

2019

## Where Are the Plain Anabaptists?

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### Recommended Citation

Anderson, Cory, and Joseph Donnermeyer. 2013. "Where Are the Plain Anabaptists?" *Journal of Amish and Plain Anabaptist Studies* 1(1):1-25.

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## Where Are the Plain Anabaptists?

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### Abstract

This article discusses geographic analytical units of plain Anabaptist groups relevant for conceptualizing spatial dispersion across Canada and the United States. All plain Anabaptist groups are tied to the land, hence, the religious values, cultural traditions, and social organizations of plain Anabaptists are intimately and reciprocally bound up with geography. We discuss six geographic units of the plain Anabaptists and describe how we gathered information about their locations. These include: local church, local affiliation, settlement, region, broad affiliation, and global region. We present maps of their geographic distribution throughout Canada and the U.S., noting spatial patterns. Hence, this article provides a geographic introduction to plain Anabaptist groups, which are defined further in the next article, “Who are the plain Anabaptists? What are the plain Anabaptists?” (Anderson 2013).

**Keywords:** Amish, Mennonite, German Baptist, Hutterite, Apostolic Christian, Bruderhof, geographical units, settlement, affiliation, region

### Erratum (*updated November 2013*)

° Pg. 5, Table 1: The final line was excluded in the original version and should include “...and/or linguistic differences.”

## **Introduction**

On occasion, a scholar will compile a massive amount of geographic data about the Anabaptists and present a complete set of locations for a branch of the plain Anabaptists. Such is the undertaking in this paper. One recent project is C. Nelson Hostetter's (1997) listing of (nearly) all plain and mainline Swiss Mennonites, Russian Mennonites, and Amish in the United States. Donald Kraybill (2010) directed a population estimate of (nearly) all plain and mainline Anabaptists in North America, Central America, and the Caribbean, but what few maps were available only showed concentrations by state. Similarly, the *Mennonite World Review* maps produced every several years is extensive—including Amish, Swiss Mennonites, and Russian Mennonites – but show only concentrations by states. All of this recent attention to plain Anabaptist population and spatial dispersion is certainly justified. The rate of growth among plain Anabaptists continues to significantly change the map of North America (Nolt 1992). Bringing our separate work together, we present here our contribution, a report of plain Anabaptism that prioritizes spatial precision.

In geographic studies of the plain Anabaptists, the Amish have received more frequent attention than the other plain groups. John Hostetler (1964) produced one of the first maps of Old Order Amish settlements, but cartographic precision was sacrificed in order to illustrate district numbers. Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana were full of evenly spaced dots despite the map title, which read “Location of Old Order Amish Church Districts...” William Crowley (1978) synthesized all Old Order Amish migration and settlement formation in North America with greater accuracy, though his maps were covered with arrows of movement and was difficult to digest in a single glance. Ottie Garrett (1996) produced a traveler's guide which included U.S. and state-by-state maps of Amish settlements. In recent years, Stephen Scott and Edsel Burdge have continued tracking new Amish settlements and population growth under the direction of Donald Kraybill at the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College (Kraybill, Burdge, and Scott 2013). The authors of this article have also published on the Amish (Donnermeyer and Cooksey 2010) and Amish-Mennonite (Anderson 2012a) churches, including maps and tables of churches and population figures. The contribution of Amishman David Luthy eclipses the work of all others in sheer depth, publishing a thick volume of failed Amish settlements through 1960 (Luthy 1986), tallies of new settlements in the latter quarter of the twentieth century (Luthy 1994), and, perhaps most importantly, annual tallies of Old Order Amish settlements in *Family Life* (Luthy 2008). Scholars have also given occasional attention to the diffusion of Hutterites colonies (Evans 1985; Janzen and Stanton 2010; Peters 1965).

Regardless of the Plain Anabaptist group, massive syntheses are becoming both easier and more difficult. They are easier today than in years past because of the printed resources available, which list all or nearly all communities of a particular group. Most denominations have a directory that includes other information as well, like membership numbers. The Old German Baptist Brethren (New Conference), the Bruderhof, and the Reformed Mennonites list their locations on the web. Plain Anabaptists may also have newsletters or newspapers that report community news—such as the Amish *Die Botschaft* and *The Diary*, the Dunkard Brethren *Bible Monitor*, and the cross-denominational *The Budget*.

However, keeping track of changes in the places where the Plain Anabaptists live, work, and worship is more difficult than in years past for two reasons. First, the sheer growth of plain Anabaptists means that they establish churches with increasing frequency. Second, with growth comes a diversity of groups and a rise in two types of populations that remain unlisted. On one side are unaffiliated congregations that fit no directory because of their loose attachments to a plain Anabaptist identity. Directories are necessarily categorical—who is in and who is out—and those without a close identity are often “out.” Many (but not all) unaffiliated churches may themselves reject such categorization as denominationalism, which they oppose on ecumenical-like grounds. On the other side are those groups that do not want to be in a directory for reasons of religious strictness, such as the Swartzentruber Amish. While they clearly delineate their lines of religious association, they feel the concept of directories is too worldly.

We present in this study a new synthesis of plain Anabaptist church locations. We use our recently completed census data to describe the dispersion of the plain Anabaptists in the United States and Canada. This study breaks down plain Anabaptist groups by seven traditions, according to the precedent of Anderson (2013) as described elsewhere in this issue. We include nearly all plain groups, but omit several for now for lack of reliable, specific data. While we realize the data are not complete, we present this research as a near-complete answer to the question: “Where are the plain Anabaptists?”

### **Socio-Spatial Units of the Plain Anabaptists**

The spatial patterns of plain Anabaptists lend themselves to tracking. This is because, by their very nature, the plain people are separatist and community-oriented. They tend to create enclaves and exist in tightly clustered communities (Rechlin 1970), though the density of clusters varies among groups (Lewis 1976). Hence, the plain Anabaptists are one of only a few major religious groups in America where community

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level analysis is just as valid (if not more so) as household or individual level units of analysis. The geographic community is largely synonymous with the social/spiritual community because the enclave is necessary to preserve distinctive practices and beliefs. Indeed, those plain households that dwell alone often assimilate or else soon move to where there are other sectarians of the same kind or closely related.

Plain Anabaptists constitute several community social units, which have been discussed to some extent by others (e.g. Cross 2004a; Enninger 1988; Hostetler 1993; Huntington 1981). Here, we will reconstitute the social units with applicability to all plain Anabaptists (Table 1). The most basic community unit is the “local church,” that is, those people who consistently show up at a given reoccurring religious meeting. The local church is a social unit, not the building that may be the local church’s site of worship. Nevertheless, the local church is contained in a geographically confined place much like a meetinghouse. To meet for reoccurring services, the members must live within close proximity. For a majority of plain Anabaptist groups, a meetinghouse represents the community’s spatial axis, pinpointing the source of centripetal force that keeps household locations in a cluster. The Amish, who in all but a few settlements reject meetinghouses, are bounded in spatial dispersion by the non-use of automobiles to travel to Sunday meetings which are rotated from residence to residence of families in the same local church. Hence, each family must be able to reach all other families within a reasonable traveling distance. Thus, transportation limitations exert an even greater centripetal force on Amish household locations in the absence of a physical meetinghouse location than automobile groups. The Amish school may serve as a supplementary axis in the absence of meetinghouses, in that children from all households must be able to reach the school daily. For Hutterites, the Bruderhof, and some Russian Mennonites, the local church’s ownership of land represents the church’s spatial boundaries; all households settle within and no outsiders reside between families’ homes, as is often the case for non-communal groups (Mook and Hostetler 1957). For groups like the Old Order River Brethren, whose pietistic emphasis accepts members living far from membership concentrations, qualification as a local church (versus a household) depends on the existence of regular religious meetings in that area.

The second unit of analysis is the “local affiliation” and is the spatial cluster of local churches. Several local churches within a local affiliation are commonly called districts. To have several districts is to have several local churches in adjacent (perhaps overlapping) geographical areas, and to be a “local affiliation,” therefore, these local churches must all associate religiously with each other. Old Order Mennonites tend to stress the aggregate over the parts; members attend services at separate meetinghouses on Sunday, but they are all part of a larger unified local affiliation. They are members

of, say, the Weaverland Mennonite Conference (Horning) in Lancaster and Lebanon Counties, the local affiliation (not the local church). Amish and Amish-Mennonites, on the other hand, tend to stress the autonomy of local churches in a local affiliation. They are members of their local church, which makes decisions independent of other local churches in the same area, but with regard to the harmony and unification of the aggregate. Despite the religious unity of local churches, each gains a reputation for progressive, moderate, or conservative tendencies (Cong 1992; Landing 1969), though they are all part of the local affiliation. An alternative type of local affiliation is the district, common especially among conference-structured Mennonites (Scott 1996). Clusters of churches are grouped into geographical units that spread across a region and are governed by a single leader or leaders.

The third unit of analysis is the “settlement.” The settlement may be synonymous with the local affiliation if only one plain Anabaptist local affiliation exists therein, but as is the case in most aged Anabaptist settlements, multiple local affiliations spatially overlap, as with the many Amish and Mennonite affiliations in Big Valley,

**Table 1: Socio-Spatial Units of Plain Anabaptists**

| <b>Unit</b>          | <b>Definition</b>  |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. Local Church      | Those people who show up at a given reoccurring religious meeting. The local church may also be a “district” in the context of a local affiliation or settlement, or a “commune” in the case of collectivist groups.   |
| 2. Local Affiliation | A spatial cluster of local churches that share intimate religious association.   |
| 3. Settlement        | A region with spatially overlapping local affiliations and local churches (at its most encompassing definition). Alternatively, a single local church may be a settlement when the church is oriented toward creating a local affiliation as it grows. A settlement may also consist of just a single local affiliation. |
| 4. Region            | Either a spatially apparent cluster of settlements within a distance that may be traversed regularly (such as for work) or a relative, subjective area concentrically weighted by the spatial and affiliative proximity of other community units from a given unit.  |
| 5. Broad Affiliation | All local affiliations and local churches across space that share intimate religious association.  |
| 6. Global Region     | Intra-national, international, and transnational clusters of smaller community units, demarcated from one another by significant spatial, cultural, jurisdictional, and/or linguistic differences.   |

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Pennsylvania (Hostetler 1993; Page and Brown 2007); Holmes-Wayne Counties, Ohio (Hurst and McConnell 2010; Schreiber 1962); Elkhart-Lagrange Counties, Indiana (Baehr 1942); and Allen County, Indiana (Petrovich 2013; Ringenberg 1976). In one sense, the spatially overlapping local affiliations do not share the most intimate religious ties, but in another sense they recognize a common heritage and use one another as socio-religious benchmarks (Hurst and McConnell 2010). Indeed, the assortment of affiliations in a single settlement may trace their roots to a single affiliation that settled the area. In the case of Russian Mennonites, which established group owned governments that manage land ownership, religious diversity may emerge within their micro nation-state, and the tendency thus far has been to afford factions all rights of land ownership and co-governance, as in Spanish Lookout, Belize, even if these factions locate out of plain Anabaptism (Schoonder-Woerd and Roessingh 2009).

Terminology between the first unit, the local church, and the third unit, the settlement, may shift based on group concept of geographical objectives. When the conservative Mennonites and Amish-Mennonites, for example, move to a new location, they tend to refer to the new establishment as a church. Their concept is that as this local church grows, it will ideally establish a new church somewhere else rather than starting a second church in the locality. All new settlements will ideally remain single-church settlements. The Amish, on the other hand, refer not to a new church but to a new settlement. Their concept is that as this new church grows, it will divide into multiple church districts all in a single location. Thus, they speak of a new settlement, not a new church or district, because the expectation is that the single-church settlement will become a multi-church settlement. Again, a local affiliation that is the only affiliation in the area may still be thought of as a settlement, as the concept emphasizes spatial clustering with the possibility of multiple affiliations contained therein.

The fourth unit of analysis is the “region,” which is merely a spatial cluster of settlements, local affiliations, and/or churches, but in certain cases may also implement measures of affiliation. Regions may be obvious from maps. Lancaster County, PA, is in its own right a settlement and Lebanon County, PA, another, though the non-Anabaptist territory between the two is long since gone. Within a reasonable driving distance of both settlements is the Washington County, MD—Franklin County, PA, settlement as well as Amish and Mennonite settlements in the valleys of central Pennsylvania, all forming a larger southeastern Pennsylvanian region. In Ohio, the Wayne County Mennonite settlement and the adjacent Holmes County Amish settlement have blended together to form a region, as has the Elkhart-Lagrange Counties / Marshall-Kosciusko Counties Amish-Mennonite-Brethren settlements, forming the “Michiana” region (which spills into Michigan) (Nolt 1999). The

Schmiedeleut Hutterites have two regions: southern Manitoba and eastern South Dakota, though the regions are too large—with colonies fairly evenly spaced—to contain any “settlements” as such, just many colonies (“local churches”).

Regions may also be relative to a reasonable traveling distance from a particular smaller unit. Thus, the boundaries of regions may be porous and footloose, as the region is really definable by the distance from a given church, local affiliation, or settlement. A relative region has two components. First, as with the “gravity model” in geography, the inclusion of a unit in a relative region is positively correlated to the proximity of that unit to a given unit. Second, the inclusion of a unit in a relative region is positively correlated to the closeness of that unit to a given unit’s affiliation. In Missouri and adjacent counties in neighboring states, churches and settlements are so widely distributed that the region takes on relative forms. The Mennonite Christian Fellowship has six churches in western Missouri in a line from north to south, each about 35 to 60 miles apart, but with a 175 mile gap between the two central churches. While all six may think of themselves as part of a region, the northern three Fellowship churches are less likely to think of the Apostolic and Amish churches near the southern three as part of their region, whereas the Fellowship churches in the south may be more inclined to do so. In the Intermountain West, where distances are even greater, the relative region is particularly applicable as well.

The fifth unit of analysis is the “broad affiliation.” Because plain Anabaptists have a history of migration, their affiliations spread out across states, provinces, and countries. The broad affiliation includes all local affiliations, that is, the broad affiliation is an amalgamation of enclaves. Members affirm their sense of religious affiliation across spatial divides through periodicals and publications, affiliation-wide meetings, writing and telecommunications, visits to other settlements, and nurture programs (Anderson 2012b; Fishman 1988; Landing 1972; Nolt and Meyers 2007).

The sixth unit of analysis, heretofore unaddressed in the literature, is the “global region.” These regions constitute transnational locations that are largely isolated from one another through international boundaries, cultural and language differences, and sheer distance that cannot be regularly traversed by most. They often include multiple spatially overlapping affiliations, much like settlements. As plain Anabaptists have migrated out of the U.S. and Canada, they have established new global regions containing numerous enclaves. For example, an annual Central American Ministers’ Meeting brings together church leaders from Amish-Mennonite, conservative Mennonite, and Russian Mennonite backgrounds. While they recognize slight religious differences, their Central American context has shaped these churches into affiliations with fewer pronounced differences than their North American parallels. Other global



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regions containing multiple affiliations include Australia, Kenya, and Eastern Europe. Some global regions are nested within others. The Belizean plain Anabaptist churches constitute a global region in their own right, but they exist within a larger Central American global region. Even within North America, clear global regions exist, such as the global region of the east-central U.S. (including Amish, Mennonites, the Apostolic Christian Church, and Brethren) and the western Great Plains of Canada (including Hutterites and Russian Mennonites).

Because plain Anabaptists cluster in certain areas, they also transform the cultural landscape according to their societal structure and values. These may include one-room school buildings, alternative power sources like windmills (Kent and Neugebauer 1990), and architectural elements in housing and barns derived from Pennsylvania German culture or from the practice of particular religious beliefs (Lamme and McDonald 1984; Noble 1986; Wilhelm 1976). Forms vary as Anabaptism varies. The absence of modern elements like power lines (or satellite dishes) from Amish properties suggest a sectarian property by what is not there (Mook and Hostetler 1957). The Hutterites and the Bruderhofs have highly visible, contained villages. Evangelically-oriented groups like many conservative Mennonites post gospel signs by their mailboxes, and a barrage of them may greet a traveler going through Mennonite areas.

In this section, we have presented six units of conceptualizing plain Anabaptist spatial dispersion, including: the local church, the local affiliation, the settlement, the region, the broad affiliation, and the global region. In the remainder of this article, we will demonstrate the utility of these concepts by applying these socio-geographic frameworks to our combined data collections.

## **Data Sources and Methods**

The level of analysis in mapping plain Anabaptists was in most cases the local church, though we mapped Amish settlements with more than one district at the local affiliation level. To locate local churches, we consulted multiple archival sources. Directories were a primary source, as many affiliations make these publications available to their constituents. These directories contain information about meetinghouse locations. Some directories, such as that of the Groffdale Mennonite Conference (Wenger), do not contain meetinghouse locations, just household listings. In instances when directories do not provide meetinghouse locations or when directories do not exist for a group, we consulted maps published by these groups, journal articles, newsletters, websites, obituaries (which often provided the location of a meetinghouse graveyard), affiliation newsletters and periodicals, other miscellaneous archival sources, and personal acquaintances. At this time, we have finalized

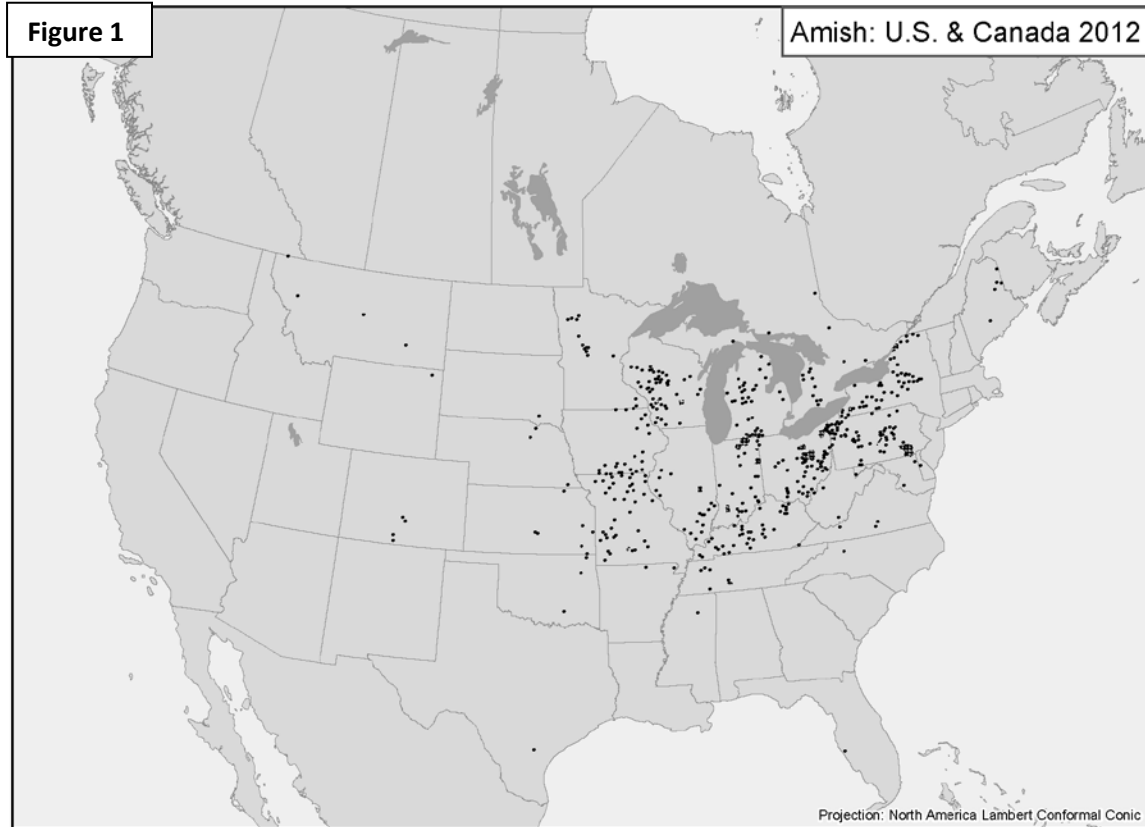
information on all but the following groups: Stauffer Mennonites, Reidenbach Mennonites, and most Russian Mennonite groups in Canada, including the Old Colony.

For all plain Anabaptist groups with meetinghouses, we used archival information to pinpoint meetinghouse locations using aerial and street views in Google Maps. Thus, the locations we present are precise, based on GPS coordinates, not street addresses (often incorrectly geocoded in rural municipalities) or general locations. What few meetinghouses we were unable to locate precisely we have noted in our data and have generated a GPS coordinate close to the suspected location. We did not generate GPS coordinates for Hutterite colonies, but instead used the ones they provide.

Only a very few Amish local churches have meetinghouses, so they required a different method of location. In association with a count of the Amish for the 2010 U.S. Religion Census, sponsored by the Religious Congregational Membership Survey (Grammich et al. 2012), we used two data sources to build up a statistical base for county-level population estimates and for mapping of Amish settlements. The first source was directories of households and local churches. All but a few of these directories are organized by local affiliations or regions, especially for the larger settlements like the Lancaster/Chester County, Pennsylvania settlement. By the end of the 2012 calendar year, an estimated 463 Amish settlements were located in the U.S. and the Ontario province in Canada (see Donnermeyer, Anderson, and Cooksey 2013, in this issue).

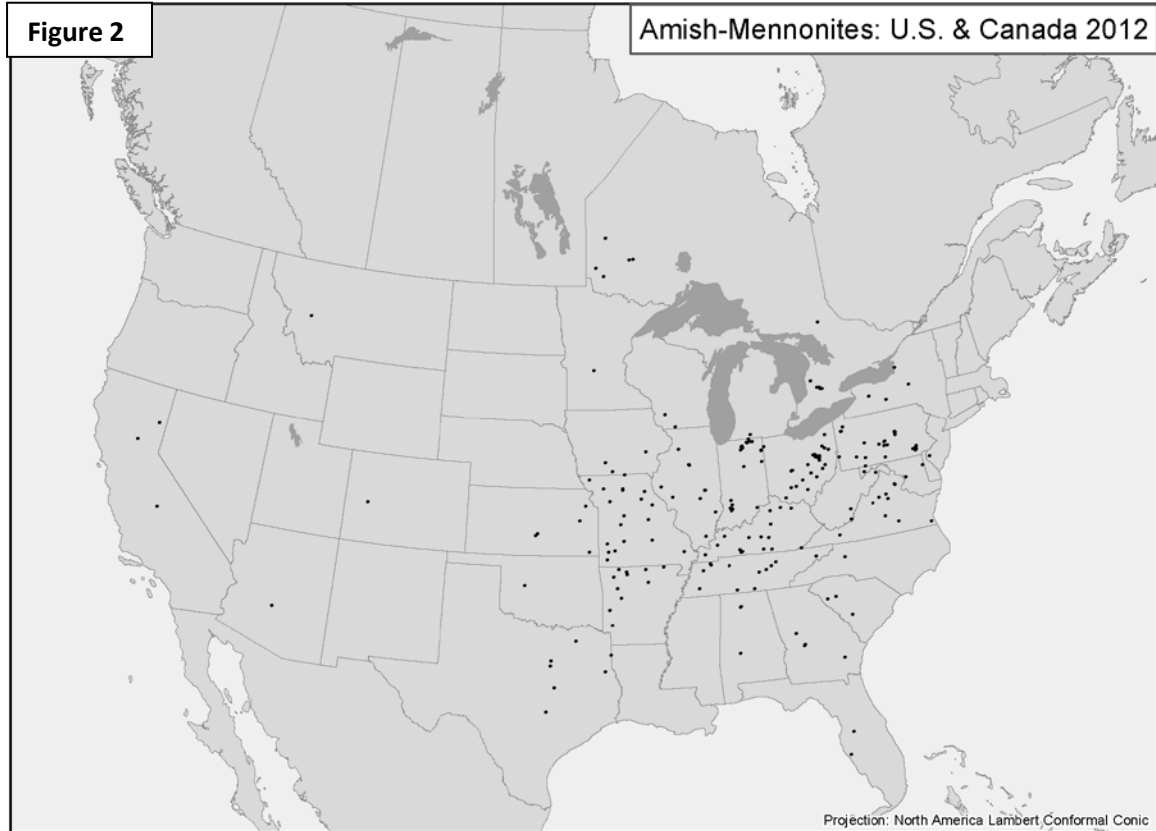
Unfortunately, there is not a recent directory for every Amish church. A second source of data for both the population count and for mapping settlement locations is three periodicals which publish information about events in Amish communities, including announcements of new communities as they are established. Two of these periodicals are almost exclusively for Amish news, *Die Botschaft* and *The Diary*. A scribe or reporter in each settlement normally submits the local news and may mention that someone's cousin or nephew or neighbor is part of a group of families "moving to \_\_\_\_\_ to found a new settlement." The name of the new local church (one-church settlement) is usually the name of the nearest town with a post office. If no other information is available, the centroid or center of the post office's zip code provides an approximate location of a settlement until more precise information is obtained. Many of these scribes also report "end of year statistics" for the settlement. If the number of households is mentioned, then a population estimate can be easily calculated from pre-established averages of household size of families in Amish settlements where directories have been published. The assumption is that household size varies little between large and small settlements. We provide a more detailed description of the Amish census elsewhere in this issue.

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### Results

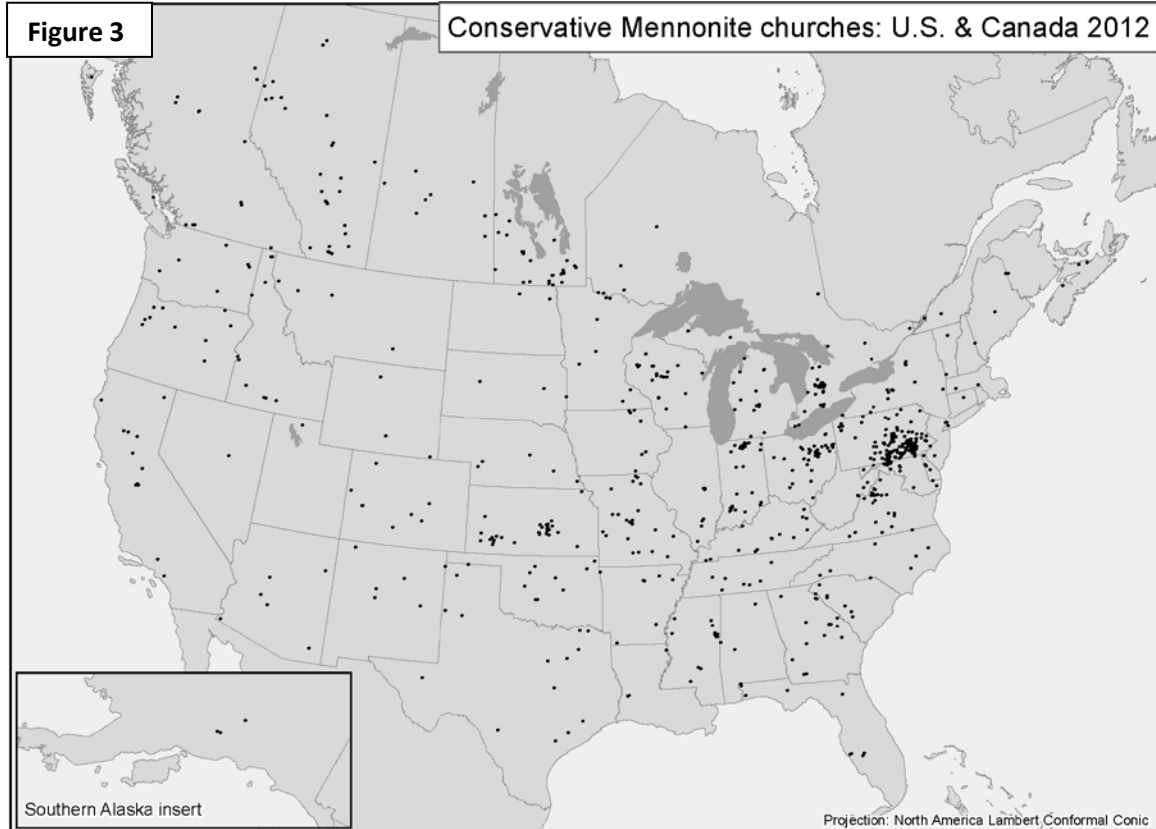
Figures 1 and 2 are of all Amish settlements and Amish-Mennonite churches, respectively. Amish settlements up to nine districts are represented by a single dot while those of ten or more districts are represented by a geometric shape of the local affiliation area, filled with dots. Amish settlement favors the Mid-Atlantic states of Pennsylvania and New York, as well as the Midwest, though not the heart of the Great Plains. The region of densest settlement transverberates the western foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, from northern New York to western Tennessee. In recent years, they have also created regions of dense settlement in central Michigan (Huntington 2001), central and western Wisconsin (Cross 2004a), and Missouri. On the other hand, the Amish have established few lasting settlements in the South (Landing 1970), though Kentucky and the southern half of Missouri are becoming contemporary exceptions. Having settled originally in Pennsylvania (Mook 1956; Stoltzfus 1954), the Amish followed the frontier west, as far west as Kansas, and in the past few decades have established new settlements largely in states with existing Amish settlements and in neighboring states (Beachy 2011; Donnermeyer and Cooksey 2010). Few new settlements have started outside this Mid-Atlantic/Midwest global region; those that have attempted such settlements became disconnected from the broad affiliation and



either changed affiliation or abandoned the location (Luthy 1986; Luthy 2003). This may be changing, however, given the establishment of two regional clusters of Amish settlements in the Rocky Mountains (Montana/Idaho and Colorado), plus settlements in northern Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming.

Amish-Mennonite church dispersion is less dense (Figure 2), with churches exhibiting a visible spacing from one another—evident most clearly in Kentucky and Missouri. This reflects Amish-Mennonite interest in establishing single-church settlements, though the continual defection of Amish in historic regions and settlements like southeastern Pennsylvania, Holmes County, OH, and Michiana necessitates some concentration in these settlements for those interested in the Amish-Mennonites. In the past half-century, Amish-Mennonite movement has gravitated more toward the South than Amish migration. All seven Amish-Mennonite denominationally-sponsored institutions with place-based sites are located in these states, including two publishing houses, two nursing homes, one mentally handicapped children's home, one camp for emotionally disturbed boys, and a Bible school for young adults, thus combating a core/periphery model that makes the South peripheral at the hands of the older settlements to the north (Anderson 2006). The churches populating regions most distant from historic settlements are also in the strict subgroups, suggesting their greater

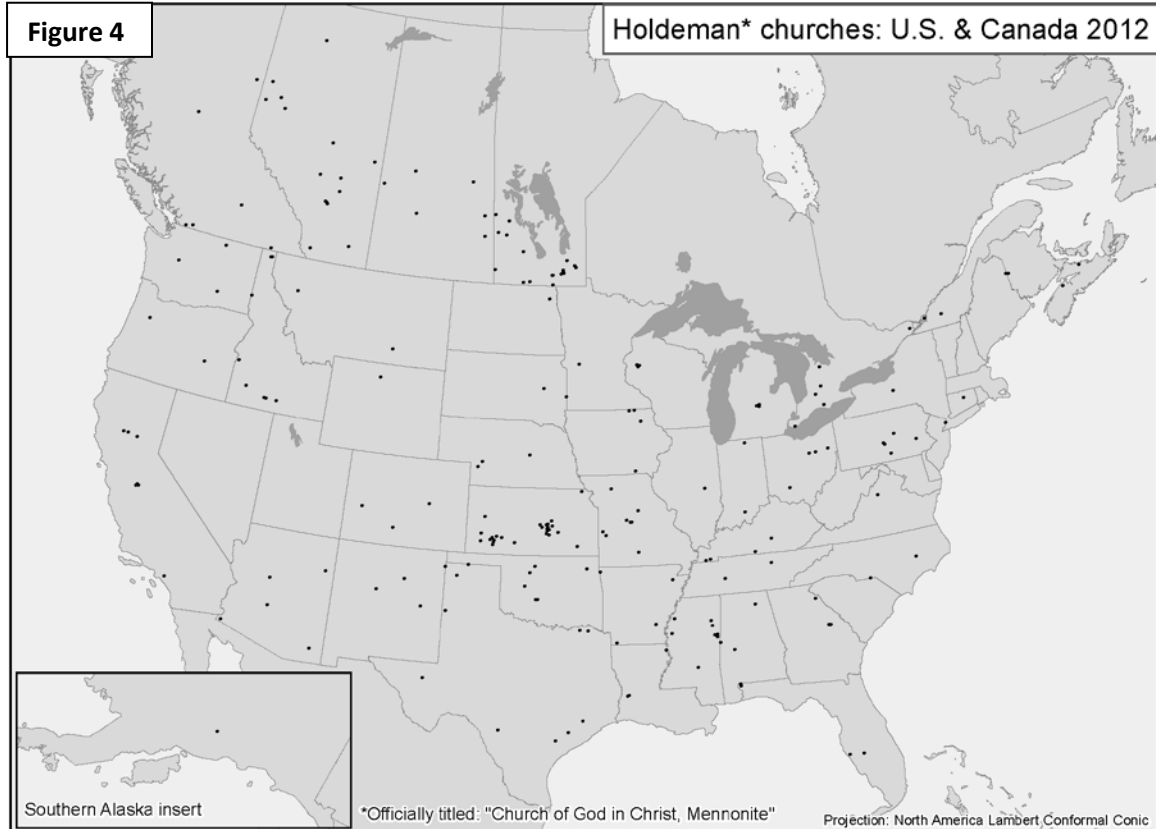
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viability outside settlements and local affiliations. For example, only two of the Tennessee churches and one of the Missouri churches is Beachy Amish-Mennonite (the largest and least strict Amish-Mennonite affiliation).

While the Amish were settling New York, Michigan, and Wisconsin, the Amish-Mennonites were settling Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, and Arkansas. The availability of small, inexpensive dairy farms to the north attracts the Amish (Cross 2004b; Huntington 2001; Johnson-Weiner 2010) more than the Amish-Mennonites, who do not have the same technological constraints that make such land desirable. Given the Amish-Mennonite allowance to own automobiles and to use airplanes, they may travel much more easily and readily. This in turn permits visitation at distant churches, which in turn reinforces a stronger sense of religious affiliation across long distances, which in turn allows them to settle more distant regions. Nevertheless, the western states have apparently been too distant for settlement until recently (Anderson 2012a).

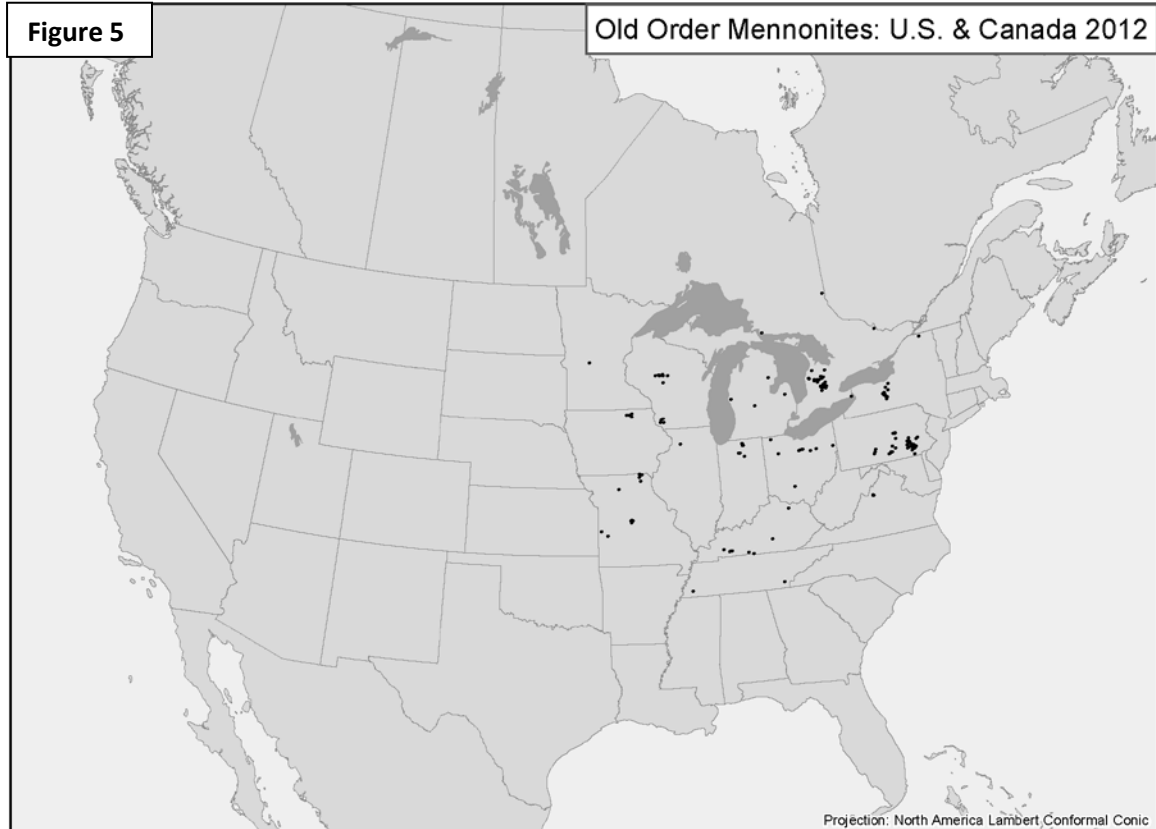
Conservative Mennonites occupy most regions of the United States and Canada (Figure 3). Only the states of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Hawaii, and the provinces of Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland (as well as the northern territories) have no conservative Mennonite churches. The spread of conservative



Mennonites owe to their disparate historic migration and origins in both the Swiss and Russian Mennonites. Eighteenth century colonization of southeastern Pennsylvania produced one of the largest (and most diverse) regions of plain Anabaptist churches anywhere. From there they migrated northwest to Ontario, west to Ohio and Indiana, and south into Maryland and Virginia.

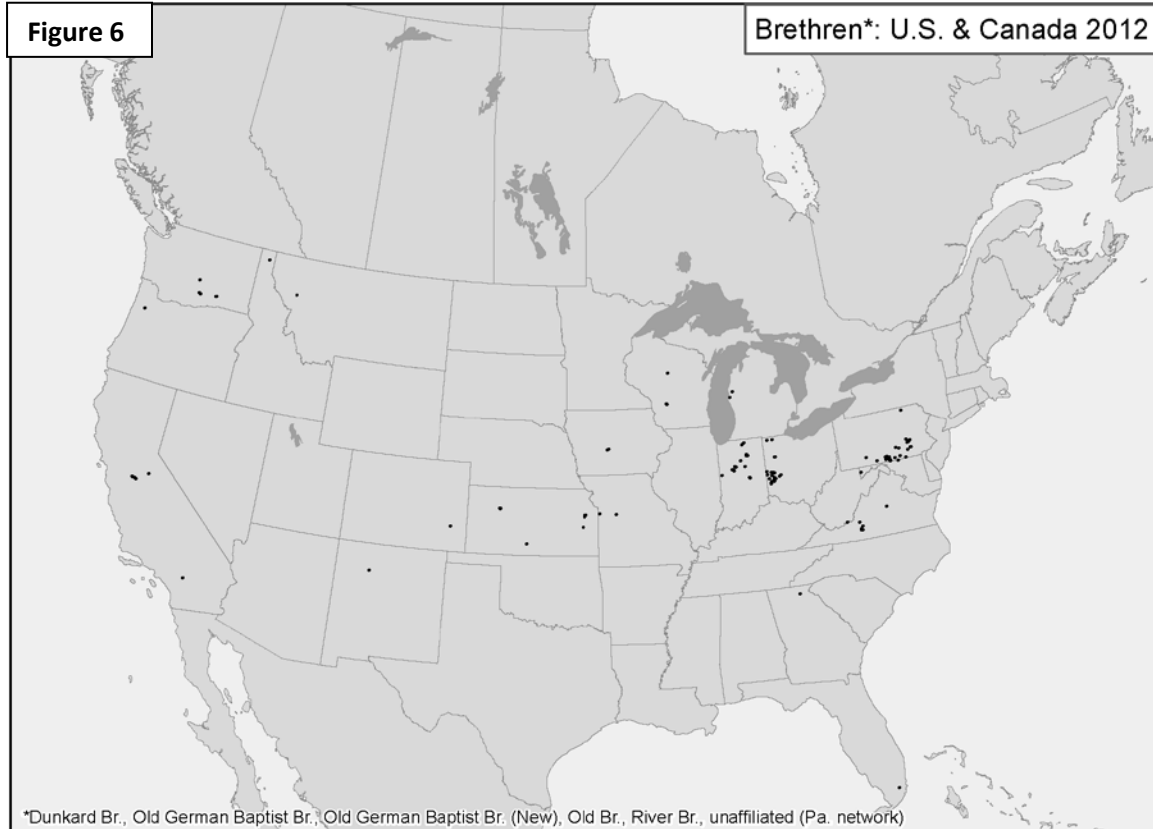
The Church of God in Christ, Mennonite (Holdeman), rooted their movement in Kansas, which has been an ideal location to populate the surrounding Great Plains and American regions in all directions, but their lack of historic roots in eastern states has resulted in only a few congregations in a very large and diverse Mennonite global region (see Figure 4, which isolates just the Holdemans from other conservative Mennonites). Russian Mennonite settlement in the Great Plains of Canada also produced numerous conservative Mennonite churches that sought affiliation with the conservative Mennonites of the United States, especially the Holdemans and the Nationwide Fellowship. Mennonite migration to the west coast around the turn of the twentieth century produced a lasting presence there. More recently, the publishing and missionary work in Farmington, New Mexico (northwest corner), has been something of a hub in the Intermountain West of establishing dispersed local churches. Simultaneously, the conservative Mennonites started churches in South Carolina,

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Georgia, and Mississippi, creating several small settlements and regions in the South. Conservative Mennonite impetus for distant dispersed church planting—even in historically unattractive regions like New England—derives from their evangelical orientation (Lehman 1998; Scott 1996), which seeks to establish a conservative Mennonite presence where there is none in order to welcome interested outsiders into their churches.

The Old Order Mennonites—both automobile and horse & buggy groups—on the other hand settle in tight clusters with only a few single-church settlements (Figure 5). This exemplifies their emphasis on the local affiliation rather than local churches. In the heart of both the Lancaster County, PA, and St. Jacobs, ON, settlements, the automobile and horse & buggy groups share some meetinghouses, altering Sunday usage, further suggesting an awareness of settlements containing multiple types of Old Order Mennonites. Like the Amish, Old Order Mennonites are concentrated in the Mid-Atlantic and Midwestern United States, as well as southern Ontario. Old Order Mennonites have also more recently settled New York (Lee 2000), Wisconsin, Missouri, and Kentucky. Limits on transportation (Kraybill and Hurd 2006; Scott 1998) may explain the inclination of horse & buggy Old Order Mennonites to settle in large, dense communities, where they can build a micro-economy customized to their needs



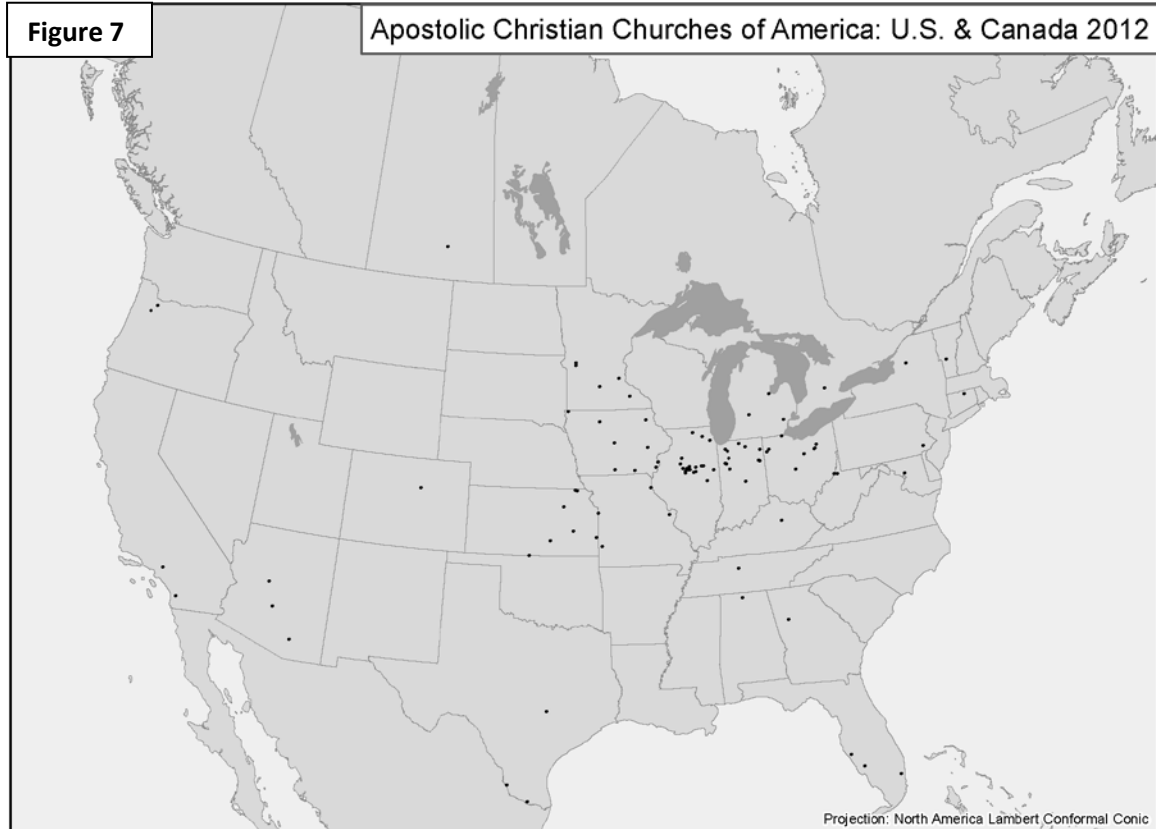
and within reach of non-motorized transportation (Murdie 1965). This does not explain the same pattern among the automobile Old Order Mennonites, except that both are frequently together and the more restrictive demands of the horse & buggy group dominates spatial patterns of the settlement.

Brethren affiliations tend to cluster together as well (Figure 6). The southeastern Pennsylvania region is home to many Old German Baptist Brethren, River Brethren, Dunkard Brethren, and unaffiliated conservative Brethren churches. A second regional luster of Brethren churches is around Dayton, OH, and central/northern Indiana. Both Brethren regions represent colonization dating back one to three centuries ago, respectively. The Old German Baptist Brethren and Dunkard Brethren have also established small settlements in the Midwest, West (Sacramento, CA), and the South (Roanoke, VA). With the relatively fresh division of the Old German Baptist Brethren, many Old German Baptist Brethren settlements now contain the mother affiliation and the New Conference, adding diversity to settlements that may have already contained Dunkard Brethren, Old Brethren, and/or other small affiliations and creating diversity in settlements that included only one local affiliation.

The Apostolic Christian Churches (Figure 7) reach their peak density in central Illinois, near Peoria, which is the site of the largest Amish-Mennonite settlement to no

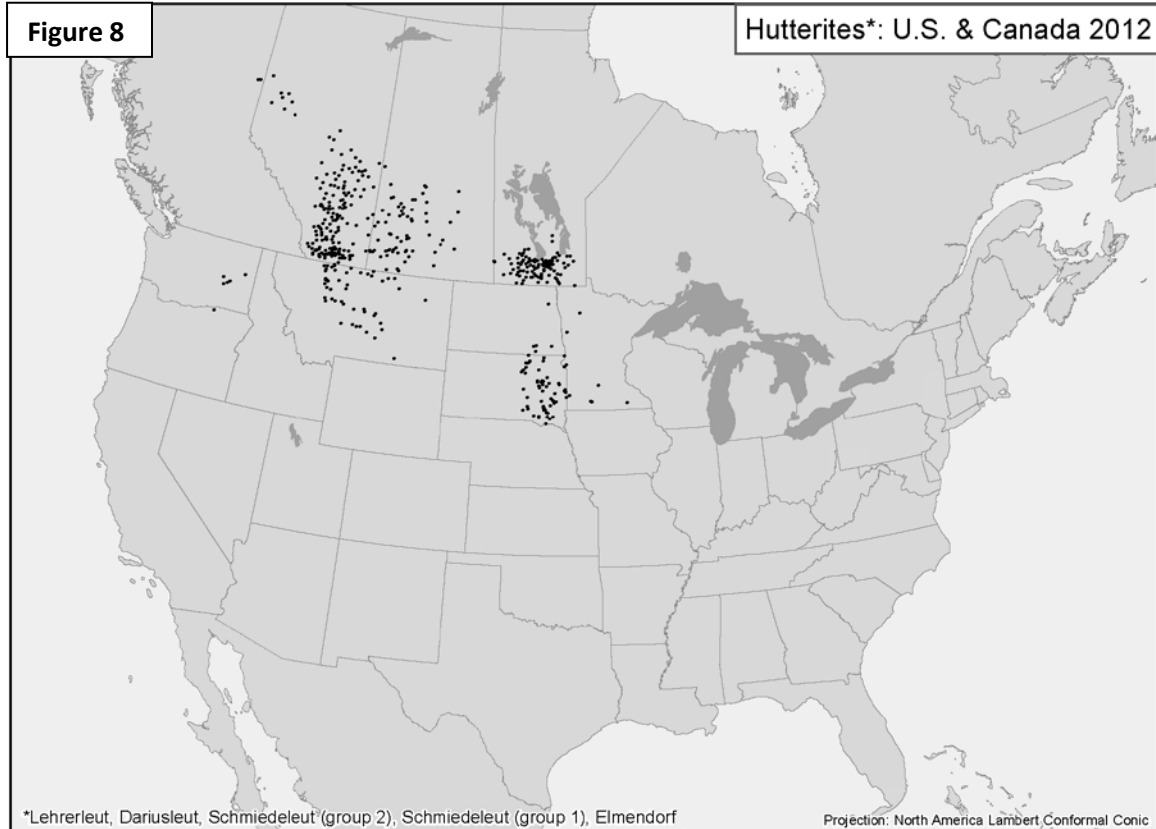


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longer be Amish (two modestly sized unaffiliated Amish-Mennonite congregations exist today). Many Amish-Mennonites joined the Apostolic Christian Church through the latter 1800s (many also joined the mainstream Mennonites). A handful of churches exist outside of the Midwest and, unlike other plain Anabaptist groups, most of these are located in urban and suburban areas, a product of growing professionalism within the sect. The present map reflects 2012 churches prior to a nationwide division that began later in the year. Numerous minority groups have pulled out of existing local churches to retain a stricter practice. Defectors establish new churches in the same area. Apostolic Christian Church settlements that were at one time synonymous with the local affiliation will now become dual-affiliation settlements.

Hutterite locations reflect their initial settlement in the American (1870s) and Canadian (1918) Great Plains (Figure 8). Their colonies constitute a global region paralleling many Russian Mennonite colonies, which also settled here in the decades sandwiching the turn of the twentieth century (Loewen 2008). When the Dariusleut and Lehrerleut settled in Alberta in 1918, they developed a spatial nucleus and acquired land in all directions, establishing new colonies, as did the Schmiedeleut in Manitoba. At midcentury, the Alberta and Manitoba governments prohibited the Hutterites from establishing new colonies within a certain distance of existing ones. The stricter Alberta



law eventually gave way to the peremptory fiats of a government board, but existing hostilities prompted the emigration of many Dariusleut and Lehrerleut settlers to Saskatchewan and Montana. Fewer governmental regulations in Manitoba permitted the Schmiedeleut to settle densely. In 1973, the Alberta Communal Property Act was repealed and the Hutterites there began infilling (Evans 1985). The absence of outward evangelical interests and the fit of the land's physical geography to the Hutterite's large-scale mechanized farming operations have kept the Hutterites regionally clustered, especially since the repeal of laws regulating settlement patterns.

When the Bruderhof migrated from Paraguay to the United States, they established their first commune in New York near the Hudson River. Most growth has occurred in this region. A few have also started in southwestern Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and South Dakota (taken over from the Hutterites), though some colonies in New York and the ones in the latter two states have closed during past membership purges. They presently have nine communes and common houses in New York, while the Pennsylvania commune now includes a twin across the road and a common house over the West Virginia line (Figure 9). The movement has long been nepotistic and authoritarian, and the leadership swaps members between communes (Rubin 2000; Zablocki 1971). This structure favors geographic centralization. A second process

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drives spatial patterns, their desire to re-establish historically abandoned colonies, which accounts for a smaller presence in Paraguay, England, and Germany. The two United States nuclei lend themselves to the “local affiliation” unit.

Because we do not yet have all Russian Mennonite meetinghouses mapped, we will describe their locations in lieu of a map. Few Russian Mennonites exist in the United States. The largest settlement is in Seminole, TX. In the late 1970s, Old Colony Mennonites largely from Chihuahua, Mexico, sought to establish a new colony in western Texas but were swindled by real estate agents. Only after signing the deed and moving did the Mennonites discover that the ranch they purchased did not include water rights and that U.S. citizenship does not accompany land ownership, as the agents led them to believe. The bank foreclosed on the ranch, but the U.S. Congress stepped in to avoid mass deportation, granting the migrants citizenship (Camden and Gaetz Duarte 2006). This fiasco precluded the settlement from reaching its expected 40,000 population, its current tally reaching only a fraction of this. Several plain Mennonite churches exist there today, as well as two Kleine Gemeinde churches in Oklahoma. In Canada, the largest concentrations of Sommerfeld, Reinländ, Old Colony, and Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites are in Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario, with smaller populations in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia. Mass migration from Russia to

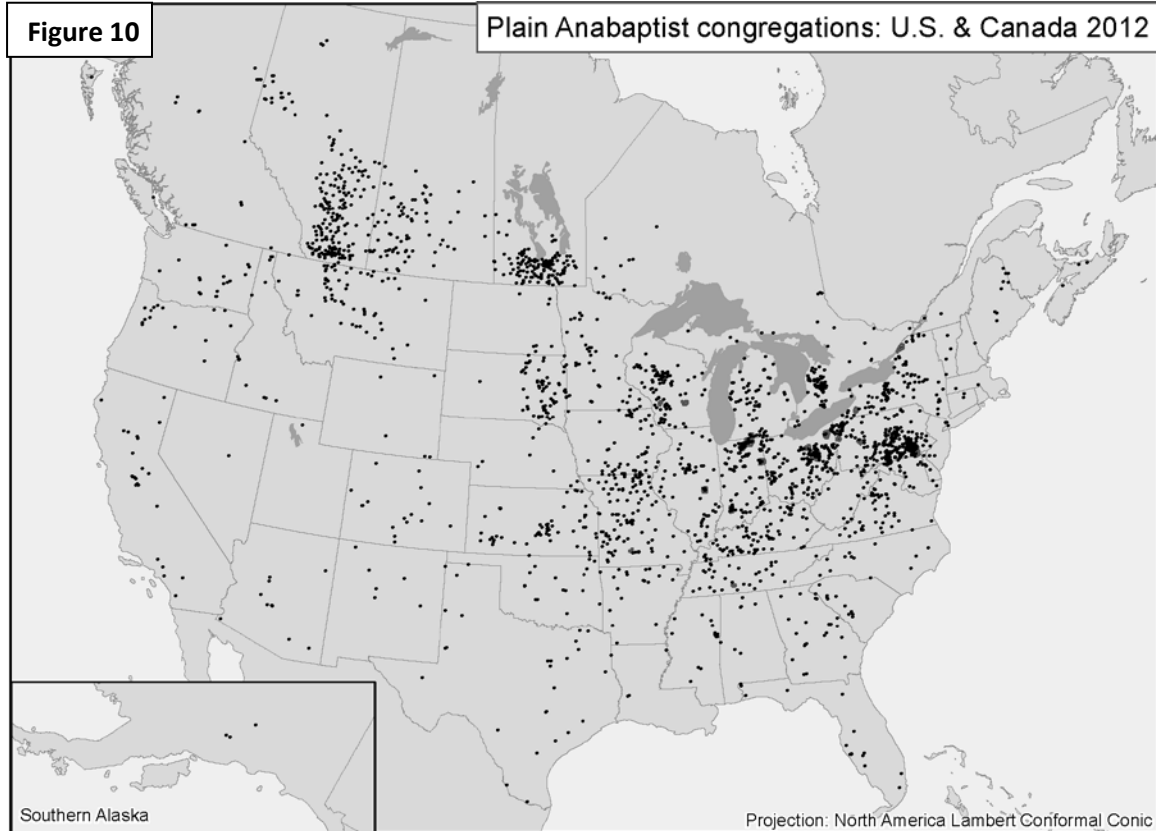
the Great Plains of Canada in the 1870s and ongoing farm labor migration account for these spatial patterns. The Russian Mennonites present a case of transnational migration not found in the other groups, whereby they migrate between Mexico, the United States, and Canada, seeking employment as farmhands (Good Gingrich and Preibisch 2010). Such seasonal migrations defy the static units of analysis in this paper.

In summary, we present Figure 10, the compilation of all above maps. The eastern U.S., the central U.S., and southern Ontario visibly constitute a global region. A second global region exists across Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Montana, which would be more even denser had the Russian Mennonites been included, though their local churches are on average much larger than all other groups, presenting a complication when using church locations to estimate local population numbers. Within the map, many regions are evident—southern Ontario, southeastern Pennsylvania, central New York, northwestern Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, western Ohio, Michiana, Missouri-Iowa, western Wisconsin, central and western Kansas, eastern North Dakota, southern Manitoba, and southern Alberta. Many more smaller ones are spread across non-historic regions like California, South Carolina-Georgia, Tennessee-Kentucky, Colorado, Michigan, and Maine. As the population of plain Anabaptists continues to grow as a result of high birth and retention rates, new settlements and regions may emerge where there are none presently.

## **Conclusion**

In this article, we have made two major accomplishments. First, we have presented our data collection of plain Anabaptist churches in the United States and Canada. We know of no other work prior that has located this many plain Anabaptist churches with such precision. Second, we have proposed a series of six analytical units by which to examine the multilevel concept of plain Anabaptist community: the local church, local affiliation, settlement, region, broad affiliation, and global region. We offer these to geographers, sociologists, and other social scientists for use—and refinement. What this study has not done is provide population censuses and estimates—the human composition—of these plain Anabaptist churches. In our tallies, we, like others (Hostetter 1997; Kraybill 2010), rely on directory reports of membership and populations for many groups as make such information available, but must also make rough estimates for others, which we are not prepared to report in full. Elsewhere in this issue (Donnermeyer, Anderson and Cooksey 2013), we do estimate the Amish population in greater detail.

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### Endnote

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