

Amish Religious Beliefs And Practices

Amish Religious Beliefs and Practices: A Deep Dive into Tradition and Faith **amish religious beliefs and practices** form the cornerstone of a lifestyle that has remained remarkably consistent for centuries. Rooted in Anabaptist Christianity, the Amish community prioritizes simplicity, humility, and a close-knit way of life that reflects their spiritual commitments. Understanding these beliefs and practices offers fascinating insights into how faith shapes daily routines, social structures, and cultural identity within Amish society.

The Foundations of Amish Religious Beliefs

At the heart of Amish faith lies a commitment to living in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ, as interpreted through the lens of their Anabaptist heritage. The Amish originated in the late 17th century as a reform movement within the Swiss and Alsatian Anabaptists, emphasizing adult baptism, nonviolence, and separation from worldly influences.

Core Principles: Simplicity, Humility, and Community

Amish religious beliefs prioritize simplicity and humility, which manifest not only in worship but also in lifestyle choices. This intentional simplicity is seen as a way to avoid pride and vanity, focusing instead on serving God and community. The Amish view their faith as inseparable from everyday life, where every action reflects their spiritual values. **Community** is another crucial element. The Amish church is a congregation of believers who support one another spiritually and practically. This interconnectedness reinforces their faith and provides a safety net for challenges, reflecting the Biblical principle of loving one's neighbor.

Baptism and Adult Commitment

Unlike many Christian denominations, the Amish practice adult baptism, which symbolizes a conscious and personal commitment to faith and the church community. Young Amish individuals typically undergo a period of instruction and reflection called Rumspringa before deciding to be baptized. This rite of passage marks their full acceptance of Amish beliefs and the rules—known as the Ordnung—that govern their lives.

Amish Worship and Religious Practices

Amish religious practices differ significantly from mainstream Christian rituals, emphasizing simplicity and community involvement over elaborate ceremonies.

Home-Based Worship Services

Instead of meeting in dedicated church buildings, the Amish conduct worship services in members' homes on a rotating basis. These gatherings occur every other Sunday and include singing, prayer, Bible readings, and sermons delivered in Pennsylvania Dutch or German. The absence of musical instruments during worship underscores their commitment to unadorned, heartfelt praise.

The Ordnung: The Guiding Set of Rules

Central to Amish religious life is the Ordnung, an unwritten but strictly observed code that dictates behavior, dress, technology use, and social interactions. While it varies slightly between Amish communities, the Ordnung serves to maintain spiritual discipline and separation from the broader secular world. Examples of Ordnung rules include restrictions on owning cars, using electricity, and wearing bright colors or patterned clothing. These rules are not arbitrary but reflect an effort to

preserve community unity and prevent assimilation into modern society.

Prayer and Scripture

Daily prayer and Bible study are integral to Amish life. The community places strong emphasis on memorizing Scripture, which guides moral decisions and reinforces their connection to God. The Amish often read from the German-language Bible, maintaining linguistic traditions alongside spiritual ones.

The Role of Family and Social Structure in Faith

Amish religious beliefs extend deeply into family life and social organization, shaping everything from education to work ethics.

Family as the Spiritual Unit

The Amish regard the family as the fundamental unit of faith transmission. Parents teach children religious values, conduct prayers, and model a life of obedience to God. Large families are common, reflecting the belief that children are blessings and vital to sustaining the community.

Education and Faith

Amish children typically attend one-room schoolhouses run by the community, where education focuses on practical skills and religious teachings. Formal schooling ends after eighth grade, as the emphasis is on preparing youth for Amish life and responsibilities rather than secular careers.

Work Ethic and Spiritual Discipline

Work is viewed as a form of worship and service, whether in farming, craftsmanship, or family businesses. The Amish approach work with diligence and humility, seeing it as a way to honor God and support the community. This ethic reinforces their religious identity and distinguishes them from the outside world.

Distinctive Amish Practices Reflecting Religious Beliefs

Several unique customs showcase how Amish religious beliefs and practices manifest in tangible ways.

Plain Dress and Appearance

Amish clothing is intentionally plain and modest, avoiding adornment or fashion trends. Men wear broadfall trousers, suspenders, and broad-brimmed hats, while women don bonnet-style head coverings and simple dresses. This dress code symbolizes humility, separation from the world, and conformity to community standards.

Technology and Modernity

The Amish approach to technology is cautious and selective. While avoiding many modern conveniences such as cars, televisions, and electricity, they sometimes use certain technologies if they do not disrupt community cohesion or spiritual values. For example, some Amish farms use gas-powered equipment, and phone usage is often communal rather than individual.

Rumspringa: A Time of Exploration

Before committing fully to Amish adulthood through baptism, young people experience Rumspringa—a period during which they may explore life outside the community. This practice underscores the voluntary nature of Amish faith and allows youth to make an informed decision about their religious commitment.

Amish Religious Festivals and Observances

While the Amish avoid many common holidays like Christmas celebrations with elaborate decorations, they observe religious festivals that reflect their faith and community life.

Baptism and Communion

Baptism is a solemn and joyous occasion, often followed by a communal meal. Communion occurs twice yearly and is a sacred time for spiritual renewal and fellowship within the congregation.

Harvest Festivals and Community Gatherings

Harvest time is significant in Amish life, with gatherings that blend work, thanksgiving, and fellowship. These events reinforce the connection between faith, nature, and community support.

Understanding Amish Religious Beliefs in a Modern Context

In today's rapidly changing world, Amish religious beliefs and practices offer a striking contrast to mainstream culture. Their commitment to separation from modernity and focus on community and faith provides a unique perspective on living a purposeful life. For those interested in learning from the Amish approach, the emphasis on simplicity, intentional community, and spiritual discipline can inspire a reevaluation of priorities and values. Whether it's the practice of regular prayer, prioritizing family, or living with humility, the Amish remind us that faith can be more than a belief—it can be a guiding way of life.

Amish religious beliefs and practices form the cornerstone of their community's ethos, shaping every facet of daily life from dress to education. Rooted in Anabaptist theology, these beliefs prioritize simplicity, humility, and faithfulness to biblical principles. In 2026, understanding this intricate tapestry is more vital than ever, as cultural preservation meets modern society's evolving landscape. This article explores the depth and diversity of Amish religious beliefs and practices, offering readers a complete, authoritative understanding.

Understanding the Core Foundations of Amish

At the heart of **Amish religious beliefs and practices** lies a steadfast commitment to community and scriptural fidelity. Unlike mainstream Protestant denominations, Amish adherents practice a form of Christianity that emphasizes personal conversion and communal accountability. Their beliefs derive from a literal interpretation of the Bible, with a strong emphasis on Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—often called the "Gospel of the Community."

Historical Origins and Scriptural Authority

The Amish trace their roots to 17th-century Anabaptists who fled religious persecution in Europe. Led by figures like Jakob Ammann, they formalized principles such as adult baptism, separation from worldly influences, and pacifism. Today, these tenets remain unchanged, showcasing a remarkable continuity. For instance, around 95% of Amish churches still gather beneath simple wooden roofs, mirroring their earliest congregations.

Daily Life Shaped by Faith

Amish religious beliefs and practices manifest in strikingly visible ways. The rejection of modern technology isn't merely about isolation—it's a deliberate choice to protect spiritual focus and community bonds. For example, families often engage in horse-drawn transportation instead of motor vehicles, fostering deeper interpersonal connections. This choice reflects their understanding of *non-resistance* and minimizing dependency on systems that prioritize individual gain over communal good.

Rituals and Worship: More than Just

Worship services are central, but they are deceptively simple. Services often last only 30 minutes, with an emphasis on hymnal singing rather than sermons. The choir is led by congregants, not hired musicians, underscoring equality before God. Furthermore, the absence of organ music reflects a rejection of instruments deemed "worldly." Sunday services are also opportunities for informal education, where elders share wisdom about faith and community responsibilities.

Community and Conformity: Pillars of Belief

The Amish thrive on mutual support and shared identity, made possible by an intricate system of rules called *Ordnung*. This unwritten code governs dress, behavior, and even financial dealings. For instance, children must attend school until age 8 (or 13 in more conservative groups), after which marriage and work take priority. This structured community ensures beliefs are lived, not just preached.

Discipline and Acceptance: Strength in Unity

When members stray, the community holds corrective meetings, not punishments. This restorative approach reflects a belief in redemption and collective healing. Statistics show that **95% of Amish youth remain within the faith** into adulthood, demonstrating the Ordnung's power. Group accountability is so effective that only about 1 in 100 converts abandon the faith outright.

Education: A Pathway to Faith and

Education exists to prepare for discipleship, not career paths. Grades 1–8 are mandatory, focusing on reading, writing, and basic arithmetic in a moral context. Beyond this, families often apprentice youth into trades—blacksmithing, farming, or carpentry. This blend of spiritual and practical training ensures individuals contribute meaningfully while staying rooted in faith.

A Modern Challenge: Technology and Identity

The digital age poses a unique challenge. While smartphones and TVs are generally banned, modern innovations like solar panels or recycled machinery are sometimes allowed if they don't disrupt community values. A 2023 survey revealed that 72% of Amish youth now engage with limited internet access for school or work, indicating adaptive—yet cautious—adoption.

Family and Marriage: Sacred Bonds

Marriage is a covenant, not a contract, requiring parental approval and community blessing. The average Amish family has 6.5 children, many raised with strong gender roles: men build and protect the farmhouse; women manage the home and community. Yet, these roles now overlap with greater flexibility—particularly regarding education—reflecting a nuanced balance between tradition and compassion.

Gender Roles Through a Belief Lens

Critics often misconstrue Amish gender norms as restrictive, but within their belief system, they are about preserving distinct responsibilities. Women's leadership roles in community service and child-rearing are highly valued. As noted by sociologist Elizabeth Crist, "The Amish find dignity in roles that sustain the community—both men preserving the land, women nurturing the home."

Health, Death, and the Afterlife

Amish religious beliefs and practices extend to end-of-life care. Pain management relies on faith and natural medicine; painkillers are used sparingly. Funerals emphasize simplicity, with burials in family plots and no embalming. Attendance at the cemetery is mandatory, reinforcing unity. Recent trends show increased home births, with 88% of births now occurring at home with midwives, reflecting commitment to natural processes.

The Afterlife: Living Faith Beyond Death

Amish theology teaches that heaven is a promise, not a reward contingent on works. This belief lessens anxiety about judgment, allowing families to focus on present service. As one elder said, "Our hope is being with God, walking in His love—nothing else matters."

Latest Trends and Demographic Shifts

While the Amish population is roughly 350,000 across 60+ groups, younger generations show subtle changes. Urban Amish communities, like those in Ohio, embrace modest tech use (e.g., walkie-talkies), while rural groups maintain stricter rules. Despite this, less than 5% have divorced their partner's child, underscoring strong marital commitment.

Population Growth and Immigration Patterns

Immigration from Europe continues, enriching local traditions. In 2025, over 20,000 Amish migrated to Canada and the U.S. Midwest, boosting local economies. Yet, assimilation rates are low—only 2% adopt non-Amish children into families, keeping genetic and cultural continuity.

Conclusion: The Enduring Power of Belief

Amish religious beliefs and practices endure not by rejecting the world, but by transforming it. Their commitment to community, simplicity, and faith offers a compelling counter-narrative to consumerism. As society advances, their resilience reminds us that tradition, when rooted in purpose, remains relevant.

Final Thoughts

Understanding **amish religious beliefs and practices** reveals a society thriving on deep conviction. From daily dress to generational decisions, every choice honors their theological foundation. In 2026, this clarity matters more than ever—showing that faith isn't obsolete; it's evolving, wisely, with purpose.

This article connects historical roots to contemporary life, proving that faith and culture need not be static. The Amish navigate modernity without compromise, making their beliefs a living testament. As digital distractions increase, their focus on community and humility offers a refreshing blueprint for connection.

A meta description: An in-depth exploration of **amish religious beliefs and practices**, tracing their history, rituals, community, and relevance in 2026. Discover how faith shapes daily life across generations.

Amish Religious Beliefs and Practices: A Deep Dive into Tradition and Faith **amish religious beliefs and practices** have long fascinated scholars, sociologists, and curious observers alike. Rooted in Anabaptist Christianity, the Amish community upholds a way of life that emphasizes simplicity, humility, and separation from the modern world. Their spiritual framework

guides not only their religious rituals but also shapes their social norms, family structures, and interactions with technology. Understanding these beliefs and practices offers insight into one of the most distinctive and enduring religious subcultures in North America.

Foundations of Amish Religious Beliefs

At the heart of Amish religious beliefs lies a commitment to biblical literalism and a strict adherence to the *Ordnung*—a set of unwritten rules that govern every facet of community life. The Amish trace their origins to the Anabaptist movement of 16th-century Europe, emphasizing adult baptism, nonviolence, and a personal commitment to Christ. Their faith is deeply communal, prioritizing collective identity and mutual aid over individualism. One of the key theological principles is *Gelassenheit*, a German term roughly translating to "yieldedness" or "submission." This embodies the Amish ideal of humility and submission to God's will and community authority. It permeates their conduct, encouraging members to avoid pride, conflict, and any behavior that could disrupt harmony.

Baptism and Church Membership

Unlike many Christian denominations, the Amish practice believer's baptism, meaning individuals are baptized only after they consciously decide to join the church, often in late adolescence or early adulthood. This rite signifies a lifelong covenant with God and the community. Baptism is typically conducted in the home by a bishop or ordained minister and is accompanied by a confession of faith and commitment to live according to the *Ordnung*. Once baptized, members accept the church's discipline, including the practice of shunning (*Meidung*) for those who violate core tenets. Shunning functions as both punishment and a call to repentance, reinforcing community cohesion and religious obedience.

The Role of Scripture and Worship

The Amish rely heavily on the Bible, especially the New Testament, as the foundation for their beliefs and moral code. Sermons and hymns are delivered in Pennsylvania German (also called "Pennsylvania Dutch"), preserving a linguistic heritage that binds the community. Worship services are held every other Sunday in members' homes rather than in dedicated church buildings, reflecting their emphasis on simplicity and intimacy. Services focus on Bible readings, singing without instrumental accompaniment, and expository preaching. The absence of musical instruments and ornate church decorations underscores their rejection of worldly distractions and pride.

Distinctive Practices Reflecting Amish Faith

Amish religious beliefs and practices extend beyond formal worship into daily life, creating a tightly woven fabric of tradition and spirituality. These practices are not merely cultural artifacts but expressions of deep religious conviction.

Technology and Modernity

One of the most well-known aspects of Amish life is their selective rejection of modern technology. This stance is rooted in their desire to maintain community cohesion and avoid worldly influences that could foster pride or individualism. Electricity from public power grids, automobiles, television, and smartphones are generally forbidden. However, this rejection is not absolute. Many Amish communities permit the use of battery-powered tools, propane-powered appliances, and limited telephony for business purposes. The *Ordnung* varies by district, reflecting a pragmatic balance between religious principles and economic realities.

Dress and Appearance

Amish clothing is a visible manifestation of their religious ethos. Plain dress symbolizes modesty, humility, and separation from the secular world. Men typically wear broad-brimmed hats, suspenders, and dark-colored suits without buttons (using hooks and eyes instead), while women don long dresses, aprons, and prayer coverings. The uniformity of dress fosters

equality within the community and discourages vanity or competition. Deviations can be interpreted as breaches of discipline, potentially leading to social sanctions.

Language and Education

Pennsylvania German remains the primary spoken language within the Amish community, especially among older generations. English is also used, particularly in interactions with outsiders and in formal education settings. Regarding schooling, Amish children attend one-room schools run by the community, typically ending formal education after the eighth grade. This reflects their belief that extended schooling is unnecessary for their agrarian lifestyle and may expose youth to worldly values counter to Amish teachings.

Community and Social Structure

Amish religious beliefs and practices emphasize the primacy of community over the individual. This communal focus shapes their social structure, conflict resolution, and economic life.

Family and Marriage

Family is central to Amish life. Large families are common, reflecting both religious values and practical needs for labor in farming and crafts. Marriages are typically within the Amish community, reinforcing social cohesion and shared values. Courtship and marriage customs are guided by religious principles, with an emphasis on mutual commitment and the continuation of faith traditions. Weddings are modest affairs held in homes, lasting several hours, and include singing, scripture readings, and a simple meal.

Work Ethic and Economic Practices

Work is considered a form of worship and service to God. Most Amish are engaged in farming, woodworking, or small-scale trades. Their economic practices often reject modern capitalist competition in favor of mutual support, bartering, and cooperative ventures. The avoidance of debt and emphasis on self-sufficiency align with their religious convictions, promoting stability and reducing reliance on external systems that might undermine community autonomy.

Challenges and Adaptations

While Amish religious beliefs and practices are deeply rooted in tradition, communities face pressures from external societal changes and internal dynamics. Some Amish groups are more conservative, strictly adhering to historical customs, while others adopt measured changes to accommodate economic viability and interactions with the outside world. For instance, the use of certain technologies in farming or business has increased in some districts. Legal and educational challenges have also emerged, as Amish schooling practices and exemptions from compulsory education laws have occasionally come under scrutiny. Despite these pressures, Amish communities continue to negotiate their place within broader society while maintaining their religious identity. The Amish religious landscape is a compelling example of how faith can shape every aspect of life, from worship to technology use, family structure to economic behavior. Their commitment to preserving a distinct spiritual path amidst modernity invites ongoing observation and respect.

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Difficult sections can be revisited without pressure, and understanding develops gradually. The ability to study offline further supports focus and consistency. Different reading styles find equal support. Some readers prefer steady progression, others follow curiosity across sections. The format accommodates both, allowing each reader to shape their own path through **Amish Religious Beliefs And Practices**. Accessibility features extend participation. Adjustable text size, reading assistance tools, and compatibility with support technologies ensure that more people can engage comfortably. These features quietly expand access without altering content. Organization becomes intuitive. Digital libraries grow alongside interests and goals. Files remain searchable, notes preserved, and insights easy to revisit. Learning feels cumulative rather than scattered. Another subtle advantage lies in reduced pressure. 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Over time, this steady availability shapes attitude. Learning feels approachable. Curiosity feels justified. Understanding feels earned through consistency rather than urgency. Accessing **Amish Religious Beliefs And Practices** in this way aligns with real-life rhythms. It respects limited time, varied attention, and changing priorities. Learning becomes something that accompanies daily life rather than competing with it. Rather than pushing toward a finish line, the experience encourages return. Each revisit brings new context and deeper insight. Familiar sections reveal new meaning as perspective shifts. Knowledge grows quietly through this process. There is no dramatic endpoint, only gradual accumulation. Ideas connect, understanding strengthens, and confidence develops naturally. In this space, learning does not announce itself. It unfolds through small choices, repeated engagement, and ongoing curiosity. The book remains nearby, ready whenever questions appear, offering not closure, but continuity.

Amish Religious Beliefs and Practices: A Deep Dive into Tradition and Community Amish religious beliefs and practices represent a deliberate, centuries-old synthesis of Anabaptist theology and communal living, serving as the bedrock of a society meticulously structured around faith. These tenets have not only preserved a distinct cultural identity but also sparked enduring discussions about modernity versus tradition. This article explores the core doctrines, rituals, and societal

impacts of Amish religion, offering readers a comprehensive understanding of how these elements sustain a way of life unlike any mainstream alternative. ###

Historical and Theological Foundations

Amish religious beliefs originate in 16th-century Switzerland, emerging from Swiss Anabaptist movements that emphasized adult baptism, separation from state-controlled churches, and a radical, personal commitment to Christ. Over decades of persecution, migration, and adaptation, these principles crystallized into a distinct religious framework. At its center is the *Ordnung*—a dynamic set of unwritten rules governing daily life, faith expression, and social conduct. "Ordnung" varies across Amish communities, but it uniformly prioritizes humility, simplicity, and obedience. Contrary to assumptions that it rigidly rejects innovation, the *Ordnung* evolves through mutual agreement, reflecting a balance between tradition and practical necessity. "Christian ethics," another anchor, stresses nonviolence (shunning), modesty in dress, and communal responsibility. Evangelical roots tie daily activities to spiritual purpose; even farming bends toward stewardship of God's creation. ###

Core Religious Practices and Daily Life

Religious practice among Amish unfolds through deliberate restraint and communal reinforcement. Gatherings center on the congregation's worship service, where worship is reverent and participatory without emotional fervor—distinct from Protestant revivalism.

Worship and Scripture

Worship services are brief, with hymns in German (a "language of the hearts") and scripture readings. Amish Bible study is highly contextual, interpreting texts through the lens of community norms. The Bible serves not just as doctrine but also as a moral compass for the *Ordnung*'s nuances.

Seasons and Rituals

Seasonal observances mark religious rhythm: Harvest festivals celebrate divine providence in agriculture. Christmas and Easter maintain biblical focus but avoid secular or commercial excess. Confirmation rites (common post-puberty) affirm personal faith commitment. Daily life mirrors these priorities—farming operates under "plain dress" guidelines, and school curricula integrate biblical instruction. ###

Community as a Spiritual Institution

The Amish "church" transcends individual congregations, functioning as a collective body absolved from individual clergy authority. "Ordnung committees" enforce standards, though dissent is managed through private repentance or, rarely, shunning—a spiritual "excommunication." "Shunning" remains potent amid modern pressures. Recent surveys indicate 15–20% of shunned members return within a year, suggesting social costs outweigh religious severity. This practice reinforces communal cohesion but raises questions about mental health impacts and intergenerational trust.

Family and Gender Roles

Family is the primary unit of faith transmission. Elders guide households, with women holding critical roles in child-rearing and preserving cultural norms. While often described as "traditional," Amish gender structures emphasize partnership rather than hierarchy, with women contributing economically and spiritually. ###

Challenges in a Modern World

Amish religious principles create friction with contemporary society. Technology adoption is cautious—some communities permit tractors but ban personal cars—tailored to minimize distraction. Education ends at 8th grade to prevent worldly influences, yet literacy rates remain high at 90%.

Adaptation vs. Preservation

Amish leaders frequently debate innovation's boundaries. Data from Pennsylvania indicates a 30% rise in modern Amish "franchise members" since 2015, though this trend correlates with economic pressures, not doctrinal laxity. Economic self-sufficiency—among the highest in rural America—supports religious values by reducing dependence on secular systems.

Environmental and Ethical Considerations

Amish stewardship aligns with broader sustainability trends, though their agricultural model relies on 80% land ownership, raising land-use equity questions. Their rejection of profit-driven motives fosters community resilience but limits scalability.

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Comparative and Contextual Perspectives

Compared to Mennonites or Hutterites, Amish observance is more austere, especially in dress and separation from media. Yet shared roots in Anabaptism unify them with Swiss Brethren traditions.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Data

As of 2023, over 350,000 Amish inhabit fourteen U.S. states, with Pennsylvania leading at 156,000. Their median household income (\$68,000) exceeds national averages, enabling modest consumer spending while avoiding credit card dependency.

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Pros, Cons, and Cultural Significance

Pros Social Unity: Shared faith creates

Questions & Answers About amish religious beliefs and practices

No	Question	Answer
1	What are the core religious beliefs of the Amish community?	The Amish believe in a literal interpretation of the Bible, emphasizing humility, simplicity, non-violence, and separation from the modern world to maintain a close relationship with God.
2	How does the Amish practice of shunning reflect their religious values?	Shunning is used as a disciplinary measure to enforce community rules and encourage repentance, reflecting the Amish emphasis on obedience, accountability, and maintaining purity within the church.
3	Why do the Amish avoid modern technology in their daily lives?	The Amish reject modern technology to prevent worldly distractions, uphold community cohesion, and preserve their values of simplicity and humility as part of their religious commitment.

4	What role does baptism play in Amish religious practices?	Baptism is a significant rite of passage for Amish adults who consciously choose to join the church, symbolizing their commitment to God's covenant and the Amish way of life.
5	How do Amish worship services differ from mainstream Christian services?	Amish worship services are held in homes rather than churches, conducted in Pennsylvania Dutch, involve singing without musical instruments, and emphasize community participation and simplicity.
6	What is the significance of the Ordnung in Amish religious life?	The Ordnung is an unwritten set of rules that governs all aspects of Amish life, including dress, technology use, and behavior, ensuring conformity to religious principles and community standards.
7	How do Amish religious beliefs influence their education system?	Amish education focuses on practical skills and religious teachings, typically ending at the eighth grade, to prepare children for Amish life and reinforce community values over secular knowledge.
8	What is the Amish perspective on non-violence and pacifism?	The Amish strongly adhere to pacifism, rejecting violence and military service based on Jesus' teachings of love and turning the other cheek, which is central to their religious convictions.

Amish faith, Ordnung, shunning, Plain dress, community worship, nonresistance, adult baptism, separation from the world, traditional farming, horse and buggy transportation

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