

Appendix I: Amish Groups

To maintain their separation from the world, the Amish live in tight-knit communities called “settlements.” Almost without exception, these settlements are in rural counties (and county equivalents) of multiple U.S. states, four Canadian provinces, and, since 2016, two single settlements in Argentina and Bolivia.

There has previously been only one adequate county-based population count of Amish church members (and adherents), developed for the 2010 U.S. Religion Census. As a “horse and buggy” people who rotate bi-weekly church service from residence to residence, each church district of about 20 to 35 families must live sufficiently close for everyone else to drive to all the other residences. Hence, it is the settlement and church districts within, along with the family or household unit, which forms the important building blocks of Amish social organization.

Amish adherents for the Religion Census include all baptized members or full members, and all children, teenagers, and young adults who have not yet decided to be baptized into the faith but who still live at home. The procedure for estimating county-level Amish populations was first developed for Ohio in 2004 and evolved to that used in the 2010 Religion Census. The steps to enumerate Amish congregations and adherents for 2020 built on these previous efforts.

This method assumes that, for the Amish, church membership and religiosity are the same. All baptized members of a church district are compelled, both by their own socialization and by the oversight afforded in a small group setting among regular members and ordained church leaders, to participate in church services and various ancillary church district level responsibilities (such as assessments for each family to establish a fund of money to pay for medical bills). Only baptized adult members who cannot physically attend due to an illness or disability are exempt from church sanctions and eventual excommunication for repeated absences or violations of the church discipline. Hence, a count of adult or baptized members is also a count of active church members in good standing.

Step 1: Using three Amish newspapers (*The Diary*, *The Budget*, and *Die Bostschaft*), and the files of the Heritage Historical Library (HHL) in Aylmer, Ontario, the Amish-Mennonite Heritage Center (AMHC) in Berlin, Ohio, and the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, I identified the formation and dissolution of Amish settlements in the past decade, and the counties in which they are located. HHL is located within a small community of Amish in southern Ontario, whilst AMHC is situated in the middle of the largest Amish settlement, located in northeast Ohio. The Heritage Historical Library is a privately-owned library in the Aylmer, Ontario Amish settlement. The owner of HHL is Amish. AMHC was founded in 1992 to provide information to tourists and scholars alike on plain Anabaptist groups, from the Hutterites to the Amish and Mennonites. In recent years, it has enhanced its research mission with the addition of a library, made available to those with interest in the social, cultural, and religious dimensions of various Anabaptist groups. The Young Center is a research center at Elizabethtown College that includes the top scholars on Amish studies. It too includes an extensive collection of monographs, directories and other source materials.

Step 2: Those same newspapers and the files of the HHL, AMHC and the Young Center provided information on the publication of directories for many Amish settlements, especially the larger ones. These directories include the names and addresses of each household in each church district of a given

settlement, and many include lettered codes indicating baptism membership status. Most directories are published periodically. For example, the directory for the second largest Amish settlement (the Greater Holmes County, Ohio community, which encompasses parts of 5 counties and nearly 7,000 households) includes a list of each household, organized by the 265 church districts, and a map indicating each household's location. Under each household is a listing of all family members and an indication if a daughter or son has married, moved out, and started an independent household. The Greater Holmes County directory is published every five years, and most other are also published at regular intervals. From these directories, I tabulated an exact count, extrapolating to 2020 for those published during off years. I examined county-line boundaries for church districts whose members' residences spill over from one county to another (and for a few, from one state to another) using web-based "find people" and other mapping services. I estimate that there are directories for nearly 70 percent of all Amish settlements, accounting for about 85 percent of the population.

It should be noted that the conservative Swartzentruber Amish do not allow their names or addresses to be placed in the Greater Holmes County settlement directory. Step 4 below discusses how I determined the number of members and adherents for the 20 plus Swartzentruber church districts in the Greater Holmes County community, as well as others with a similar situation. Fortunately, Swartzentruber groups show up in other directories, from which I calculated an average household size and average size of a church district.

I devised estimates for communities with off-year directories published prior to 2020 in one of two ways. In the first, I counted the population from earlier directories of the same settlement and then established a percentage change in the population from which to extrapolate to 2020. Given that most directories are published every three to five years, extrapolations will project an estimated population gain/loss. The second comprises step 3 of my process, typically used for smaller and newer Amish settlements, as discussed below.

Step 3: Smaller and newer Amish settlements represent about one-third of all communities, but a relatively small proportion of the population. Such communities only have an older (prior to 2015) directory, one directory, or no directory. This is an important consideration because it affects population estimates for many counties where the Amish reside. From the large amount of demographic and other forms of data available in various directories, I calculated averages for the number of baptized or adult members and children still living at home (adherents). I adjusted these averages for both the age of the settlement and whether it is a more progressive, mainstream, or conservative community of Amish. I applied these averages where only a limited amount of information is available (e.g., communities with no directory or no recent one).

Before applying these averages to estimate Amish adherents, I confirmed lack of directory availability for a community through a thorough search of the HHL, AMHC, and Young Center shelves, as their collections of directories are the most extensive of any library. I then used information in *The Budget*, *The Diary*, and *Die Botschaft* to estimate the populations of smaller settlements. All three newspapers are published monthly and provide reports from hundreds of Amish settlements, especially the smaller ones. Usually, the reporters describe the weather, illnesses and accidents, and important events, such as weddings, ordinations, church services, and communion. Once each year, mostly in the issues published in January and February, many reporters give the "end of year statistics" for their settlements. Almost all of these include the number of households. Using, as described in step 2, age-of-settlement-specific

averages and conservative/mainstream/progressive-specific averages of both household and church district size, I estimated church membership for these smaller and new settlements from the number of known households. The addresses of ordained men (bishop, minister, deacon) can be found in *Raber's Almanac*, a nearly complete annual accounting of church leaders, which I used to estimate population for settlements that overlap county boundaries but lack sufficient directory information and related maps.

Step 4: Even after gathering all information to develop estimates in steps 2 and 3, there were a few settlements for which there was very little information. If I was able to determine the number of households in a settlement, then I estimated its population as described in step 3, accounting for the age of the settlement and its identification as conservative/mainstream/progressive. If I could not determine the number of households in a settlement, then I estimated it from the number of households in an average church district, accounting for the age of the settlement and statistically established projections of normal population growth over time, as well as whether the settlement was progressive, mainstream, or conservative.

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