

Mennonites like 'First,' 'Bethel,' trees in names: One-quarter don't use "Mennonite" in their names

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If you're looking for a Mennonite church in any given city, turn to "F" in the phone book—more Mennonite churches start with "First" than any other name, according to the *Mennonite Weekly Review*. Its analysis found that 46 congregations of the 1,130 churches in the Mennonite Church USA and the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches are named "First" Mennonite Church, making it the most popular name for the historic peace churches.

There are no "Second" or "Third" Mennonite churches, but following in the most popular name category are Bethel or Beth-El with 21, Emmanuel or Immanuel with 14, New Life (or Nueva Vida in Spanish) at 13 and Grace at 12.

A little more than one-quarter of Mennonite churches don't use "Mennonite" in their names, and 23 percent don't use "Church"—12 are called fellowships, 27 are chapels, 13 are centers and three are tabernacles, the newspaper reported.

None of the congregations are called "branches," but 13 types of trees have been used for names: oak is used ten times, maple is used eight times and pine is used seven. *-Religion News Service*