

Demographic Resources

There are a variety of places to look for facts and figures about your community. Studying demographics should never be done apart from one-to-one conversations, door to door visitation or other relational methods of research. However, in conjunction with such methods, demographics can be a powerful tool to help you understand trends, opportunities and challenges in your community. Here are a few demographic resources.

[The ELCA Office of Research and Evaluation](#) is an excellent source for information about your own congregation (as long as you have been filing accurate annual parochial reports) and information about your community. You just need to know your congregation id# and the zip code you are interested in studying. To find your congregation id#, simply look up your congregation under “congregations” listed alphabetically [here in the South Dakota Synod Handbook](#).

[This State Fact Sheet](#), available through the US Census Bureau, can be a good source of information about poverty, income, jobs, etc. The same fact sheets can be obtained for counties and zip codes.

[Percept Data Group](#) is not a free source, but it can provide you with rich demographic data on life-style, program preferences, and openness to faith as well as the more usual population and income data. It's designed specifically for churches and costs around \$250.00 for a highly detailed study of your service area.

Questions? Contact Pastor [Bill Tesch](#), the Director of Evangelical Mission for the South Dakota Synod.