

## CHURCH MEMBER PROFILE 2006 (CMP2006)

### Overview

In 2006, the Young Center of Elizabethtown College conducted a national survey of 7,000 members in Mennonite Church USA, the Brethren in Christ, and the Church of the Brethren. Two previous studies of Mennonites tracked attitudes and practices of members. Church Member Profile I (CMP I) surveyed 3,500 members in 1972. The findings, used by many church-wide agencies, were published in *Anabaptists: Four Centuries Later*. A second church member profile (CMP II) surveyed 3,000 members in 1989. The results were published in *The Mennonite Mosaic*. A similar survey of Church of the Brethren members, the Brethren Profile Study, was conducted by Carl Bowman in 1985. The findings of that study were used by various Brethren agencies and published by Brethren Press in *A Profile of the Church of the Brethren*. They were also referenced in Bowman's *Brethren Society*, published by the Johns Hopkins University Press.

### The Research Team

The research team included Donald B. Kraybill (senior fellow at the Young Center), senior project director, Conrad Kanagy (associate professor of sociology at Elizabethtown College), Mennonite project director, and Carl D. Bowman (professor of sociology at Bridgewater College), Brethren project director.

### Methods

A sample of 7,000 members from some 250 congregations were selected through scientific sampling methods sensitive to congregational size, in order to assure a representative national probability sample of members 18 years of age or older living in the United States. The instrument was 20-page, self-administered mail questionnaire that included: 1) common items asked of all participants, 2) items from the 1972, 1985, and 1989 surveys, 3) denomination-specific items, and 4) national benchmark items.

### Results

The fielding of the questionnaire was completed by May 15, 2006. Response rates averaged about 70 percent, which is far above the typical rates of 25 to 30 percent for mail surveys to church members. Information on the project for particular denominations may be obtained by contacting the principal investigator for that denomination.

### Reports

Preliminary reports include *Road Signs for the Journey: A Profile of Mennonite Church USA*, a book by Conrad Kanagy that interprets the Mennonite survey data, which was published in July 2007. (*Resources for the Journey*, a CD/DVD collection of worship, small group, and Sunday school resources for congregations, was released in conjunction with the book.) A book by Carl Bowman that interprets the Church of the Brethren data will be published by Brethren Press in early spring 2008.