the Chinese Catholic church and the Vatican.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Joseph Tse-Hei Lee, *Christianity in Contemporary China: An Update, Journal of Church and State* (2007) <https://academic.oup.com/jcs/article-abstract/49/2/277/764110?redirectedFrom=fulltext> (accessed February 7, 2021).

²¹¹ Ibid.

Rising Secularism

Secularism is defined by English writer George Holyoake as “a code of duty pertaining to this life, founded on considerations purely human,”²¹² as opposed to a staunchly religious or atheist dogma. Secularism can be seen as a *hetairia*, yet not as a church or organization. It was more of a shared mindset by people within general society and, ultimately, within the existing *hetairia* of the Christian Church. Holyoake intended Secularism to be an affirmation of Positivist human values, as a “freethinking” examination of Christian values, without preconceptions. “The Freethinker fears not to follow a conclusion to the utmost limits of truth, whether it coincides with the Bible or contradicts it.”²¹³ This is notably different from atheism, which is a theology that specifically functions as a negation to theism, and states that God does not exist, or no Gods exist.²¹⁴

In modern political theory, “secular” is used a little differently. Merriam-Webster defines “secular” as “not overtly or specifically religious,” and it denotes a perspective that discourages the influence of religion in political affairs. As more democracies separated religion and state and expanded religious freedoms, state secularism became the norm and by the 21st century only 20% of the countries in the world had an official state religion.²¹⁵ Many historians attribute the proliferation of secularism into society to the intellectual and scientific developments of the Age of Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as the aforementioned political shifts in

²¹² George Jacob Holyoake, *The Principles of Secularism*. (London: Watts, 1881) <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/36797/36797-h/36797-h.htm> (accessed February 8, 2021).

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Paul Draper, *Atheism and Agnosticism* The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2017 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/atheism-agnosticism/> (accessed February 8, 2021).

²¹⁵ Pew Research Center’s Religion & Public Life Project, *Many Countries Favor Specific Religions* (May 30, 2020) <https://www.pewforum.org/2017/10/03/many-countries-favor-specific-religions-officially-or-unofficially/> (accessed February 10, 2021).

Russia and Germany that displaced millions on religious grounds. Secularism has no party or specific champion; it has been spreading naturally through social and economic development.

Philosophy of Enlightenment

The Age of Enlightenment was a period of philosophical and scientific development among European intellectuals. Philosophy in this era is characterized by a shift in paradigm away from theistic sovereignty toward a focus on human understanding and reasoning. René Descartes is seen as the first to examine this paradigm through his statement, “cogito ergo sum,” or, “I think therefore I am.”²¹⁶ Descartes’ proclamation is significant because he is alleging that only his own cognition can prove that he exists, that if a deity (or, demon, as he writes) was causing him to perceive the world falsely he would first have to exist in order to then be deceived.²¹⁷ His own thoughts are the only thing he can be certain exists in the world, and these thoughts exist irrespective of the existence of God. It is this recontextualization of human intuition into the center of existence that is central to the Enlightenment, and significant in the rise of secularism in the following centuries.

Darwinism

Following the Age of Enlightenment, a groundbreaking scientific development was made in the 19th century that would change the study of biology forever. This development was the concept of natural selection, developed by Charles Darwin. Darwin traveled as a geologist on a ship early in his career, and he noted the biological diversity in different areas around the globe. This observation led him to construct his theory of natural selection in 1838,²¹⁸ and to the

²¹⁶ René Descartes, translated John Veitch, *A Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy* (Washington D.C. London, M. W. Dunne, 1637, 1901), 62-73.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Adrian Desmond and James Moore, *Darwin: The Life of a Tormented Evolutionist* (London: Michael Joseph, Penguin Group, 1991), 115-132.

publication of *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. Prominent contemporary biologist Jerry Coyne writes on *On the Origin of Species*: “In *The Origin*, Darwin provided an alternative hypothesis for the development, diversification, and design of life. Much of that book presents evidence that not only supports evolution but at the same time refutes creationism. In Darwin’s day, the evidence for his theories was compelling but not completely decisive.”²¹⁹ In brief, natural selection is the theory that as a species interacts with its environment, certain genetic traits will be more favorable for survival and reproduction than others. The traits that are less favorable will eventually be bred out of a species’ genetic code.

At this point in history, post-Enlightenment, many state institutions were not overtly religious; however, society was still religious at large. Darwin’s theories directly refuted the prevalent creationist perspective in education and was seen to challenge fundamental Christian thought. Reverend Adam Sedgwick, a geologist and friend of Darwin, wrote him a letter after reading *On the Origin of Species*. Sedgwick is clear that in his perspective, if Darwin were to refute creationism and therefore challenge the existence of God on a global stage, “humanity in my mind, would suffer a damage that might brutalize it—& sink the human race into a lower grade of degradation than any into which it has fallen since its written records tell us of its history.”²²⁰ Darwin’s theory was seen by many as an affront on Christian morality and ethics in its formulation of a non-religious theory of human creation.

The Theory of Evolution is a synthesis of Darwin’s theory of natural selection with genetic studies of mutation, and it has been positively hypothesized and reproduced enough to be known as a scientific fact as well as a theory. Darwin’s ideas have fundamentally influenced

²¹⁹ Jerry A. Coyne, *Why Evolution is True* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 168-190.

²²⁰ Adam Sedgwick, *Letter 2548 to Darwin, (24 Nov 1859)*, Darwin Correspondence Project <https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/letter/DCP-LETT-2548.xml> (accessed February 10, 2021).

science and popular understanding, and very quickly began being taught in schools in America. Darwin and the theory of evolution both clashed with widespread Christian creationist education of that day and supported many aspects of the growing secularism leading into the 20th century.

Scopes “Monkey” Trial. The Scopes Monkey Trial was a significant event in the social and political impact of Darwinism on America. The trial was seen to be significant in the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy within the Presbyterian Church, which will be discussed next. In 1925, John W. Butler successfully lobbied the Tennessee government to pass an anti-evolution law, The Butler Act, that outlawed schools from teaching evolution in their classrooms, favoring creationism. This decision was predicated on a 35-year career of William Jennings Bryan, a lawyer, politician, and fundamentalist Presbyterian, who had been opposing the teaching of evolution and Darwinism in general since he was elected to congress in 1890.²²¹ Bryan was influenced by the opinions of Sedgewick and other religious scholars, most specifically Presbyterian theologian Charles Hodge, who argued that evolution was irreconcilable with biblical Christianity and morality. Bryan was also convinced that the philosophies of Nietzsche, along with the theory of evolution, purported a “Social Darwinism,” where survival of the fittest would occur in the social and political realms. Bryan saw this as impetus for Germany’s aggression in starting World War I.²²²

The trial itself was launched only months after the Butler Act was passed, when Tennessee schoolteacher John Scopes intentionally broke the law by teaching evolution to his students. The act was premeditated, as the American Civil Liberties Union agreed to finance the trial, and it was meant to bring media attention to the small town of Dayton. High profile lawyers

²²¹ E. J. Larson, *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America’s Continuing Debate Over Science and Religion* United States: Basic Books, 2020, 60-87.

²²² J. P. Moran, *The Scopes Trial: A Brief History with Documents*. (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2002). 124-132.

were called or drawn to the case, including Clarence Darrow, Tom Stewart, John R. Neal, and of course, William Jennings Bryan himself.²²³

The trial itself was somewhat of a spectacle. It garnered great media attention, and it was the first United States trial to be broadcast on radio. The judge, John T. Raulston, was accused of being biased toward the prosecution, and he did (rightly) remind the jury that the trial was on the violation of the law, not the merit of the law itself.²²⁴ Ultimately, the jury found Scopes guilty as charged, however the jury seemed overwhelmingly sympathetic toward Scopes on the grounds that the law was unjust. Scopes was ordered to pay a \$100 fine, to which he responded:

Your honor, I feel that I have been convicted of violating an unjust statute. I will continue in the future, as I have in the past, to oppose this law in any way I can. Any other action would be in violation of my ideal of academic freedom—that is, to teach the truth as guaranteed in our constitution, of personal and religious freedom. I think the fine is unjust.²²⁵

The fine would later be repealed on a technicality. Although the Scopes “Monkey” Trial would have no direct impact on policy, it greatly influenced the American public and perception of the evolution-creationism debate. Tennessee would repeal the Butler Act in 1967 and, in 1968 the Supreme Court would finally rule that opposing evolution on religious grounds is in violation of the First Amendment (*Epperson v. Arkansas*, 393 U.S. 97).

The Response to Secularism

The church recognized all of the issues it was facing entering the 20th century, and various Christian leaders attempted to recontextualize their religion in a world that was losing its deeply-ingrained religious paradigm. Religion was now seen as secondary to culture, as a

²²³ Richard M. Cornelius, *The Scopes Trial “The World’s Most Famous Court Trial”* <https://www.bryan.edu/about/college-history/scopes-trial/> (accessed February 10, 2021).

²²⁴ Larson, 60-87.

²²⁵ Clarence Darrow, *World’s Most Famous Court Trial* Complete stenographic report of the court test of the Tennessee anti-evolution act at Dayton, July 10 to 21, 1925, including speeches and arguments of attorneys, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1925), 304.

separate entity, when the two would have been synonymous in decades past. To prove the efficacy of the Christian church and to further promote the teachings of Jesus, Christian authorities rallied and regrouped in an attempt to connect the church body and revitalize it in a completely alien setting. Although this group think was not a *hetairia* in and of itself, it was supported and opposed by two differing factions within the *hetairiai* that already existed within the Christian Church at the time.

Second Vatican Council. One of the most significant and transformative moments in the 20th century church was the Second Vatican Council, or Vatican II. Vatican II was a dialogue that occurred during the years 1962-65 between Catholic clergy and religious leaders from around the world. This was instituted in part to bring together the global *hetairiai* based on language, liturgy, and ideology. The church hoped to address issues of infallibility, or whether its teachings would conflict with its initial doctrines, within the church concerning the quickly modernizing world. Vatican II sought to reconcile the various changes that modernity, globalism, and secularism brought upon the world with original Christian ideals that the entire Catholic church would adhere to. Specifically, Vatican II brought ecumenism and a universal call to holiness to the forefront of Catholic consideration.²²⁶ Before this period the Catholic church had been somewhat insular and unconcerned with other religions and Christian denominations. This development marks a renewed Catholic interest in the larger church body and in maintaining the holiness of the Christian church as an entity.

Vatican II also took strong stances on the issues of genocide and xenophobia. For instance, in the document I, Pope Paul VI writes:

²²⁶ Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Second Vatican Council, *Sanctitas clarior - Lettera Apostolica in forma di Motu Proprio con la quale sono riordinati i processi per le cause di beatificazione e canonizzazione (19 marzo 1969) | Paolo VI* http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/it/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19690319_sanctitas-clarior.html (accessed February 10, 2021).

Never has the human race enjoyed such an abundance of wealth, resources and economic power, and yet a huge proportion of the worlds citizens are still tormented by hunger and poverty, while countless numbers suffer from total illiteracy. Never before has man had so keen an understanding of freedom, yet at the same time new forms of social and psychological slavery make their appearance. Although the world of today has a very vivid awareness of its unity and of how one man depends on another in needful solidarity, it is most grievously torn into opposing camps by conflicting forces. For political, social, economic, racial and ideological disputes still continue bitterly, and with them the peril of a war which would reduce everything to ashes. True, there is a growing exchange of ideas, but the very words by which key concepts are expressed take on quite different meanings in diverse ideological systems. Finally, man painstakingly searches for a better world, without a corresponding spiritual advancement.²²⁷

This beautiful declaration speaks to the spirit of Vatican II: an increasingly progressive perspective on the sectarianism between humankind, and a call for peace, love and unity.

Without invoking too much of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, the Vatican was able to express its concern with the equity and peace of all individuals. Indeed, Vatican II met in the Cold-War era, after the atrocities of WWII, but still yet experiencing persecution in Communist authoritarian regimes, and the impact of this era of history is clearly seen in the documents from the Council.

Furthermore, Vatican II was a largely liberal and Modernist endeavor.²²⁸ It brought the church closer to secular and socially liberal policies of the time. This strong stance alienated Traditionalist Catholics and even some Liberal Catholics who thought that the Vatican didn't go far enough in their progressivism. Vatican II allowed for local languages to be used in Mass instead of the traditional Latin, and generally intended to allow Catholicism to adapt to local cultures. Vatican II intended to show the world that "the church was sympathetic to the way of life of different peoples and races and was ready to appropriate aspects of different cultural

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Eamon Duffy, *Saints and Sinners, a History of the Popes*, (London: Yale University Press, 1997), 354-362.

traditions.”²²⁹ These ideals of unity and ecumenism are prevalent throughout the entire Christian church in the 20th century.

Ecumenism. The Christian community at the beginning of the 19th century was fractured and weakened. Christian leaders knew that the best way for Christianity to enter the modern world, with its ever-changing and evolving scientific and political landscape, was to unite. This movement went a long way to adopt a new-found *hetairia* from the various *hetairiai* and their like-minded faith expressions. The early 20th century saw a development of Christian Ecumenism, wherein denominations from around the world decided to lay aside their differences and work together toward a common goal. The first significant Ecumenic event was the 1910 World Missionary Congress in Edinburgh, Scotland, wherein 1,215 different representatives gathered to discuss the state of the Church and to develop a plan for interdenominational collaboration. The dialogue in Edinburgh was that Christianity had matured from its adolescence into adulthood, and that widespread evangelism was becoming less pertinent to church survival. The report from the conference confirms,

For these reasons we lay emphasis, not so much upon the evangelistic work by which new members are added to the Church, a subject which falls rather within the scope of other Commissions, but rather on the questions of organization, Church membership, discipline, and edification, the training and employment of workers, the development of the new life within the Church in character and spiritual fruitfulness, and its deepening and strengthening by means of an adequate Christian literature in all its departments.²³⁰

Another significant ecumenic event was the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1948. WCC was notably different than the World Missionary Congress because of increased representation by the Catholic church, including East Orthodoxy and Old Catholic sects. The

²²⁹ John O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge MA: First Harvard Press, 2010), 93-97.

²³⁰ Cheng Jingyi, *World Missionary Conference 1910 – Report of Commission II: The Church in the Mission Field*. (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 352–353.

WCC describes itself as “a worldwide fellowship of 349 global, regional and sub-regional, national and local churches seeking unity, a common witness and Christian service.”²³¹

Church historian Herbert Wallace Schneider writes that in regard to ecumenism, “The chief object of cooperation... [for ecumenic churches organizations] now is the attempt to end hostilities, but more positive areas of common interest are beginning to take shape, as they combat the growth of ‘secularism.’”²³² Finally, it seems, the various *hetairiai* of the church are working toward the creation of the Beloved Community as intended by Jesus in the Gospel of John.

Social Gospel. In tandem with ecumenism was the increasing popularity of the Social Gospel in early 20th century America. The Social Gospel, as defined by Encyclopedia Britannica, was a movement that “interpreted the kingdom of God as requiring social as well as individual salvation and sought the betterment of industrialized society through application of the biblical principles of charity and justice.”²³³ This can be understood as a *hetairia* as it was expressed in the days of its original adoption. The ideology permeated many mainline dominations and was brought into a shared belief system with each of those faith traditions. The social gospel can be seen as an attempt to incorporate the Christian values of Agape, or love for one’s fellow man, into secular liberal social policies.

Schneider adds that the central idea to the Social Gospel is that “the redemption or salvation of mankind collectively, the regeneration of the social order, is the ultimate goal of religion.”²³⁴ In this way, the Social Gospel can be seen as an attempt to create the Beloved

²³¹ Huibert Van Beek (Editor,) *Handbook of Churches and Councils* (World Council of Churches, 2006), 27-29.

²³² Herbert Wallace Schneider, *Religion in 20th Century America* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 18-29.

²³³ Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica *Social Gospel* (October 10, 2019).

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Social-Gospel> (accessed February 11, 2021).

²³⁴ Schneider, 18-29.

Community through social means, as a philosophy that is congruent with society, that attempts to better all mankind through love and charity. “Doing Good” becomes synonymous with “loving God” in Social Gospel mindset, and many social clubs began adopting the ideals of the Social Gospel, such as the YMCA and Rotary International.²³⁵

The Social Gospel was less influential on politics and policy, but it saw a great shift in the attitudes of large religious establishments toward social equality and a concern for the way society shapes its individuals, and to that end, the Social Gospel hoped to influence society for the better. This was occasionally in opposition to American capitalism and industrialization, as the Social Gospel influenced populist collective organization of unions for workers’ rights and for more humane working conditions. Contrary to Leninist interpretations of Marx, the Social Gospel sought to “prove to the proletariat that organized religion was actively concerned in its welfare, and to invite labor to work with and through religious agencies.”²³⁶

Service Clubs

The Social Gospel was significant to American society not only because of the way it integrated religious ideals into populist laymen’s livelihoods, but also because it spurred the rise of Service Clubs in America and not long after, the international community. Individuals took the message of “Do Good” to heart, and soon, worldwide organizations were formed that sought to spread kindness and charity among the international community. The structure of these organizations can be seen as a secular reflection of the ecumenic order, with small, local offices that send representatives to attend larger conventions, that each have an international order with their own specific goals, but that each work toward the elevation of all humans through charity to achieve peace. These Service Clubs are the literal epitome of what a *hetairia* actually is. I see the

²³⁵ Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Social-Gospel> (accessed February 11, 2021).

²³⁶ Ahlstrom, 175-180.

Christian Church of the 20th century reimagined through the various service clubs and how the individual clubs were reinforced by the *hetairia* that had become the church in America.

Golden Age of Fraternalism. The Social Gospel, declining church membership, and additional free time for American laborers led to the Golden Age of Fraternalism. This “golden age” occurred near the end of the 19th century and lasted through the beginning of the 20th. In 1897, it was noted that fraternal organizations – the secular *hetairiai* of that day and were then commonly called secret societies – claimed 5.5 million members while the total U.S. adult population was approximately 19 million, with an estimated 40% of all adult males holding membership in at least one fraternal order.²³⁷

Perhaps the most significant catalyst for the rise of fraternal organizations was the American Civil War. Following the war, many individuals wanted to repair the damage that the country had sustained fighting “brother on brother.”²³⁸ These fraternal organizations were meant to reunite the American populace with a common cause and instill a sense of community in fractured communities. Some of these groups, besides the previously described Masonic Order, are: the Independent Order of Good Templars (1851), Knights of Pythias (1864), the Patrons of Husbandry (the Grange, 1867), Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (1868), the Knights of Columbus (1882), the Loyal Order of Moose (1888), and the Woodmen of the World (1890).²³⁹ In fact, this push for communal social clubs may have revitalized the waning membership of the Freemason Society following the Morgan Affair.

²³⁷ William D. Moore, *Secret Societies in America: Foundational Studies in Fraternalism* (New Orleans: Cornerstone Publishers. 2011), 67-93.

²³⁸ Blake Stilwell, *This Civil War Battle Literally saw Brother against Brother* <https://www.wearethemighty.com/mighty-history/civil-war-brother-against-brother> (accessed February 12,2021).

²³⁹ Moore, 67-93.

Furthermore, most of these organizations were charitable, which attracted many well-to-do Americans who wanted to aid their communities at the end of the 19th century. “While it is difficult to arrive at positive figures as to the amount which has been paid out by the fraternal orders in the United States since their establishment, yet, allowing for the amount paid out in the year 1896 and not included in the annual reports of the grand secretaries of the various bodies, the enormous total of \$475,000,000 has been given by these organizations in beneficences.”²⁴⁰ In addition, these organizations often provided their members and their members’ families with some sort of insurance, providing them with a social safety net in case of unforeseen catastrophe.²⁴¹

The Golden Age of Fraternalism was spurred on by the American Civil War, yet it was primarily over by World War II. The Great Depression took a toll on all Fraternal orders as individuals had to prioritize their own family’s safety and financial security over the community. This also led to a turn from the secularized *hetairiai* in America back to a realization of the church as the primary sense of *hetairia* in the community. Furthermore, the integration of a governmental social safety net through the New Deal policies, as implemented by President Franklin Roosevelt, meant that there was less demand for Fraternal insurance.²⁴² One primary exception was Rotary International.

Rotary International

Rotary International is a Service Club that is of enormous significance to the author. Before my pursuit of religious studies, I worked in the corporate sector and participated in my local Rotary chapter. I found that service club membership helped foster a level of success and

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ibid.

accomplishment in individuals. However, I began to see how many of the same goals within Rotary International were present within the institutional church. I now realize the similarities were the aspects of *hetairiai* present in both organizations. I hope that my research will explicate the similarities in the two institutions and will contribute to the scholarly understanding of how the church can strive to create the Beloved Community.

Rotary History. Rotary was brought into existence singly-handedly by American lawyer Paul P. Harris. Harris had a vision for a civilian service club, an organization of men or women from varied business and professional backgrounds that is dedicated to fellowship among its members and to voluntary community service.²⁴³ To achieve this goal, he organized a meeting of just four professionals in a friend's office and, on February 23, 1905, the first Rotary Club meeting was held.²⁴⁴ The club was called Rotary because the meeting locations were to rotate between the members' offices, but by the end of the year, membership was so high that a common meeting place was selected.²⁴⁵

Rotary grew exponentially, and only 16 years after being founded, Rotary had clubs on six continents.²⁴⁶ Growth was first in western American cities, but spread across the nation, and the National Association of Rotary Clubs in America was formed in 1910. The next year, the first international Rotary meeting was held in Dublin and, in 1912, the name of the organization was modified to the International Association of Rotary Clubs in order to fit its now global

²⁴³ Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, *Rotary International* (Encyclopedia Britannica, November 12, 2020). <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Rotary-International> (accessed February 12, 2021).

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Paul Harris, *Our History, Rotary International*. <https://www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary/history> (accessed February 12, 2021).

scale.²⁴⁷ In 1922, the organization finally settled on the name of Rotary International and the club was established enough to implement its mission.

Current Rotary Priorities. The Rotary Foundation was established in 1928 to raise and distribute funds in support of local and international service projects that Rotarians around the world design and carry out.²⁴⁸

The Rotary mission statement on its website states “We provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through our fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders.”²⁴⁹ The influence of the Social Gospel is evident in this statement, and as “Do Good” is synonymous to “loving God,” one can appreciate the heavenly work this organization engages in. The church and service clubs alike function toward the creation of the Beloved Community on Earth. By the early 21st century the Rotary Foundation had issued more than \$4 billion in charitable grants, with a focus on third-world communities and single mothers.²⁵⁰

Rotary’s most notable civil service project has been its effort to eradicate polio. Rotary administered the first oral drops of the polio vaccine in 1979 at a Filipino hospital. The event launched a joint multiyear effort between Rotary International and the government of the Philippines to immunize approximately 6 million children against polio, at a cost of approximately \$760,000.²⁵¹ The success of the initial program led to the launch of PolioPlus in 1985, and Rotary was a founding member of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988.

²⁴⁷ Ibid

²⁴⁸ Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Rotary-International> (accessed February 12, 2021).

²⁴⁹ Rotary International, *About Rotary*. <https://www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary/history> (accessed February 12, 2021).

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Rotary International, *The roots of Rotary’s polio eradication efforts* <https://www.rotary.org/en/history-rotary-polio-eradication-efforts> (accessed February 12, 2021).

Rotarians have contributed over \$850 million and hundreds of thousands of volunteer-hours to eradicating polio, leading to the inoculation of more than two billion of the world's children.²⁵² Although polio has yet to be fully eradicated, the effort of Rotary International to this endeavor has been recognized by the United Nations.

Another crucially important Rotarian goal is the achievement of world peace. Rotary International currently operates eight Rotary Peace Centers around the world and seeks to develop leaders who become catalysts for peace and conflict resolution in their communities and around the globe.²⁵³ Rotary reportedly has \$150 million in gifts and donations by which it operates a rigorous program of study and offers field experience in areas relating to peace and conflict resolution. Peace is central to the ideals of the Christian church, and the efforts of Rotary International, although a secular *hetairia*, have helped to recreate the Kingdom of Heaven in each corner of the globe and can be seen as a huge step in secular and religious ideals colliding in the interest of what many consider the Beloved Community.

²⁵² Rotary International, *Value of Rotary Volunteering* <https://www.rotary.org/en/value-rotary-volunteering> (accessed February 12, 2021).

²⁵³ Rotary International, *Promoting Peace* <https://www.rotary.org/en/our-causes/promoting-peace> (accessed February 12, 2021).

CHAPTER FOUR: AMERICAN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE BELOVED

COMMUNITY

The Lord will see us through,
The Lord will see us through,
The Lord will see us through someday;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome someday.

Rev. Charles Albert Tindley, “We Shall Overcome” (*adapted from I Overcome*). 1900²⁵⁴

Introduction

The previous chapters each included a historical discussion of the church and the various *hetairiai* that surfaced within it. Each “club,” as it were, intended on fully embodying the ideal of the Beloved Community as intended by Jesus in the gospels by critiquing the dominant religious authorities and paving their own paths to righteousness. This chapter will discuss what exactly the ideal of the Beloved Community is according to highly influential modern theologians, who take Jesus’ vision of the church and contextualize it in their contemporary contexts. The idea of the Beloved Community can be seen to solidify in American Christian intellectuals, such as Jonathan Edwards, Josiah Royce, John Lewis, and Martin Luther King, Jr. The Beloved Community was significant to these thinkers, especially in the 20th century as the civil rights movement became increasingly important to the American psyche.

²⁵⁴ Rev. Charles Albert Tindley, *We Shall Overcome*, The United Methodist Hymnal (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989).

Jonathan Edwards

The concept of the Beloved Community can be seen to begin taking shape in the philosophical writings of Jonathan Edwards. Edwards (1703 –1758) was an American philosopher and theologian whose work “...is an expression of two themes — the absolute sovereignty of God and the beauty of God’s holiness.”²⁵⁵ Edwards was concerned with the duality of these concepts, and the ways in which a community can exemplify these ideals through its benevolence and love. Edwards believed that God is excellent; however, God does not act alone in his sovereignty. To Edwards, part of the philosophical beauty of God was breaking down the plurality of His being, that “if God is excellent, there must be a plurality in God, otherwise, there can be no consent in him.”²⁵⁶ “Consent,” to Edwards, is the idea that different agents can act in a unified purpose, although isolated, to achieve a common goal – in this case, in acting out God’s excellence. In this way the idea of the Beloved Community can be seen forming through Edwards’ writing: “This plurality is shared by creatures through the ‘propensity in God to diffuse himself.’”²⁵⁷

Therefore, Edwards, a highly influential American Christian and philosopher, was conceptualizing the Beloved Community as the diffusion of God through his followers, as the body of the united church acting in benevolence toward a united goal.²⁵⁸ This idea is noble and highly romanticized, as we can see the numerous ways that Christians have been pitted against

²⁵⁵ William Wainwright and Edward N. Zalta (editor), *Jonathan Edwards*, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2020 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/edwards/> (accessed February 10, 2021).

²⁵⁶ Jonathan Edwards and Harvey Townsend (editor), *The Philosophy of Jonathan Edwards from his Private Notebooks* (Eugene OR: University of Oregon, 1955), 261-263.

²⁵⁷ Johnathan Edwards, *The Works of President Edwards* (London: James Black & Son, 1817), 461-467.

²⁵⁸ Paul J. Nagy, The Beloved Community of Jonathan Edwards, *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, (Indiana University Press, 1971), Vol. 7, No. 2 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40319484> (accessed February 10, 2021).

one another since the foundation of the church, and how unlikely it is that the church body as a whole will act toward a unified benevolent goal. Edwards takes this ideal even further, writing: “The whole world should appear together in one great assembly before the judgment seat. The whole world is all one common wealth and kingdom all made of one blood all under one moral Head, . . . and all parts of it joined in communication one with another.”²⁵⁹ To Edwards, the entire world is the Beloved Community, and in a pluralist aspect we all are judged by God both as individuals and as a society, therefore, it behooves a Beloved Community to not only act in benevolence to uplift itself, but also to extend charity and grace to all members of the community and the world.

Josiah Royce

Josiah Royce (1855-1916) is credited with coining the term “Beloved Community” itself. Royce was an American Christian philosopher that taught at Johns Hopkins and Harvard Universities, and his writing was influential in the philosophical realms of personalism, agapism, and fallibilism.²⁶⁰ Royce builds upon the aforementioned ideas of Jonathan Edwards, of the pluralism of God as seen through His church and speaks to a higher universal consciousness of all individuals:

The ambiguous relation of the conscious individuals to the universal thought...will be decided in the sense of their inclusion, as elements in the universal thought. They will indeed not become ‘things in the dream’ of any other person than themselves, but their whole reality, just exactly as it is in them, will be found to be but a fragment of a higher reality.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ Jonathan Edwards and Thomas A. Schafer (Editor), *Miscellanies, No. 1007* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 223-229.

²⁶⁰ Kelly A. Parker and Edward N. Zalta (editor) Josiah Royce The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2020 Edition) <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/royce/> (accessed February 12, 2021).

²⁶¹ Josiah Royce, *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy* (1885) <https://royce-edition.iupui.edu/docu/1885.pdf> (accessed February 12, 2021).

Similarly, to Edwards, Royce sees all the individual experiences of humans as relating to a “higher reality” of truth at which each individual is only able to grasp. Edwards interprets this phenomenon as proving the existence of a higher supreme being, of God; however, Royce doesn’t necessarily equate God’s divine excellence to this personalist philosophical view.

To Royce, it is expected that individuals will be imperfect, and he argues that this collective experience does not disprove the existence of God. To Royce, it is the church community that is central to Christianity, regardless of the purity of each congregations’ practices.

Doctrines and creeds may change; the particular institutions that identify themselves as churches may or may not actually be communities of grace. What matters in the end is the process of interpretation — the process of communicating and understanding one another in actual, imperfect, finite communities of grace bound together by loyalty and striving toward the ultimate and ideal Beloved Community.²⁶²

Jonathan Edwards understood the plurality of God as a supreme being on His own as well as God represented through the collective actions of all individuals on earth. Royce takes this concept even further as he allows for the collective struggle and even failures of Christians in their process of interpreting scripture. Royce specifically relies on the benevolent ideals of Christians in their interpretations – that is to say that, even in their transgressions, Christian communities are constantly striving to spread charity and grace in the name of Jesus. The history of the church is unfortunate in this view, as so many *hetairiai* fought and struggled against each other in the name of Jesus, when in Royce’s view, they all were essentially striving toward a unified goal – of creating the Beloved Community on earth as each church understood it in their own perspective. However, what Royce believes is missing for these “clubs” is the belief of Agape.

²⁶² Parker, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/royce/> (accessed February 12, 2021).

Anders Nygren, a contemporary Christian writer, defines Agape as “the characteristically Christian form of love which we find detailed in Paul’s writings. It is the oceanic, other-oriented, and all-redeeming love which flows unchecked and... monodirectionally from God to humanity.”²⁶³ Royce posits that it is not the recognition of the personalist proof of God that makes one a good Christian, or even a good person; rather, that by attempting to interpret the mysteries of life in a way that extends love and grace to our fellow human being, individuals strive toward the Beloved Community of Christ. This is significant insofar as it separates the idea of a “true Christian ethic” as achieved by one’s church or denominational affiliation. Royce posits that simply trying to be a good person and constantly asking questions about the nature of being and life is how each individual approach God and holiness. Sin, to Royce, is any action that “does not spring from the love of God or man, and especially whatever deed breaks with the instinctive dictates of whole-hearted love.”²⁶⁴ When one sins in this way, they are defying the Beloved Community. This Agapeic perspective is highly influential to the thoughts and leadership of civil rights leaders, especially of Dr Martin Luther King Jr.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

These ideas of personalism and agape are put into practice through the writings and teachings of the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. and his concept of the Beloved Community as seen through the activism of the civil rights era and his training and experience as a pastor within The Church. King is famous for his doctrines of civil disobedience and nonviolence, which he believes are central to the formation of the Beloved Community. To act in violence would be to directly contradict the Christian ideal of love and grace. The King Center,

²⁶³ Anders Nygren and Phillip Watson (translator), *Agape and Eros*. Trans. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), 798-800.

²⁶⁴ Josiah Royce, *The Problem of Christianity* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1968), 75-99.

which is dedicated to educating about Dr. King and his life of activism, writes this about the Beloved Community: “The Beloved Community was for [King] a realistic, achievable goal that could be attained by a critical mass of people committed to and trained in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence.”²⁶⁵ The ideal of Agape is fundamental to King’s notion of nonviolence, as nonviolence is an act of love.

King was familiar with the concept of Agape, as he relates in his writings:

Agape is more than romantic love; agape is more than friendship. Agape is understanding, creative, redemptive, good will to all men. It is an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return. Theologians would say that it is the love of God operating in the human heart. So that when one rises to love on this level, he loves men not because he likes them, not because their ways appeal to him, but he loves every man because God loves him.²⁶⁶

King internalized this concept of Agape and utilized it in every aspect of his ministry. For example, immediately following the 1955 bombing of his Montgomery, Alabama house, King delivered an extemporaneous speech to the angry mob that gathered to protect his family. In this extemporaneous speech, his philosophy of nonviolence and agape comes shining through. He is reported to have said, “Don’t get your weapons. He who lives by the sword shall die by the sword. Remember that is what God said. We are not advocating violence. We want to love our enemies. I want you to love our enemies. Be good to them, love them and let them know you love them.” King understands that only by treating one’s fellow human being with love and patience can they be persuaded to act in grace and to change their views, that violence and hatred only act in a vicious spiral to alienate individuals. Even in the aftermath of an attempt on his life,

²⁶⁵ The King Center, *The King Philosophy - Nonviolence*³⁶⁵ January 05, 2021. <https://thekingcenter.org/about-tkc/the-king-philosophy/> (accessed February 13, 2021).

²⁶⁶ Martin Luther King, and James Melvin Washington (editor), *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King* (San Francisco: Harper, 1986), 62-64.

King used his platform to advocate toward a Beloved Community in the tense Alabama civil rights movement.

Another notable reference King makes to the Beloved Community is during an address in 1956 concerning the Montgomery Bus boycott. “A boycott is merely a means to say, I don’t like it.’ It is merely a means to awaken a sense of shame within the oppressor but the end is reconciliation. The end is the creation of a beloved community. The end is the creation of a society where men will live together as brothers.”²⁶⁷ This ideal of the Beloved Community as being inexorably linked to love is directly related to Royce and Agape. King merely takes the previous ideals as fashioned by Royce and Edwards and uses them to mobilize his Black contemporaries toward nonviolent activism. King found that divisions of religious denomination and social class were eroded and miracles of self-transformation occurred as ordinary people translated their resentments into determined courage.²⁶⁸ This, according to Edwards, Royce, and, especially, Jesus, is the Beloved Community.

In Mark 10:42-45 Jesus says to his apostles:

You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.²⁶⁹

In this quote, Jesus shows that hierarchies and divisions are of no significance in the Kingdom of Heaven and, likewise, have no use in the Beloved Community that King portrays.

²⁶⁷ Gary Herstein, “The Roycean Roots of the Beloved Community.” *The Pluralist* 4, no. 2 (2009): 91-107.. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20708980> (accessed February 13, 2021).

²⁶⁸ Ralph E. Luker, and Ted Owenby (editor), *Kingdom of God and Beloved Community in the Thought of Martin Luther King, Jr.* ” *In the Role of Ideas in the Civil Rights South* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2002) 39-54.

²⁶⁹ Mark 10:42-45, NRSV.

Rather, the Beloved Community as understood by King is a community that acts uniformly to achieve equality in the practice of agape for the glory of God. Edwards lays the foundation for this thinking, as his ideas of the “consent” inherent to God’s existence. Gary Herstein, a King commentator, writes: “To revile human worth in its connection to God would be to deny the possibility of true community with God. And if personhood is dependent upon community, as Royce and King both argue, then to eject God from community is in effect to deny God’s personhood.” This, in its essence, is the idea of the Beloved Community as professed by King: a community that acts in the glory of God to love, provide charity and grace to humankind; a community that is not hierarchical in nature nor is separated by petty disputes of denomination, social class, or race, but that views each individual as having a unique relationship with God and as creating the Beloved Community in its actions. King firmly believed that eventually, through grace, the Beloved Community could exist on earth, and this principle is evident in one of his most famous quotes: “We shall overcome because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” In this way, King professes his faith in the morality of man, not for man’s sake, but for God’s.

John Lewis

John Lewis was an American diplomat, civil rights, and religious leader who only passed away this past year. Lewis is the most contemporary theologian discussed in this essay, and his life spanned the civil rights movement of the 1960s through the Black Lives Matter movement that began in the 2010s. Lewis was a contemporary of King and firmly believed in his vision of the Beloved Community.

In a 2016 interview, Lewis discusses his notion of the Beloved Community as an ongoing process of manifestation. “...you live as if you’re already there, that you’re already in that

community, part of that sense of one family, one house. If you visualize it, if you can even have faith that it's there, for you it is already there."²⁷⁰ It is evident that all the civil rights leaders of the time understood and internalized Dr. King's notion of the Beloved Community. Lewis himself was a victim of racist attacks and oppression; however, his commitment to the concept of Agape is central to his idea of perseverance. Even if one can't observe the consequences of the Beloved Community in one's immediate surroundings, Lewis alleges that just conceiving of it brings it into practice. This is reminiscent of Edward's concept of personalism, that each individual's reality collectively creates the reality of the world. To Lewis, believing and acting in the ideals of Agape toward the Beloved Community is what creates the Beloved Community. Furthermore, similarly to Edwards and Royce, Lewis believes that God lies in each individual, and God's existence is proven by this "divine spark" in each individual: "In the religious sense, in the moral sense, you can say that in the bosom of every human being, there is a spark of the divine."²⁷¹

To this end, Lewis writes in his 2012 book *Across That Bridge: Life Lessons and a Vision for Change*, "The progress we take for granted to day brought on by the successes of the Civil Rights Movement are just one more step down a very long road toward the realization of our spiritual destiny as a nation of 'freedom and justice for all.'"²⁷² Lewis mirrors King's optimism and embodies the faith that in time, justice, grace and love will prevail, and he even acknowledges that the 2008 election of Barack Obama into executive office of the United States is an example of this doctrine in action. Lewis doesn't allege that this country is finished

²⁷⁰ John Lewis, *We Are the Beloved Community: John Lewis* The On Being Project (July 02, 2020) <https://onbeing.org/programs/beloved-community-john-lewis-2/> (accessed February 12, 2021).

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² John Lewis, *Across That Bridge: Life Lessons and a Vision for Change* (New York: Hachette Books, 2017), 177-183.

developing, but rather that this is proof of the continuing growth and realization of Agape in the pursuit of the Beloved Community.

Lewis asks, “what is the purpose of a nation if not to empower human beings to live better together than they could individually?”²⁷³ This question speaks to the root of the Beloved Community and to the formation of every *hetairiai* since Christ walked the earth. Each club, nation, or church denomination acted with the explicit goal of improving the lives of their members and reaching a more holy and perfect understanding of Christ’s gospel. However, contrary to most *hetairia* through history, Lewis and King implore their followers to act in love and in the interest of Agape.

In his 1963 sermon titled “Loving Your Enemies,” King says, “While abhorring segregation, we shall love the segregationist. This is the only way to create the Beloved Community.”²⁷⁴ In essence, this is what is missing from each *hetairia* throughout history. As Christians sought to perfect the church in Christ’s design, they necessarily rejected all other forms of worship. In this chapter, there has been a discussion of some of the modern intellectuals that shaped these ideas of Agape and the Beloved Community, which has elucidated that in a true church community, there can be no hatred or segregation. Few through history have come close to this conceptualization of the Beloved Community as an organization that respects each individual’s autonomy in realizing their relationship with God as long as that individual acts with love and grace toward his fellow man.

²⁷³ Lewis, 197-200.

²⁷⁴ King. A Testament of Hope, 313.

Beloved Community in the Gospel of John

In the Gospel of John, Jesus Christ is portrayed as a transformative teacher and an inspired leader of people. In John's Gospel we find Christ redefining ethics and religious morality of love and service.

In John 13:34-35, Jesus says, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."²⁷⁵ This declaration speaks to the Beloved Community as prophesized by Jesus. The true Christian community is one based on love. Jesus is saying that in a way, anyone who loves others and acts out of love, can be seen as a Christian to Him. For God so loved the world that he sent his only son,²⁷⁶ and that love should be extended to others in wholehearted Christian charity. On love, Jesus continues: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."²⁷⁷ Jesus' Gospel as told by John shows his commitment to selfless love: that in order to love others, Christians must put others above themselves and prioritize their safety and comfort over their own.

Concerning the Christian community, Jesus has a few significant quotes in the fourth Gospel. Jesus says, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."²⁷⁸ Many have interpreted this quote as a validation of the Christian's place in the kingdom of heaven over non-believers, and that may very well be true; however, this passage can be inversely analyzed as Jesus instructing his followers on how to create his church. The most righteous thing a Christian can do to worship God is to "bear fruit" of piety by abiding in Jesus. In this way, each church and each

²⁷⁵ John 13:33-35, NRSV.

²⁷⁶ John 3:16.

²⁷⁷ John 15:13.

²⁷⁸ John 15:5.

denomination is its own branch that Jesus, the vine, metaphorically winds over and through to inspire prayer and reverence. Each denomination and *hetairia* is valid in the eyes of Jesus, as long as they are purporting his ultimate value of evangelism and spreading love throughout the world.

In John 3:8, Jesus says to Nicodemus: “The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So, it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”²⁷⁹ In this quote, Jesus is explaining to Nicodemus that anyone can be born again and take up the mantle of being a Christian to achieve eternal life. Some Bible scholars have taken this passage to also denote the mystery of God’s practices. Jesus, in this quote, is also telling his followers to trust in God’s vision, and to go with the wind, so to speak. Where God shows himself, a good Christian will follow, and not resist or propose to have all the answers. As we have seen throughout history, many factions and *hetairiai* claim to know the singular correct intention of Christ, and these divisions have caused incomprehensible conflict. In this quote, Jesus is compelling his followers to be fluid, and to not suppose that they have divine authority on the church, and to follow where God leads them, even if it may not be ideal or in their comfortable worldview. It is far more important for Christians to spread their message of brotherly love, of Agape, than to quarrel about petty “worldly” issues. As long as Christians accept Christ into their heart and love their fellow neighbor, there is a place for them in heaven.

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.’ Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father

²⁷⁹ John 3:8.

except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.²⁸⁰

The following passage is cited by Ecumenical Christians as justification for the Ecumenical design:

I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.²⁸¹

Jesus's quote from John links the Father and Son to the holy body of the church, imploring all believers to be "one." It is sad, when reading the words of Jesus, to recall the strife and fragmentation that occurred ecclesiastically over the two millennia of church history. It is clear by examining John that Jesus was instructing his followers on the method of becoming the Beloved Community, which involves the addition of Agape to a unified Christian network. When denominations and *hetairiai* can put aside their differences and work toward a common goal, the Beloved Community can be formed. This becomes an institutional structure that is reminiscent of the structure within service clubs such as Rotary International, in their international humanitarian effort to promote peace and distribute charity. Therefore, establishing a Beloved Community from very imperfect *hetairia* which was once observed by a pagan governor from Rome, and has continued down the centuries. As we strive and succeed in our efforts to live a life of Agape as the church and as individuals, we can ultimately realize the Beloved Community on this Earth.

²⁸⁰ John 14:1.

²⁸¹ John 17:20–23.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this project has been to study the history of the church in the United States and the advent of service clubs and organizations to discover how the mission of the church has been influenced by such service organizations as the Free Masons and Rotary International. I began my research by examining the church's original mission in the book of Acts as a Beloved Community. I continued following the post-biblical church prior to the church's arrival here in the United States. My findings showed that, through the observation of independent historical sources, the early church was known by the Greek name *hetairia*, which is generally translated into English as "club." I also observed the beginning of the institutional church and both the successes and challenges the *hetairia* had in rediscovering and becoming the Beloved Community.

This phenomenon was demonstrated time and time again throughout my research with the "Desert Fathers" and the Copts of Egypt, Francis of Assisi and his order and the Puritan and Anglican *hetairiai* that became the Pilgrims and the Methodists. In the writing of this project, I was able to demonstrate that, as each *hetairia* came into being during the establishment of the United States, there seemed to be a desire of many of the individual *hetairia* to want to adhere to the original missional goals of the church. It appears from my findings that, as many of these *hetairia* became institutionalized to the point of no longer being a functional community of like-minded believers, they instead developed their own hierarchical systems and organizations. One

area of primary focus was to examine the seeming dichotomy between the various churches that had been established in the United States and the service clubs. Since each of these service clubs was founded in Great Britain and settlers were already familiar with them, they allowed the people to achieve a sense of involvement in their new land. This variant began to appear in the United States almost as soon as the English colonies were founded.

I had a great deal of personal interest in my research of the Free Masons as my grandfather, who was a Swedish immigrant in the late 19th century, was a member. He claimed that the Free Masons were instrumental in establishing him as an American. This gave him a sense of belonging. In addition, there was a women's auxiliary with which my grandmother was involved. Although they were faithful attenders of church and had a very strong faith, most of their involvement in the community was through the Free Masons. This secular *hetairia* was more important to their socialization in the United States than the *hetairia* that was their church. This realization helped shape my original question and guided my research. My original research question had focused on the area of hospitality within communities, before learning of this concept of *hetairia*. I found that, at the time of my grandparents' involvement and earlier, the Free Masons offered a bridge to the broader community. It was not until the 20th century that the church in the United States took on the role of community builder by a proliferation of *hetairiai* and mainline hierarchal churches.

In the midst of this research on *hetairiai* was another service club – Rotary International. I mentioned in my introduction how I had come to be involved with this organization. Initially, I found that Rotary International was a bridge for me into a sector of society that I had never dreamed I could belong. It was a foundational experience during my early adult years. Based on my own experience and what I learned through my research, I discovered that secular *hetairiai*

have an unwritten rule that you have to pay to play. The good part of this rule is that those who receive the payments are generally philanthropic in nature. It was in this experience that my personal focus became toward the *hetairia* that was the church. I found an emphasis and spirit of inclusiveness rather than the exclusiveness that sometimes is found in the model of a service club.

The next part of my research question revolved around how a *hetairia* can build trust within communities. The church should lead the way to find ways to acknowledge our shortcomings in being the welcoming arms of Christ in our communities. I discovered that, like Dr. King, we truly need to believe that there can be a Beloved Community in our lifetime. In conjunction with this understanding, we should find ways to avoid conflicts by listening, negotiating, and accepting those who have lived on the outside of *hetairia* and church hierarchy and find ways to do justice together. This undertaking is not just to welcome those who previously were not a part of the *hetairia*. Instead, our mission as the Beloved Community is to create this new place where everyone is welcome.

During the course of researching, gathering data, and writing this project, many global and national events transpired that impacted the very essence of my thesis and objectives. In January 2020, as our cohort completed the final classwork for this doctoral program and began work on our projects, we were made aware that Bridwell Theological Library was already in the process of renovation; however, we had a workaround that allowed us full access to materials needed to complete the project. Then we were all hit by the global pandemic COVID-19, whose impact was best described in the Spring 2020 edition of *Bridwell Quarterly*:

The COVID-19 health crisis has turned into a global pandemic over the last months and affected Bridwell and the broader SMU community directly. Over the course of the week of March 15th, the university moved quickly to mitigate the risks involved in the outbreak by moving most staff to working from home. A

flurry of activity and the impending phrase “a fluid situation” became part of Bridwell’s daily emergency lexicon. Many changes have occurred since early March, and especially since mid-March when SMU went to “essential staff only” on campus, and subsequently to almost all employees working from home. Bridwell and SMU Libraries have been working exceedingly hard, coordinating through teams on various digital platforms to ensure consistency of services and resources. Admittedly, we are challenged by the severity of the situation, but the diligence, attention, and hard work of staff, administration, faculty, and others across campus have been exceptional in these times of duress.²⁸²

Throughout this process, Bridwell Library has emulated for me and my cohort a Beloved Community. In fact, they made the transition from an institution to a group of *hetairiai* working from home and facilitating much of the research material contained in this very project.

During the course of this project, two other national events had an impact on my thesis and my thought process. On May 25, Minneapolis police officers arrested George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, after a convenience store employee called 911 and told the police that Mr. Floyd had bought cigarettes with a counterfeit \$20 bill. Seventeen minutes after the first squad car arrived at the scene, Mr. Floyd was unconscious and pinned beneath three police officers, showing no signs of life.²⁸³ This event brought to light the struggle that exists in this country to achieve what Dr. King felt was something that actually could happen in our lifetime and in this country. The other significant event was the death of John Lewis. In this project, I lift up John Lewis as a follower of Dr. King and a believer, as was Dr. King, that the Beloved Community can be realized in this life. John Lewis went so far as to say that “[i]f you visualize it [the Beloved Community], if you can even have faith that it’s there, for you it is already there.”²⁸⁴ Lewis lived long enough to witness the killing of George Floyd and many of the other similar

²⁸² Anthony J. Elia, *Welcome* (The Bridwell Quarterly, Issue 7. Spring 2020), 2.

²⁸³ How George Floyd Was Killed in Police Custody <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html> (accessed March 16, 2021).

²⁸⁴ John Lewis, “We Are the Beloved Community: John Lewis” The On Being Project. July 02, 2020. <https://onbeing.org/programs/beloved-community-john-lewis-2/>. (Accessed March 16, 2021).

incidents with people of color and the subsequent protests that occurred in response to those events.

As I consider the overall takeaway from this project, I trust that I have contributed some new ways to look at concepts that have been researched, debated, and exegeted within the academia for decades and possibly centuries. I know the efforts and diligence accrued from this process will have a positive impact on my ministry, my life, and the professional and academic lives of those who might stop by to see what someone wrote about the Beloved Community, the *hetairia* within the church, or even how all of this impacts the institutional church. My hope is that the ultimate realization might be similar to what Dr. Martin Luther King proposed at the end of his *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*:

I hope this letter finds you strong in the faith. I also hope that circumstances will soon make it possible for me to meet each of you, not as an integrationist or a civil rights leader, but as a clergyman and a Christian brother. Let us all hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities and in some not-too-distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all of their scintillating beauty.

Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood, MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁵ Martin Luther King Jr., *Letter from the Birmingham Jail* (New York: Harper Collins, 1963) 34-35.

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