



# Understanding Your Community

## Part Two: Demographics

Working with Jesus

**iFOLLOW**

The iFollow Discipleship Series



## About the iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition

### Categories

The iFollow Discipleship Series is designed to be used in congregations to assist people in their pursuit of God. This assumes that individuals are in unique places in their journey and there is no perfect set of lessons that everyone must complete to become a disciple—in fact discipleship is an eternal journey. Therefore the iFollow curriculum is a menu of milestones that an individual, small group, or even an entire church can choose from. The lessons can be placed in three general categories: **Meeting with Jesus** (does not assume a commitment to Jesus Christ); **Walking with Jesus** (assumes an acceptance of Jesus Christ); and **Working with Jesus** (assumes a desire to serve Jesus Christ).

### Components

Each lesson has a presenter's manuscript which can be read word for word, but will be stronger if the presenter puts it in his/her own words and uses personal illustrations. The graphic slides can be played directly from the Pastor's DVD or customized and played from a computer. There are also several group activities and discussion questions to choose from as well as printable student handouts.

### Usage

The lessons are designed to be used in small groups, pastor's Bible classes, prayer meetings, seminars, retreats, training sessions, discussion groups, and some lessons may be appropriate sermon outlines.

### Credits

**Curriculum Development:** The iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition curriculum development was lead by the **Center for Creative Ministry**. **General Editor:** Monte Sahlin; **Assistant Editor:** Debbonnaire Kovacs; **Directional Advisory:** Brad Forbes, Carole Kilcher, Ceri Myers, Cesar Gonzalez, Clayton Kinney, Curtis Rittenour, Dave Osborne, Dave VanDenburgh, Gerry Chudleigh, Jane Thayer, Jerry Thomas, John Appel, Jose Rojas, Kim Johnson, Nicole Chao, Paul Richardson, Rich DuBose, Shasta Nelson, William Sutton; **Pastoral Advisory:** Claudio Consuegra, Collette Pekar, Dave Hutman, Don Driver, Fredrick Russell, Jerry Nelson, Jesse Wilson, Leslie Bumgardner, Loren Fenton, Rebecca Brillhart; **Unit Authors:** Alberto Valenzuela, Althea Pineda, Corienne Hay, Debbonnaire Kovacs, Ed Dickerson, Gianluca Bruno, Gil Bahnsen, Greg Nelson, Jack Calkins, James Whibberding, Karen Collum, Monte Sahlin, Norma Sahlin, Pam Splawinski, Patty Ntihuka, Reinder Bruinsma, Ryan Bell; **Additional contribution** by Maria Ovando-Gibson; **Additional editing:** Dave Gemmell, Meredith Carter; **Graphic Design:** Mind Over Media; **Layout:** Paul D. Young; **Web Development:** Narrow Gate Media.

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# Understanding Your Community

## Part Two: Demographics

*This is the second in a series of six units designed to provide basic training in community assessment.*

### Learning Objectives

1. Understand the definition of “demographics”
2. Understand how to use demographics in planning for ministry
3. Understand each of the key terms used in demographic profiles
4. Review a demographic profile and select significant findings for a local community
5. Discuss the implications of the demographics for the mission of the church in this community

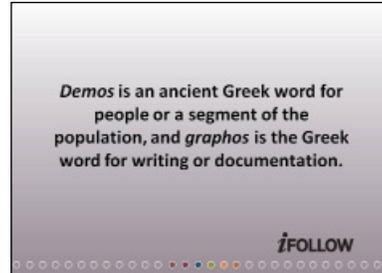
### Content Outline

- A. What are demographics?
- B. Key demographic items and the meaning of each for ministry planning
  1. Population vs. households
  2. Population by age
  3. Race and ethnicity
  4. Relationships
  5. Education
  6. Groups with special needs
  7. Mobility
  8. Immigration and ancestry
  9. Employment profile
  10. Household income
- C. How to find a demographic report for a specific local community



## Background Material for the Presenter

In the information age, the use of demographics has become an integral part of church ministry. The word literally means, “documenting people.” **Demos** is an ancient Greek word for people or a segment of the population, and **graphos** is the Greek word for writing or documentation. Just as the invention of photography and publications like *National Geographic* helped a generation of North Americans to open its eyes to natural wonders and cultures around the world, so the invention of the computer and demographics have made it possible to see and understand trends and dynamics on a vast scale; the births, lives and deaths of entire populations.



Demographics are readily accessible to leaders of congregations through the census web sites of both the United States and Canada. There are also many other sources of demographic data being marketed to business executives, as well as some tailored for non-profit organizations and Christian ministries. (See “Resources.”)

In practical terms, “demographics” refers to such things as location of residence, income level, education attained, marital status, etc. It is within this context that demographic statisticians study the size, density, distribution, and vital statistics of populations.

For example, the United States population was about 281 million in the 2000 Census. Official projections indicate that it will grow to 300 million by 2010, 400 million around 2050 and 571 million by the end of the century. (U. S. Census; Healy) The increase will come primarily from a decrease in death rates and an increase in birth rates, both related to better health conditions and longer life spans. Immigration, which has long played a key role in population growth in America, will actually decrease by about 25% over the first two decades of the century and then slowly move to higher levels. With these demographic trends in view, what are the implications for the Church? Specifically, how will the Church plan for the expected explosion of older adult population which is projected to grow 108 percent by 2030 to 70 million and will account for one in five Americans compared to one in ten today?

What about families who are highly mobile? In some areas of the country, young middle class families in which the head of the family is a professional move every five to ten years. How will this impact the ministry of the local church?

Urban areas have become magnets for a large immigration of ethnic groups from all over the world. The Census Bureau reported recently that Hispanics have become the largest ethnic minority in the United States. And, the growth among Hispanics will

change; in the future it will no longer come primarily from immigration, but from the natural increase of the Hispanic population in the U.S., bringing to dominance a new generation of native-born Hispanics, some of whom will begin to abandon the Spanish language. Immigration will increasingly come from the Middle East, Southern Asia, China and sub-Saharan Africa. What does this demographic trend mean to conferences where the largest share of baptisms for more than a decade has come from newly-arrived immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean basin? Migration as a source of church growth is likely to falter and may disappear.

How can you use demographics to improve your ministry? How will demographics help you understand your community better, so your congregation can reach people more effectively, start new ministries, or plant new congregations in unreached communities? This chapter will attempt to answer some of these questions.

## What is Your Ministry Area?

National demographics may or may not reflect reality in your community. The economy may be booming across North America, while your neighborhood is depressed with high numbers of unemployed. Schools may be crowded with growing numbers of children across the country, while school enrollment in your community is in decline. Because of this, it is important to look at the demographics that are specific to your community.

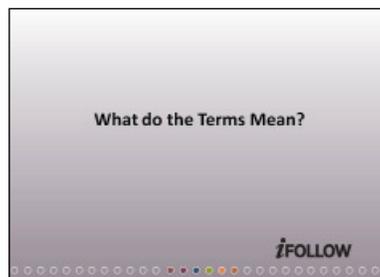


It is essential for you to identify the Zip or Postal Code or Codes which define your ministry area—the community you are trying to reach. These code numbers are the key that unlocks the vast wealth of demographic data available so that you can use it in your ministry. Using these code numbers, you can download demographic data from the Web and find useful information in many published sources.

[A typical demographic report is shown in Handout 2. It is from the U.S. Census. It would be better to have a copy of a similar report for your local community to serve as a hand-out. Much of this session is related to understanding the various items listed in such a report and the specific indicators they provide about ministry in your community.]

## What do the Terms Mean?

You may discover many unfamiliar terms as you look over a demographic report. These are technical terms, and each has a specific, defined meaning. It is important that you keep the definitions in mind as you study the information,



or you may run the risk of drawing wrong conclusions.

In this session we will define the key demographic items and compare our with the national “norm.” You may also want to compare the numbers for your community with the norms for your state. <http://www.census.gov> These numbers have the greatest significance in understanding the unique character of your community, and determining what needs to be done to shape an effective outreach strategy for your community.

As you look at various sources of demographic information, you will find differences in terminology from what is presented here. These small variations are to be expected and have no significance. You should be able to easily identify these varied terms with the definitions included here. If not, then call the 800 number for the Center for Metropolitan Ministry and the staff will help you understand what you are looking at.

We will also present explanations of what the demographic data mean for church growth and evangelism. This interpretative information is drawn largely from the major church growth and marketing studies that have been conducted by the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University, the Center for Creative Ministry and the Center for Metropolitan Ministry. A summary and bibliography of this research can be found in *Adventist Congregations Today*.

## Population vs. Households

The population is the total number of people living in a community, county, nation or other defined territory. This is not just adults, but people of all ages and conditions from the newborn to the eldest. The count was taken on a given day, and, of course, there are individuals who were born the next day, who died, and who moved in and out. So, projection formulas are used to estimate the population on more recent dates and into the future.



**Household** refers to a home or living unit—an apartment, a single-family home, etc. Some are occupied by families, people related by birth, marriage or adoption and residing together. Other households are occupied by a single adult living alone, while other are occupied by two or more single adults who may simply be roommates, a single homeowner renting out a room, two siblings sharing a home, or in some cases couples who are cohabiting. “Household” is a more generic term than **family**, which is the one you may naturally use. Some demographic reports will include both the total number of households and the number of family households and nonfamily households.

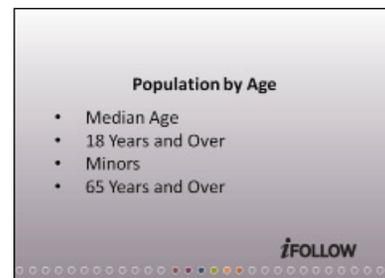
When the population is divided by the number of households, the number that results from this calculation is **average household size** or the average number of persons living in each home. In the U.S. that was 2.6 individuals per household in the 2000 census and you

are likely to see news stories announcing lower numbers as time goes on. (U. S. Census a) In a community made up of couples with young children this will be a higher number than in a community many older couples whose children have left home or a community with lots of single adults.

**What does this mean for our ministry?** The total population represents the number of individuals with whom the message and the love of Jesus Christ must be shared. It is the total number of people our ministry must seek to touch. The number of households is the number that would be used in purchasing direct mail advertising, or calculating the sample for a door-to-door survey, or setting a goal for any ministry where “one per family” is a practical guideline.

## Population by Age

These data show the percentage of the population that falls into each age category. Various reports will divide the age groups differently, sometimes into only four or five categories—children and teens, younger adults, middle-aged adults, and those of retirement age and older. The U.S. Census uses five-year segments for children, teenagers and young adults. For adults it uses ten-year segments.



**Median Age** means that half of the people in our community are older than this age and half are younger. It is a quick marker for the relative age profile of a community. The median age for the United States was 35 in the 2000 census. (U.S. Census a) Is the median age in our community younger or older than this national norm? If the median age in our community is higher than this, it indicates that our community has more older people. If the median age in our community is below 35, it indicates that our community has more younger people.

The population **18 years and over** gives the total adult population in our community. You can find out how many **minors** there are by subtracting this number from the total population. The population **65 years and over** indicates the number of senior citizens in our community. Age 65 is still the time at which most Americans are eligible to retire, although the Social Security program is being modified by the U.S. government to slowly inch up the age of eligibility and many private employers and local governments may follow this trend in the future. Children and seniors have particular needs related to their state in life and both the church and society in general have special programs focused on these needs, so these numbers are important.

**What do age data mean for ministry in our community?** If the percentage of children under 5 years of age in our community is above the national norm, then Vacation Bible School, day care, Mothers' Morning Out, parenting seminars, Welcome Baby, and a parent resource center, among others, are all outreach programs that should be considered by

our congregation. And it is important to take a careful look at the quality of our Cradle Roll and Kindergarten Sabbath Schools.

If the percentage of children 5 to 9 years of age in our community is above the national norm, then in addition to Vacation Bible School, parenting seminars, and a parent resource center, our congregation might also consider the possibility of an Adventurer Club or Neighborhood Bible Club. And it is important to take a careful look at the quality of our Primary Sabbath School.

If the percentage of children 10 to 14 years of age in our community is above the national norm, our local church should study how a strong Pathfinder Club can be an outreach as well as a nurture ministry. And it is important to take a careful look at the quality of our Junior Sabbath School.

If the percentage of youth 15 to 19 years of age in our community is above the national norm, then our congregation should consider how a strong youth ministry can be an outreach as well as a nurture ministry. This is often a weak area in Adventist congregations and needs careful development in order to have any chance of success. Part of building an effective youth ministry is taking a careful look at the quality of our Earliteen and Teen Sabbath Schools.

If the percentage of young adults 20 to 24 years of age in our community is above the national norm, then our congregation should consider how to develop a strong young adult ministry such as a College & Careers Sabbath School, secular campus ministry, or young adult fellowship. This is one of the weakest areas of ministry in the Adventist Church and there are almost no developed models to work from.

If our community has more than the national norm among “30somethings,” then it has an emerging new generation of young families. Much has been written about the impact of new generations on the church and its mission. With the cultural divide of the Baby Boom generation, some congregations began the difficult and risky process of repositioning themselves to minister in a new context. The Adventist Church has a smaller share of new generations than the general population. This is one of the most important missional issues faced by the Church today. If it fails to embrace new generations, it will utterly fail in its God-given mission. (Sahlin *et al*, 1999)

Research has shown that the birth of children is the key event that causes unchurched adults in their 30s to consider joining a church. This is one of the largest evangelistic opportunities available in many communities. If one or more neighborhoods in our community is above the national norm in this age group, then our congregation is in a good position to be part of the harvest.

If our community has more than the national norm of people in their 40s and 50s, then it is at the center of the middle-aging of the Baby Boom. Born from 1946 through 1964, in the 2000 census this generation fell squarely into the 35 through 54 age groups. With

the trend toward delayed births and related advances in medical science, some younger Boomers are just now getting started with children and families. Older Boomers have young adult children and are dealing with “empty nests” and menopause. This generation is beginning to reinvent retirement and old age just as they have changed everything else about American culture at earlier stages in their lives.

Increasingly, congregations will find themselves centered on the needs of the middle-aged. If we have a significant number of Boomers in our community, we should consider sponsoring marriage retreat weekends, divorce recovery seminars, specialized support groups, health screening and fitness programs, seminar-type evangelism, and small group ministries. It is also important to have a strong Pastor’s Bible Class or Community Bible Class as part of our adult Sabbath School.

If our community has more than the national norm in the 65 and over age group, then it is a neighborhood with a high concentration of Senior Citizens. This is the fastest growing age segment of the population in North America, and it can be a significant time for ministry. The 65-through-74 age group is sometimes called the “new old” today because, with advances in health care and better nutrition and fitness in recent years, people in this age group are generally in better health than has been true in the past. They have more energy and interest in activities like volunteering, travel, recreation, and study. If there is a significant Senior Citizen population in our community, our congregation should consider outreach programs like a Sensational Seniors Club, mission trip volunteer opportunities through Maranatha Volunteers International and ASI Mission Builders, a senior feeding program, a mid-day Bible class, or morning prayer meeting for seniors who would rather come during the day than go out a night, and a Phone Friend ministry or a nursing home ministry for the frail elderly.

What if the age profile of our congregation is different from the age profile in the community? The answer depends, in part, on how big a difference exists. If the differential is rather small, you may simply choose to minister to “minority” segments, rather than the dominate profile in our community. Sometimes this means that you will have little competition from the other denominations who may all be focusing on the dominate age groups. Our congregation may be the only one focusing on children’s ministries in a neighborhood dominated by Senior Citizens. That can give our congregation a certain kind of distinctiveness, a unique “edge” for its outreach strategy.

On the other hand, our congregation may sense that God is calling it to be “cross-cultural missionaries.” It is easier for most church members to reach out to “my kind of people,” but clearly in Matthew 28 and Revelation 7, God calls us to reach all kinds of people. This will require a lot of work and time for a “learning curve,” as the group learns to reach and win people who are different than what they are used to. In the end, it can be very successful.

## Race and Ethnicity

Race is a concept that is based on some questionable assumptions. More recently, there has been a shift to the related concept of ethnicity. While “race” is supposedly based on genetics and it is assumed that a person has a particular race by accident of birth, whether they accept it or not, “ethnicity” is based on culture. Culture is learned, usually in childhood, and individuals have some freedom in self-identifying their ethnicity. Ethnicity also allows for the inclusion one of the largest minority segments in North American today—Hispanics—which is not defined by race.



Unfortunately, census data is still largely defined by concepts of “race.” The progress in the 2000 U.S. Census is only that several, confusing ways of counting the data are shown side by side. Respondents were allowed to identify themselves as having more than one race, so the first count shows the breakout of those reporting “one race,” while all of the people reporting “two or more races” are counted together on one line at the bottom. A second count displays everyone who described themselves as part of a race, including those who are counted on two or more lines in different racial segments. This produces a total of 102.6 percent because some people are counted twice, as well as individuals among the 6.6 percent identified as “some other race” who actually refused to report their race.

In these first two counts, Hispanics are not identified as a category. Instead, Hispanic respondents were asked to say what “race” they were. A third way of counting the data is labeled “Hispanic or Latino and Race.” The best line to get the Hispanic population is “Hispanic or Latino (or any race).” To get a simpler ethnic profile, many of the companies that re-package census data find the number of Hispanics who selected each race, subtract that number from each of the race numbers, and then adjust the percentages, including the Hispanic percentage in the total.

**White** includes people who identify themselves in the census as having an ethnic background that is from Europe.

**Black or African American** includes people who identify themselves in the census as having an ethnic background that is from Africa or the Caribbean basin or from ancestors who were brought to North America as slaves many generations ago.

**American Indian and Alaska Native** includes people who identify themselves in the census as having an ethnic background that was present in North America before European colonization began and the founding of the United States or Canada.

**Asian** includes people who identify themselves in the census as having an ethnic back-



ground from India, China, the Philippines, Japan, Korea or Vietnam.

**Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander** includes people who identify themselves in the census as having an ethnic background native to Hawaii, Guam, Samoa or other small islands in the Pacific ocean. In many summaries this category is combined with American Indian and Alaska Native.



**Some other race** includes people who identify themselves in the census as having an ethnic background different from any of the categories listed above. Because the question about Hispanic ethnicity is asked separately, some of these may be people who see themselves as “Hispanic” or “Latino” and do not understand why it is not listed among the responses to this question about “race.” It also includes people who refuse to identify themselves with any race because they find the concept objectionable or ill-defined. In addition, there are some people who feel that they belong to a race not listed above. All together, these constitute 5.5% of Americans in the 2000 census—a small, but significant proportion of the population—and their responses demonstrate the need for change around the concept of “race.”

**Two or more races** includes people who report that they belong in more than one of the categories listed above. There are a growing number of young people who have a mother from one race and a father from another race. The 2000 census was the first time that Americans were given the option of reporting this reality and 2.4% choose to do so.

**Hispanic or Latino (of any race)** includes people who identify themselves in the census as having an ethnic background that is Hispanic, without regard to their response to the other categories. Hispanics are also included in the other, racial categories.

Simplified ethnic profiles commonly include only White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian percentages with all of the other categories listed above included as “Others” or left out. This is simply because the four largest categories include 97.5% of Americans, although it does not account entirely for those whose parentage is from two or more races.

**What do race and ethnicity mean for our congregation?** If our community is 50 percent to 75 percent white it is a neighborhood where a multi-cultural approach to outreach will become increasingly necessary. There are also an emerging number of communities in major metropolitan areas where no ethnic group has as much as 51% of the population. These are even more decidedly multi-cultural.

If our community is less than 50 percent white, it may be a “transitional” or “border” neighborhood or it may be a community defined by another ethnic group. In large metropolitan areas there is a history of changing ethnic dominance in inner urban neighborhoods, and a “transitional” neighborhood is usually one in which there has been a white majority, but other ethnic groups are moving in and whites are leaving. Transitional neighborhoods can be identified by comparing the ethnic data over ten or twenty years. If you

see significant changes, it is a good indicator of transition. Transitional neighborhoods can be very difficult ones in which to minister, especially for an historically white church which has many members who no longer live in the neighborhood.

A “border” neighborhood is one in which there are more minorities than the national norms, but when the ethnic data is compared over ten or twenty years, there is little if any change. This may indicate a Zip or Postal Code that sits across a traditional border between different ethnic communities. Border neighborhoods can be an excellent location for a church that is able to successfully reach out to more than one ethnic group.

If our community has more than the national norm of any ethnic minority group, it is likely to have an ethnic neighborhood. This means that consideration should be given to the ethnic identity of our congregation. Is our church an historically African American congregation, an historically white congregation, or an intentionally multicultural congregation such as the Church of All Nations in Berrien Springs, Michigan? Unfortunately, North America is never more segregated than when it worships. The established, effective pattern for Adventist churches has been to form separate outreach ministries that are predominantly “black” or “white.” A neighborhood with 12 percent to 25 percent black population might be a good location for a multicultural congregation. A community with more than 25 percent black population is a likely location for planting a black church, if one is not already present.

If our community is more than 4 percent to 8 percent Asian, it has a significant Asian population. This means that consideration should be given to outreach activities targeted to Asians. Additional research will need to be done to determine which specific Asian culture is present. For census purposes a number of very different cultures have been lumped together, and the effective outreach require that our congregation identify the specific kind of Asian culture present in our neighborhood.

If our community is more than 25 percent Hispanic, it has a significant Hispanic population. This may represent an excellent place to plant a Spanish-language congregation if one does not already exist. Or, it may mean that our church should start Spanish-language Sabbath School classes, Bible study groups, Bible seminars, etc. If the Hispanics in this community are primarily immigrants, English classes, immigration counseling, and other community services will also be excellent outreach ministries.

Neighborhoods with high Hispanic population have the greatest Adventist church growth rates across the U.S. They represent excellent opportunities for personal and public evangelism. Neighborhoods with majority Black population often have the highest ratios of Adventist presence and represent excellent opportunities for public evangelism. Multicultural evangelism can also be successful, especially in neighborhoods with higher than average, but not majority, non-white populations. Any neighborhood with a higher than average ethnic minority population will produce higher than average response rates to mailings or media advertisements offering Bible literature such as Bible lessons, tracts, or

Bible correspondence courses.

## Relationships

More attention has been focused on family life in recent years and more demographics are becoming available that focus on relationships. The demographic profiles published by the U.S. Census Bureau from the 2000 census include for the first time a section entitled “relationship.”

The population **in households** makes up about 97% of the total population. This means that almost everyone lives in a home of some kind. The other 3% includes the homeless on the streets and those living in group quarters (see below).

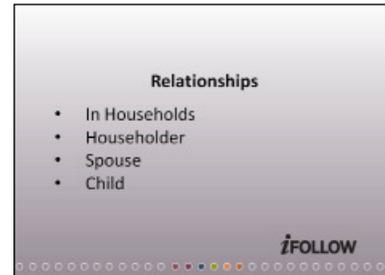
Among those living in households, there are several types of relationships. **Householder** refers to the head of household, which is often the husband in a couple, but also includes single adults. **Spouse** means the wife or husband of the head of household. **Child** means any son or daughter of the householder living in the home no matter what their age, while “**own child under 18 years**” refers specifically to minor children for whom the householder is the parent. (For example, if a 40-year-old daughter is living with her 80-year-old mother, the daughter is counted under “Child,” but not counted under “own child under 18 years.”)

**Other relatives** includes any relative of the householder who lives in the home who is not a spouse, son or daughter. This would include grandchildren, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, grandparents, in-laws, aunts, uncles, etc. Other relatives that are under 18 years of age are counted as a specific sub-category. The remainder would be adult relatives living in the home.

**Nonrelatives** refers to anyone living in the home who has no relationship to the head of household which is established by kinship or marriage. This includes roommates, “housemates” or “roomers” who may simply be renting space from the householder.

**Unmarried partner** is a person who lives with the head of household in relationship that is similar to marriage, but the couple is not legally married. This is a sub-segment of the “nonrelatives” count and a particular data point that has become the source of considerable attention in recent years with the discourse on family values, etc.

The population **in group quarters** is made up of those people living in various residential institutions such as nursing homes, dormitories at schools, military barracks, prisons,



jails, juvenile detention facilities and mental health residential facilities. Apartments are not group quarters. “Group quarters” refers to housing which has shared bath or cooking facilities or is under institutional control.

**What does this relationship information mean for our ministry?** If you subtract the spouse number from the householder number, that will give you the number of single adults in our community. Is this a significant number? If so, then our congregation should consider starting a single adult ministry. Single adults have reported in published surveys that they do not feel accepted in most congregations. Local church life tends to be dominated by married couples and it requires special attention to the unique needs of single adults to attract and hold people from this segment.

The population living in group quarters has special needs in terms of outreach and ministry. Many are not free to leave the institution and go to church or other meetings. To start a ministry with these people, the first step is to identify the major institutions where people are living in group quarters. Is there a college or university campus in the community, or a military installation or a prison? These all call for special approaches in order to reach the unique groups that are living on secular campuses, or are in the military or in prison. Resource materials for secular campus ministry and prison ministry are available, and Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries works with professional chaplains in all these settings.

## Education

A person’s level of education is a major factor in shaping an individual’s values and attitudes. The education profile of our community will tell a lot about the needs and interests of the residents. Information about education is published in U.S. Census Table DP-2 and in demographic reports from many other sources.

**School enrollment** data relate largely to children and young people. The total population enrolled in schools at all levels includes children as young as three and adults of all ages, but most of these individuals are young people.

**Educational attainment** data include only adults 25 years of age and older—after they are expected to have completed their education. The amount of education that the adults in our community have completed is a good clue to the lifestyle and culture of the community. For example, those with less education are usually not able to get the highest-paying jobs and, therefore, this is often related to lower incomes as well as needs for job training programs as the economy becomes more and more technology-driven. It is also a very strong indicator of the way the gospel must be communicated to be understood. Those with less education need a basic, simple message, while those with more education will respond to a more nuanced and complex message.



**Percent high school graduate or higher** is the percentage of adults who have completed a secondary diploma, including the GED. This is currently more than 80 percent of the age group in the U.S. and has become so common a factor that it is no longer used in many demographic profiles.



**Percent bachelor's degree or higher** is the percentage of adults who have completed a four-year college degree.

Some of these have also completed a graduate degree. In the 2000 U.S. Census, 24 percent of adults 25 years of age and older had completed a four-year college degree.

Some demographic reports still include median years of education. "Median" means that half of the adults in the community have completed more years of formal education than this number and half have completed fewer years. The median years of education for the entire population in the U.S. is 13.5 years. Half of the adults who are 25 years of age or older have completed a secondary diploma and three semesters of college. (NEA)

**What do the data about education mean for ministry?** The total population enrolled in schools at all levels represents a significant target group for ministry in our community. Young people under 25 years of age have very specific needs related to their grade level and developmental stage. They are also many times more likely to accept Christ and join a church.

If the percentage of the school population in our community that is enrolled in preschool and/or Kindergarten is above the national norms, then we should ask if our church school has a preschool or Kindergarten program? If not, why not?

If the percentage enrolled in elementary school is above the national norm, then our congregation should study how to expand our church school. Can a larger number of children from non-member families be recruited for the church school?

If the percentage enrolled in high school is above the national norm, then we should ask if the time has come to expand our elementary school to a 10-grade school, or at least add the 9th grade program provided by Home Study International. Or should we consider starting a day Academy in our area, perhaps initially using the AE21 program available through the North American Division Office of Education?

These segments of our community really need more from our congregation than just sponsoring a church school. Look at the number of teenagers enrolled in high school. What plans do we have for youth ministry to reach out to this group? How many young adults are enrolled in college or university? What plans do we have for young adult or, more specifically, campus ministry?

If the percentage of college graduates in our community is significantly greater than the national norm, then it has many highly educated heads of households. Educated people

are generally very resistant to conventional forms of evangelism and less likely to join the Adventist Church. This type of neighborhood requires experimentation and time devoted to a “learning curve”—years invested in trying various unsuccessful new approaches—in order to find an effective way to reach these educated people. Small group evangelism is one approach that is currently being experimented with in a number of places throughout North America.

Less educated people are more likely to respond to conventional forms of evangelism and join the Adventist Church. If our neighborhood has a lot of people who have less than a high school diploma, this is the most likely kind of neighborhood for public evangelism. If our community has a majority of the adults with a secondary diploma and some with a little higher education, but few college graduates, this is a likely context for a Revelation Seminar or other seminar evangelism. Here you should carefully consider a sequenced seminar strategy—stop smoking, weight control, cooking school, stress seminar, parenting seminar, family life workshops, Daniel Seminar, Revelation Seminar or Family Seminar, and pastor’s Bible class.

## Other Groups with Special Needs

The 2000 census has given specific attention to three kinds of people in our community who have special needs—grandparents raising grandchildren in their homes, veterans of military service, and individuals with disabilities. Each of these segments of the community could be the focus of a specific ministry.

**Grandparents as caregivers** refers to a grandmother or grandfather (or both) who live in a household where their own grandchildren also reside. This would include multi-generational families where an older person lives with both their child and one or more grandchildren, but primarily these are grandparents who take the place of parents who may be in prison or otherwise institutionalized, or for some reason unable to function in the parental role. Is there some organization in our community that focuses on these individuals and meets their specific needs? If not, they represent a real opportunity for a new ministry.

**Veterans** are specifically labeled “civilian veterans” by the census. These are individuals who are no longer in the military but have served in the military in the past. Included are both young men and women who recently left the military for civilian life, and older people who served in World War II, the Korean conflict and the Vietnam era. Across the U.S., they constitute about 13% of the population. If our community has a higher percent-



age, then this is an even more significant people group for you to consider how to serve.

**Disability** status includes individuals who are blind, deaf, have lost limbs, are paraplegic or have other conditions that impair typical human capacities. The Office of Human Relations at the North American Division has begun to provide resources to encourage local churches to initiate Disability Ministries. This may be an area that our church should consider. Are there unmet needs among this portion of our community? If the percentage of young people, adults or senior citizens with disabilities in our community is above the national norm, we should certainly explore this area of need.

## People who Move

Mobility is a demographic factor that has a high correlation to church growth among Adventist congregations. (*Ministry*) **Residence in 1995** is the section of the 2000 census reports that measures the percentage of people in our community who have moved in recent years. More recent updates may be available at the U.S. Census web site or from other sources.

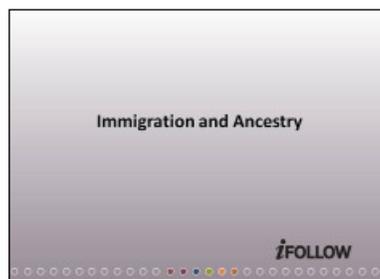


Some 54 percent of Americans lived in the same house in 2000 that they did five years earlier in 1995. That means 46 percent had moved—25 percent within the same county, 10 percent to a different county in the same state, 8 percent to a different state, and 3 percent from outside the country. If our community has higher percentages of current residents who have moved recently, it is more likely to be responsive to appropriate evangelism. Church planting projects are more likely to be successful in communities with higher percentages of newcomers.

If our community has significant numbers of people who have moved recently, then our congregation should consider starting a Newcomer Ministry which seeks to contact families soon after they arrive in the community. Resources for Newcomer Ministry are available from AdventSource.

## Immigration and Ancestry

Both the United States and Canada have a rich tradition of immigration. People moved here from all over the world to find freedom and opportunity. Except for a small percentage of Native Americans and Canadian First Peoples, almost everyone in North America has roots in Europe, Africa or Asia. Immigration continues today and provides an important opportunity for ministry.



**Native or native born** population refers to those who were born as citizens here. In the U.S. currently nearly nine out of ten residents were born as American citizens, including a small percentage born overseas to a parent or parents who were American citizens at the time.



**Foreign born** population is the number of current residents who were not born with citizenship. These people are in the U.S. or Canada as immigrants. If our area has a larger percentage than the national norm, then it has a significant immigrant community.

**Region of birth** data help to identify the kind of immigrant communities that may be present in our area. Currently across the U.S., the majority of immigrants are arriving from Latin America and Asia. This pattern may be quite different in our area.

**Language spoken at home** provides some additional information about where the immigrants in our area have come from. It also helps to identify a major need among many immigrants—learning English.

**Ancestry** numbers include more than just immigrants. In the U.S. Census people are permitted to claim ancestry no matter how many generations have passed since their immigrant forebearers arrived. Almost all Americans claim some ancestry, although 7 percent in the 2000 census simply said simply “United States” or “American,” meaning that they no longer identified any memory with another nation. If the percentages in our area exceed the national norms for any ancestry, then it is likely that at some time in the past it was home to an immigrant community. Those traditions are likely to still have meaning among many of the people living in our area.

## Employment Profile

How people make a living is a very important part of their life, especially in today’s world when most North Americans spend more time at their jobs than they do at home. These data are not only collected in the every-ten-year census.

Because these items change more rapidly than most items included in the census, the Federal government (in both the U.S. and Canada) conducts surveys to up-date the information on employment quarterly and, for some items, even monthly. It is advisable to ask about the date of this type of information when it is included in a demographic profile and to seek up-to-date reports directly from official sources. Handout 2 tells how to access this information on the Web.



**In labor** force counts the people who are either employed or looking for work among the total population age 16 and older. **Not in labor force** are people who are retired and no

longer working or looking for work, full-time homemakers and students who do not have or seek a job even part time. Women in the labor force, especially those with children under six, is an item of particular interest today, so the census reports break out those segments of the total. The **civilian labor force** is also separated out from those employed in the armed forces, and many of the local reports or monthly updates include only the civilian labor force since it makes up nearly all of the workers in the country.



The **unemployed** are indicated as a percentage of the labor force which is currently out of work and actively looking for a job. In the U.S. the Bureau of Labor Statistics updates this indicator is reported monthly. This changes often and it is a very sensitive measure of how the people in your community are doing.

**Commuting to work** has become a reality for almost all North Americans. In the 2000 U.S. Census only 6 percent of the work force either walked to their job or worked at home. **Mean travel time to work** is the average number of minutes that people report they use each day to travel to work. This is a one-way time that includes those who drive, use mass transit, and participate in car or van pools.



**Occupation** counts the types of jobs that people are currently doing. It does not include the unemployed who may be trained for certain occupations. There are six or more major categories in most reports, but some demographic reports boil these down to two large segments. **White collar** workers include those who are working in management, professional, clerical, sales or retail jobs. **Blue collar** workers include people employed in industrial, construction, transportation, maintenance, farming, fishing, forestry, and mining. If only one of these two figures is reported, the remainder is the other amount because demographers break almost all occupations into these two categories. This is a somewhat outdated way of categorizing jobs and careers which dates from the industrial age. New technology has given rise to a growing number of “new collar” occupations which do not fit neatly into either category or sit squarely on the divide between the old white collar, blue collar categories. Nonetheless it does still provide some indication of the kind of jobs held by the people in our community.

More detailed occupational analysis is available in the census and the monthly employment reports. The U.S. Census provides 13 categories and some Bureau of Labor Statistics reports compress these into eight categories. The terms used are straight-forward and easy to understand.

**Class of worker** reports the type of arrangement under which people are employed. Those who work for a wage or salary make up the largest category. The **self-employed** here refers to a smaller group that you might consider self-employed. For example, if a

dentist in our community has created a corporation for his practice (a common arrangement recommended by many experts today), he is paid a salary by his corporation and is not included among the self-employed numbers. Unpaid family workers refer to a very small category of individuals who are legally permitted to live with a family in exchange for lodging and meals, treated as a child or full time homemaker might be instead of being paid a wage of any kind. It is often called an “au pair.”

**What do these data about employment mean for our ministry?** This information includes important indicators of how the people in our community spend their time, as well as their socioeconomic status. Occupations are also related to the training necessary for each job which indicates something about the type of thinking that has been encouraged and maybe even the type of personality typically involved.

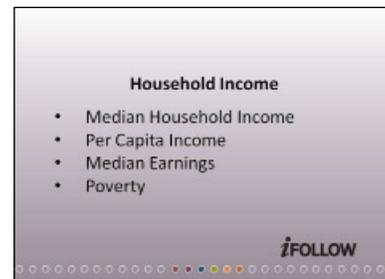
If our community has more than the national percentage in the labor force, it indicates that it is a community of working people with relatively few retirees, full-time homemakers and full-time students. If our community has a significantly higher level of unemployment, it will be the cause of considerable pain in the lives of families. When breadwinners are laid off and are unable to quickly find another job, they become discouraged and angry.

There is a direct correlation between increasing unemployment and increases in the incidence of domestic violence, substance abuse, foreclosures on mortgages, etc. Family ministries become more important in a community that is experiencing high unemployment, as do the basic social services provided by Adventist Community Services—emergency groceries, recycled clothing and furniture, etc. Our congregation may want to consider starting a support group for the unemployed. A number of Protestant churches have found this a very effective outreach in Pittsburgh and Detroit during past decades. The good news is that when unchurched people are unemployed, they are more likely to think seriously about religion. **High unemployment levels mean a better response to evangelism.**

If our community has a female labor force greater than the national norm, it is an indicator that women here are more likely to work outside the home. This means that the traditional church concept of women being at home to respond to visits or phone calls is not viable in our community. In fact, when more women enter the work force, it becomes more difficult for families to come out to a lengthy series of meetings and alternatives have to be found. For example, the Voice of Prophecy has used a “Harvest Time” weekend event during which only four of five key sermons are presented to get decisions from people who have already covered the teachings of the church in correspondence courses or small-group and individual Bible studies. If the female labor force participation is much higher than the national average, our community may also have somewhat non-traditional values and lifestyles. On the other hand, if this indicator is far below the national norm you may have a very conservative, traditional local culture.

## Household Income

These data indicate the economic profile of our community. Annual household income means the total amount of earnings coming into a family or to a single person living alone during a given year, including interest on savings accounts, dividends from stocks, etc., if those monies are not immediately reinvested or left in a retirement account or mutual fund. Sometimes the word household is represented by the initials HH in various charts or profiles. These data are often displayed simply as a percentage of the total households.



**Median household income** is usually considered to be a more revealing measure of the economic status of a community than any other. “Median” means that half of the households in the community have annual incomes lower than this figure, and half are higher. By comparing the median household income over a multi-year range, it is possible to get an idea of the economic growth or decline in the community. The median household income for all households in the United States in 1999 was \$41,994. That is the year of record published as part of the 2000 Census.

**Per capita income** divides the total income by each individual. It is the total income in our community divided by the total population—the average individual share of the total money coming into all households. This includes dependents in the population who are not earning any income. For example, if a family consists of a husband who works full time and brings home a paycheck, a wife who is a full-time homemaker with no outside earnings, and two small children, to get the per capita income of this family we would take the husband’s earnings and divide by four. This is a figure constructed by formula and may not reflect the reality of any family. It is used as an index to compare the economic status of communities.

**Median earnings** measures the wages paid to workers in our community. Again, it is the median or half-way indicator. Half of the employees in our community make more than this each year and half make less than this amount each year.

**Poverty**—A number of different indicators are used. In some reports it is the percentage of the total households in our community that fall below the official poverty line. In other reports it is the percentage of individuals in the total population in our community who live below the poverty line. In the U.S. Census Table DP-3 both the number and percentage of families and individuals is included, as well as additional breakdowns to show the extent of child poverty and among senior citizens.

The official poverty line is established by careful research regarding the cost of living. It is adjusted to the specific economic conditions in each community and by family size. For example, the average poverty line for all communities across the U.S. in 1997 for a family of three was \$12,802, but for a single adult living alone it was \$8,183. (*Statistical Abstract*)

This formula is adjusted each year. It is the generally accepted definition of “the poor,” but it probably does not include many people whom our congregation might consider poor. Undoubtedly, it also includes some individuals who do not appear to be “poor” in the eyes of some in our congregation.

About 35 million Americans currently live below the poverty line or 13 percent of the total population in the U.S. Among blacks and Hispanics the percentage is doubled. (*Ibid.*, Table 760) Particularly disturbing is the poverty rate among children. One in five children in America today (19 percent) live in families below the poverty line, and among blacks and Hispanics this rate is nearly doubled (37 percent among blacks and 36 percent among Hispanics—*Ibid.*, Table 761). About 10 percent of families live below the official poverty line in the U.S., and when the definition of poverty is adjusted to include those at or below 125 percent of this very conservative line, then nearly one in six American families are poor. (*Ibid.*, Table 769)

**What do these economic data mean for our congregation?** Median household income is simply another way to take a look at the realities of how the people live their lives in our community. If our community had a median household income above \$41,994 in the 2000 Census, it is a more affluent community. If its median household income was above \$38,721 in the 1990 Census, it was above the U.S. national median then. The increase in the median household income between 1990 and 2000 was about 5 percent in current dollars. (U.S. Census website)

If our community is above the national norms on all the economic indicators, it is a very affluent neighborhood with excellent economic growth. Neighborhoods like this are most often found in “Sun Belt” states (the southern tier states from Florida to California), and especially in Florida, California, and the Atlanta, Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston metropolitan areas.

If our community is below most of the national economic norms, but has a growth rate above the national growth rate, it is a neighborhood that is making excellent economic progress even though it is not very affluent. This might be a low-income neighborhood where economic development projects are beginning to make a difference, or a middle class neighborhood where a new source of jobs has opened up perhaps from the establishment of new business enterprises.

If our community is above most of the national economic norms, but has a growth rate below the national rate, it is a stable, affluent neighborhood. In a stable, low-income or “working class” neighborhood, the median income and the growth rate would be below the national figures. In both types of neighborhoods, the prospects of the residents are not likely to change much in the years ahead.

The overall effect of these data is to give a picture of the economic conditions among the people in our community. We can compare the profile of household income for our com-

munity with the national profile to get a very specific picture of the economic status most of our people live with. This might explain lower than average Tithe or why members have little time for church ministries because of overtime at work and “moonlighting.”

If the per capita income in our community is significantly above the national norm, this is an indicator that our community includes many residents who are paid high salaries. If it is significantly below the national norm, this is an indicator that our community includes many people who earn smaller paychecks. If the percent of people in poverty in our community is above 13 percent this is an indicator that our community has more than an average share of poor people.

Low-income people are more likely to respond to Adventist outreach and join the Adventist church. There is also a response to Adventist evangelism among lower-middle to middle income households, but upper-middle and higher income households are generally very resistant to the conventional approaches widely used in Adventist evangelism. This means that if our community has large numbers of upper-middle and higher income households, there is a need to experiment with non-traditional approaches. These experiments will likely not have positive results in the short term, but will require an extended “learning curve”—years invested in trying various approaches that prove unsuccessful until an effective approach is found. (This information is from an extensive analysis of adult converts to North American Division churches published in *The NAD Marketing Program, Report 2* by the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University.)

If our community is a low-income neighborhood, an Adventist Community Services center, a shelter or soup kitchen for the homeless, a street feeding ministry, a job training program and other social services will likely be needed. This kind of outreach is also helpful in working class neighborhoods. Conventional evangelistic crusades, Revelation Seminars and other large-group evangelism approaches have proven to be most effective in working class neighborhoods. Results diminish in upscale neighborhoods. Small group evangelism, family life education activities, health screening and health education programs all work best in middle class neighborhoods. Results diminish in downscale neighborhoods.

## Housing

Data about housing are directly linked to when a community began, the kind of homes available and the lifestyle of the residents. It is a strong indicator of the degree to which poverty is a problem in the neighborhood. The most important housing data from the U.S. Census is reported in Table DP-1, the basic demographic profiles. More detailed information is included in Table DP-4, which is devoted entirely to housing.



**Total housing units** is the total number of residences available for occupation. This

includes both detached, single-family units and duplexes, apartments, etc. In the 2000 Census there were nearly 116 million units in the U.S. (U.S. Census b)

**Vacant housing units** are the number that were unoccupied at last count, and of course this number varies all the time. This is a measure of the economic health of a community. In the 2000 U.S. Census, 9 percent of housing units were vacant. (*ibid.*)

The portion of these vacant units **for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use** indicates these are “vacation” homes or second homes for the owners and not their primary place of residence. This indicator mitigates the previous one. About a third of the vacant units in the 2000 census fell into this category. (*ibid.*)

**Owner-occupied** is the percentage of the total housing units occupied by their owners, including those who are paying off a mortgage held by a bank or other loan arrangement. Across the country about two-thirds of homes are owner occupied. (*ibid.*) If our community has a higher percentage, it is an indicator of a more upscale neighborhood, perhaps a suburban “bedroom” community.

**Renter occupied** is the percentage of the total housing units occupied by people other than the owners. They are paying rent or have a lease. The national norm is 34 percent of homes are occupied by renters. (*ibid.*) If our community has a higher percentage, it may be an indicator of a concentration of low-income families who cannot qualify for home mortgages. It could also be an indicator of a community with a high percentage of transients, near a military base or a large university, for example. It can also be an indicator of a highly urbanized neighborhood which may be very upscale and expensive, or quite depressed.



**Single-unit detached** homes made up more than 60 percent of the total housing units in the U.S.. This is the standard for most Americans.

**Single-unit attached** homes is the nomenclature that demographers use for what are commonly called townhouses. **Two units** are commonly called duplexes. Several categories of apartment buildings are also included in the breakout in the U.S. Census Table DP-4. **Mobile homes** make up about 8 percent of the available housing units in America and there are nearly 300,000 boats, recreational vehicles and vans that are considered to be residences for some people.

**Year structure built** provides an indicator of the age of the housing stock in the neighborhood. Generally reports that include these data give the percentage of the total units in the area which were built during each of the decades back through the years of World War II. U.S. Census Table DP-4 provides the national norms for purposes of comparison.

The number of **rooms** in each home gives a measure of crowding. In the 2000 census

only 2 percent of Americans lived in one-room apartments. Half of the homes had five rooms or less and half had more than five rooms.

**Year householder move into unit** is an excellent indicator of how stable our community is or if it is largely transient. If our community has higher percentages than the national norm among the most recent categories, then it is less stable and more transient in nature.



**Vehicles available** is a good measure of how many commuters living in our community. If it is below the national norm on the number of vehicles available, it is more likely to be an urban neighborhood where many residents walk and use mass transit.

Many of the items included in Table DP-4 are of technical interest to city planners and officials responsible for energy policy, pollution control, etc. These items may not add much to our understanding of our community for purposes of ministry.

**Median value** is the probable cost at which the homes in the area were purchased. Half of the homes are worth more than this figure and half are worth less. Current market values for newcomers moving into the area and looking to purchase, are almost always above the median value because the median takes into consideration those who bought their homes years ago when prices were lower. In the 2000 census this value was \$119,600 for the U.S.

**Median rent** is the current monthly rental cost in dollars. Half of renters are paying more and half are paying less. Again, new renters are almost always faced with rents above the median because the median includes people who rented their homes years ago and continue to benefit from lower rents that were common at that time. This is especially true where local laws enforce some form of rent control. In the 2000 census this norm was \$602 per month.

**What do housing data mean for ministry?** If significantly more than the national norm of the homes in our community are owner-occupied, it is likely that it is a middle or upscale neighborhood with affluent families. Members of the Adventist Church in North America are more likely to be homeowners than renters, so homeowners should feel more at home in the Adventist Church than do renters. But Caucasian homeowners are also more resistant to Adventist evangelism, and require the development of new outreach approaches in order to win them. Neighborhood Home Bible Studies is one approach that has proven successful in a number of pilot projects. Conventional public evangelism and Revelation Seminars work well with Black homeowners.

If more than the national norm of the homes in our community are occupied by renters, it is likely that it is a downscale neighborhood with lower middle class and low-income

families. This also usually means that people move more often. Lower income people who move often are those most likely to respond to conventional Adventist outreach, so the higher the percentage of renters in a neighborhood, the more fruitful a target area for evangelism it should be. A higher percentage of renters is also typical of some very affluent, highly urbanized neighborhoods. Unfortunately, communities of this type have no track record of successful Adventist evangelism at all. We are only beginning to learn how to reach this kind of community.

In the U.S. Zip Code areas typically include about 5,000 to 10,000 households, so you can see if our area is more or less densely populated by looking at the number of housing units. Smaller Zip Codes are usually rural or small town areas, or they are new Zip Codes set up in the fast-developing suburbs of large metropolitan areas to provide “room” for more postal patrons.

If our community has significantly older housing stock than the national norm, it may be a downscale neighborhood. There are exceptions. A few upscale neighborhoods have older housing stock. These tend to be “old money” neighborhoods of established, wealthy families; the aristocracy of a large city.

If more than a third of the housing in our neighborhood was constructed in the 1960s, it is a community that “once was” the “new development area,” but now may be fraying around the edges. These 1960s developments are mostly inner suburbs in large metropolitan areas. They are largely populated now with middle-aged couples; “empty nest” families.

If more than 25 percent of the housing units in our community were constructed in the 1980s and 1990s, it is likely at the front edge of development today. It is probably one of the newest communities in the metropolitan area, and it likely has a larger than average population of young families with children.

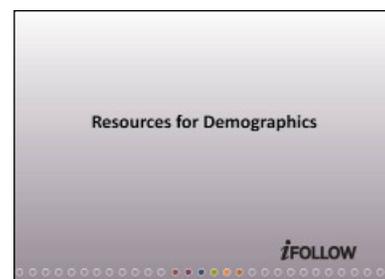
Overall, the age of housing stock is another indicator of socioeconomic status and interacts with economic indicators like median household income. Older housing is often an indicator of poverty and lower socioeconomic status (with some exceptions) and newer housing is almost always an indicator of affluence and higher socioeconomic status.

## Resources for Demographics

There are several ways to get a demographic profile for our community:

1. Go on the Web. Instructions on how to do this are in Handout 1.

2. Contact the Center for Metropolitan Ministry and purchase a detailed, customized report. Dial (800) 438-9600.



3. There are other sources described below.

The Chamber of Commerce in your community will provide a demographic report, and these too are often free or cost only a few dollars. Of course, the printed reports, especially the free ones, may be somewhat dated. There are also a number of suppliers that will provide more current data, as well as specialized analysis and tools designed to help their clients make more effective use of the data.

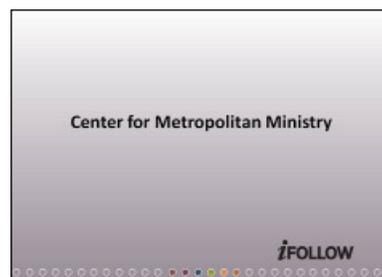
## Center for Metropolitan Ministry

7600 Flower Avenue, Takoma Park MD 20912

(800) 438-9600

The Center for Metropolitan Ministry is one of the resource centers that serve the Adventist denomination. It monitors and analyzes urban and suburban church life, evangelism and the nature of city and suburban life. It conducts a whole range of specialized seminars for lay leaders and pastors, with emphasis on major metropolitan areas. It provides a new demographic service for local churches and conference offices. Through the use of a computer technology known as a geographic information system (GIS), the center can create a report for you that targets people groups in any part of the United States by Zip Code and at the street level.

What this means is that any congregation can target a specific income group, ethnic group, age group, etc., for direct mail outreach or door to door visitation. With this new tool, local churches receive maps and demographic data that depict the local community or an entire metropolitan area. There is a modest cost for the color-coded maps and demographic reports.

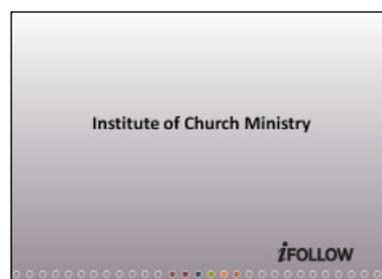


## Institute of Church Ministry

Andrews University, Berrien Springs MI 49104

(616) 471-3575; Fax, (616) 471-6202; Email, dudley@andrews.edu

The institute conducts ongoing research on the Adventist Church and its evangelism and church growth. It conducted a pioneering study in the 1980s which links demographics with specific kinds of outreach ministries and completed an analysis of the demographics of both church members and converts. Recently, it has arranged with Percept Group, Inc., to provide its specialized demographic analysis to Ad-



ventist congregations and ministries and add to the package the institute's own research with the demographic profiles of various types of Adventist outreach.

You can define your ministry area by Zip Codes or by a radius of specified miles (up to 20 miles) from a fixed address or point on a map, such as “the corner of Main Street and Imperial Boulevard.” These reports are individually tailored for each client, include a number of full-color maps and graphs that can be used to make overhead transparencies and nearly 100 pages of information in a binder. This is the “Rolls Royce” of demographic services, and it has a high price tag. Each report is individually priced, based on precisely what information you wish, but they average about \$400.

Percept Group has conducted original studies of its own, and provides proprietary information in its reports that is not available anywhere else. “The Ethos Survey Series” is a ten-year national research project undertaken by Percept to collect information about the beliefs, attitudes, concerns and religious behavior of the American people. The primary purpose of the project is to provide useable and cost-effective tools to church leaders to help them better understand and respond to people they seek to reach.” (*Percept Source Book* First Edition, page 23) These data move into the categories of “psychographics” and “segmentation,” which are explained in the book *Understanding Your Community*. Additional ideas are given in those chapters about how to make use of Percept information products.



## Handouts in this Package

1. Finding Demographics on the Web
2. Employment: Find It on the Web

iFollow  
Discipleship  
Series:  
Working  
with Jesus

Action Plan  
& Presenter  
Notes

**U.Y.C. Part  
Two: Demo-  
graphics**

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## Additional Resources

*Adventist Congregations Today* (2003). Lincoln, Nebraska: Center for Creative Ministry.

Healy, Anthony E (2000). "Picturing the 21st century," *Visions*, January-February, 2000

Sahlin, Monte and Carole Luke Kilcher and Paul Richardson (1999). *Reaching New Generations*. Lincoln, NE: Center for Creative Ministry.

*The NAD Marketing Program, Report 2* by the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University.

*Statistical Abstract of the United States*, Current Edition, Tables 762-769

U.S. Census, *Profile of General Demographic Characteristics*, 2000: United States, May 2001, Table DP-1

U.S. Census, *Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics, 2000*: United States, Table DP-4

## Websites

Bermuda demographics can be found on the official web site of the Bermuda government [www.namlc.bm/portal](http://www.namlc.bm/portal) under "Government," then "Cabinet Office," and then "Statistics. Copies of the most recent published report of the Census of Housing and Population can be obtained from the Phoenix Store in Hamilton.

Statistics Canada provides local area demographics for Postal Codes, towns, communities, counties and Provinces in Canada: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/>

The United States Census Web site has the capacity to provide a demographic profile for any Zip Code area, town, entire metropolitan area, county or state. Under the new American Community Survey program, these are updated with new surveys as often as yearly: [www.census.gov/hhes/income/income99/99tablea.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/income/income99/99tablea.html)

## Discussion Questions

1. On which items is this local community significantly above the national and/or state norms?
2. On which items is this local community significantly below the national and/or state norms?
3. Which of these items are of the highest priority for our church?
4. What do these priority items tell us about how to plan for effective outreach in this local community?

## Group Exercise

**Purpose:** To gain a clearer understanding of why demographics information (or lack thereof) matters to our ministry.

**Preparation:** This is a two-part activity. It will not require special preparation on the part of the presenter, but you will need space, preferably with enough tables for small teams, and some Bibles, concordances, and writing materials.

**Assignment:** (1) Have the group as a whole choose three likely constellations of the demographic categories in this unit and one or two people to role play that category. In other words, two people could role play high income, well-educated urbanites, two or three could be minority inner-city individuals, or even street people, some could be rural and some city, etc. Now have others choose an outreach method they are already familiar with (Revelation Seminars, Satellite Ministries, Webinars, individual Bible studies, etc), intentionally mismatch them, and try to “win” their chosen demographic with this method. Try a Webinar on a street person or door-to-door evangelism on the highly educated urbanites (if you can find them “at home.”) Have the missionaries be earnest and well-meaning, and have those being targeted do their best to seriously experience how they think they would feel if reached out to in this way. This role-playing can be in front of the whole group, or going on simultaneously at different tables.

2. Ask the team at each table to choose a person to whom Jesus ministered, that would fit the demographic they are trying to reach. How did He do it? What was the result? Did He use different methods for different kinds of people? (Caution: It is clear from what we are **not** told that Jesus often knew more about a given person than shows in the story. What would be the result if we simply walked up to rich people and said, “Give all you have to the poor and come follow Jesus”?)

**Time:** Allow 5 minutes for choosing a demographic and role players, 10 minutes for trying to reach them with a method not suited to their needs and interests, and 10 more for finding examples from Jesus’ ministry and discussing them briefly at their tables.

**Debrief:** Here is where important discussion can take place. After sharing reactions and insights, and what was found in Jesus’ methods, then decide as a group what kind of method would have been more effective with the various individuals, and why? Be sure to zero in on possible mistaken motivations: we are not trying to choose the “Right” method to rope them in! We are trying to meet **their needs**, the ones **they** feel not the ones **we** think they have, or should have! Jesus already loves them. Let’s never forget that.

# Handout 1

## Finding Demographics on the Web

The U.S. Census is entirely accessible on the Internet. If you have access to a computer with a web browser, you can find a demographic profile for your community and download it or print it out.

1. Go to the U.S. Census home page: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
2. Click on “American FactFinder” in the menu to the left
3. In the box type in your Zip Code or the name of your town or county and click on “Go”
4. This will bring up the basic demographic profile of your community; you will see major categories such as “General Characteristics ... Social Characteristics ... Economic Characteristics,” each followed by a place where you can click on “show more,” which leads you to more detailed versions of these sections.
5. Across the top of the profile there will be tabs for “2000” (the 2000 Census) and then, possibly, more recent reports. You can click on these to get similar reports from the dates indicated.
6. Notice that alongside the items in the basic profile (to the right) there are many places where it says “map.” You can click on this and get a color-coded map of the data on that item for your community. If you click on “Reference Map” at the top of this column, you will get a basic map of your community.
7. To the right of “map” there are many places where the word “brief” appears. You can click on this to get a report with the national data on this item and a detailed explanation of what these data mean, etc.

## Canada

The census for Canada is entirely accessible on the Web. If you have access to a computer with a web browser, you can find a demographic profile for your community and download it or print it out.

1. Go to the Statistics Canada home page: [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)
2. Select English or French and click on the word
3. Near the middle of the next page you will see a tab entitled “Key Resource”

4. When you click on “Key Resource,” you will get a menu that includes “Community Profiles”

5. Click on “Community Profiles” and follow the instructions on this page which will lead you to a demographic report on your community

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HANDOUT

**U.Y.C. Part  
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## HANDOUT 2

### Employment—Find It on the Web

In the United States, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) conducts monthly surveys to update the information about employment. You can access these updates at: [www.bls.gov/ces/home.htm#news](http://www.bls.gov/ces/home.htm#news)

There are three monthly reports that the BLS produces: (1) the national employment situation, (2) regional and state employment and unemployment, and (3) metropolitan area employment and unemployment. The later two include tables where you can find the latest data for your state or your metropolitan area.

The BLS also provides the same kind of data for nonmetropolitan (rural) areas, counties, and towns with populations of 25,000 or more. In order to get recent information for your community, you will need to go to: [www.bls.gov/lau](http://www.bls.gov/lau)

There are instructions on how to extract the data you want at this web page: [www.bls.gov/lau/lausad.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lausad.htm) This document is entitled “Instructions for Extracting LAUS Data.” (LAUS = Local Area Unemployment Statistics)

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