

## **Menisten Concession by the Elector (Kurfurst) Karl Ludwig**

Dear loyal subject,

It is known to you that because of the long years of war, which caused wilderness and devastation, there has been a group of people, called Menisten, among the immigrants. Compared with the customary religions they have separate meetings. They renounce carrying a gun and refuse all conflict of war. They also have other peculiar customs among themselves.

We do not think it necessary to explore these because we need first of all people and subjects who will rebuild the devastated land and restore it. Therefore, we have decided to tolerate these earlier mentioned Menisten and others who belong to them. First of all, tolerate them, until another order by the Elector is given, never the less with certain restrictions.

We recommend ourselves to you and order you to have all these persons entrusted to you be registered in a specific register . . .

- Duty to register – they all must be registered on a special list
- Restricted number – make it clear to them that in their church services in villages where there are five or more families, not more than 20 persons can meet at one time
- Prohibition to make contacts – they cannot invite others from similar religions
- Subjects who conform – they are not to talk or do anything to belittle God or the authorities
- Prohibition to do mission work – demand of them that they do not rebaptize
- Additional tax – in recognition of these freedoms awarded to them, each homeowner must pay three gulden this year. After that annually and each year, as long as these rules are not recalled, they will pay six gulden more than the other subjects need to pay. This money is to be recorded under the title ‘Menisten recognition money.’

. . . with the warning that persons who do not register and are not put on that special list, or who provide shelter, if they are found out, they shall be expelled. They shall no longer be permitted to have a residence in our electorate and land. In this way you will carry out our gracious will and serious intentions.

Heidelberg, Aug.4, 1664