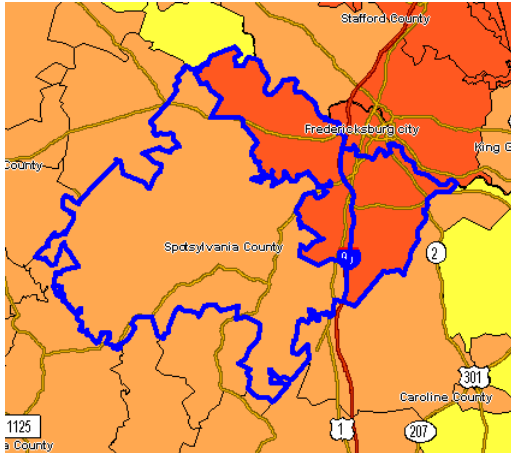
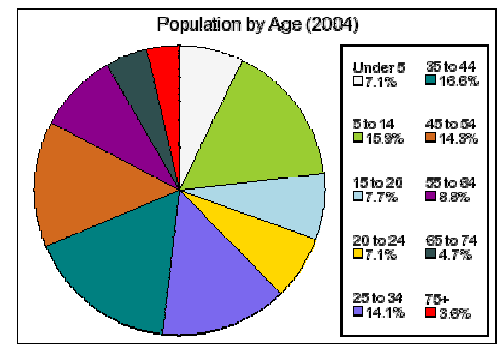


# Understanding who you will reach...



ministry?

- Who's there?
- What are their needs?
- How do needs translate to

## More Info:

**Approach** - Looking to understand the people you are trying to reach? We suggest the following basic approach:

1. Identify General Areas of Interest: If you already know the meeting location for your Sunday services, make note of the address (street address or intersection). If not, identify addresses/intersections for potential meeting locations. In most city/metropolitan areas, your target area will typically be within a 5 mile radius of a specific meeting location. In rural areas, the radius can be significantly larger.

2. Educate Yourself on Census Data: Census data does not have to be complicated. The US Census Bureau has a short [educational paper](http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/mso-01icdp.pdf) (<http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/mso-01icdp.pdf>) explaining the essential basics of census data that is a must read.

3. Identify Variables of Interest: Demographic data is available for hundreds of different variables of interest (e.g., age, income, housing prices, race). The amount of data available will overwhelm most people. Decide the 5 most important variables of interest to you. Start by obtaining demographic data for these variables. You

can expand your list to 10 later. Most of the sites below provide a list of the different variables available.

4. Obtain Free Demographic Data/Reports: A number of organizations offer free demographic data. In many cases, the free data is based on the 1990 census rather than the 2000 census. Look for data based on the 2000 census. The level of detail in the demographic reports varies widely so look for a site that offers what you are looking for. We've identified a list of sites that offer free demographic information (see the list below). Most demographic data is provided in "raw" form leaving you with the responsibility to interpret results. Often, the sites that charge a small fee for data will provide the information in a more readable form with some assessment/interpretation of the data provided (e.g. Percept).

The best place to start is the [US Census Bureau](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/AGSGeoAddressServlet?_lang=en&programYear=50&treeId=420) ([http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/AGSGeoAddressServlet?\\_lang=en&programYear=50&treeId=420](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/AGSGeoAddressServlet?_lang=en&programYear=50&treeId=420)) or [Church Marketing Solutions](http://www.church-marketing.com/) (<http://www.church-marketing.com/>). The Census Bureau site will allow you to interactively get demographic data and maps for areas you specify. The Church Marketing Solutions can also provide you free data and maps for areas you specify.

5. Demographic Mapping: Demographic information is easier to interpret when it is mapped. Typically, data is mapped in different colors with each color representing a different range of values for the data. For example, dark green may represent average age of 35-40 while lighter shades of green represent different average age ranges. Maps allow you to see the data in specific geographic locations (down to small census tract areas) and to easily compare how the data in one area compares to another. Many of the companies that offer free demographic data also provide some mapping support. Most paid demographic services offer mapping. Again, the US Census Bureau site is the best place to start with mapping. Check out the Census Bureau's site ([http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet?\\_basicfacts=2&\\_mult1=22560726&\\_geo2=010&\\_current=&\\_action=\\_mapsSelected&\\_child\\_geo\\_id=&\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet?_basicfacts=2&_mult1=22560726&_geo2=010&_current=&_action=_mapsSelected&_child_geo_id=&_lang=en)) for Thematic mapping. Or request a report through Church Marketing Solutions ([www.church-marketing.com](http://www.church-marketing.com)).

6. Interpreting the Data: After collecting the data and maps, its time to figure out what it means. You should consider purchasing a report like the ones provided by [Percept](http://www.percept.info) ([www.percept.info](http://www.percept.info)). They offer a relatively low cost solution (under \$500) that will tell you what the data in your area means. This product is called a [Ministry Area Profile](#). (Click on products and then ministry area profile).

7. Carrier Route Mapping: Carrier route mapping is done to determine how many active households and businesses exist within individual mail carrier routes. Carrier routes become important for direct mail marketing because you will want to "saturate" an entire carrier route to obtain the lowest possible postage rates. Carrier route maps are typically done by mail shops (or other paid services) and are not available to the general public online. Organizations like [Church Marketing Solutions](http://www.church-marketing.com) (www.church-marketing.com) offer free route mapping for customers doing direct mail with them.

## Demographic Sites Worth Checking Out:

### [American Fact Finder \(US Census Bureau\)](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/AGSGeoAddressServlet?_lang=en&programYear=50&_treeId=420)

([http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/AGSGeoAddressServlet?\\_lang=en&programYear=50&\\_treeId=420](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/AGSGeoAddressServlet?_lang=en&programYear=50&_treeId=420))

Probably the best overall site available for obtaining FREE data tables and color coded maps. Simple enter an address of interest and then follow the on-screen instructions. A huge number of data tables and maps are available. Maps can be zoomed to obtain closer views.

### [US Census Bureau \(2000 Census Homepage\)](http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html)

(<http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html>)

Gateway to all 2000 US census information.

### [Church Marketing Solutions](http://www.church-marketing.com) (www.church-marketing.com)

Church Marketing Solutions provides free demographic reports for church planters.

### [Percept](http://www.percept.info) (www.percept.info)

Premier "for fee" demographic data for churches. Select "products" from the main menu.

### [ESRI Business Information](http://www.esribis.com/reports/ziplookup.html)

(<http://www.esribis.com/reports/ziplookup.html>)

Great free summary

### [Melissa Data](http://www.melissadata.com/Lookups/) (<http://www.melissadata.com/Lookups/>)

Great overall information

### [FreeDemographics.com](http://www.freedemographics.com/) (<http://www.freedemographics.com/>)

### [Claritas \(Free Info\)](http://www.clusterbigipl.claritas.com/claritas/Default.jsp?main=6&subcat=freeinfo)

(<http://www.clusterbigipl.claritas.com/claritas/Default.jsp?main=6&subcat=freeinfo>)

Several great free things

### [Link2Lead](http://www.link2lead.com/L2L/start.asp) (<http://www.link2lead.com/L2L/start.asp>)

Link2Lead.com is a new web site for local church pastors and lay **leaders**. Here you can download **FREE** demographic reports by **Percept**. You must be affiliated with a participating denomination to download the free reports.

### [The Right Site](http://www.easidemographics.com/) (<http://www.easidemographics.com/>)

Good site for free and paid reports. To enter the site and obtain free reports, you must sign up for a free membership.

### [Citibay Data](http://www.citibay.com/citibay/subhome/referencesearch/demographics/demographics.shtml)

(<http://www.citibay.com/citibay/subhome/referencesearch/demographics/demographics.shtml>)

Basic information, but its FREE.

[MapStats](http://www.fedstats.gov/qf/) (<http://www.fedstats.gov/qf/>)