

Title: Web Resources From Christian Church Bodies

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Summary: As someone making an entry to the web for your church or ministry, it's rather simple, given the number of easily available tools. Or, you might find a myriad of choices and options you face. In either case, having somewhere to start makes your job less challenging.

A logical place to turn is someone who has already done what you are hoping to do in mission. Larger churches and denominations certainly fit this role and are a good example. However, they vary greatly in the resources they use and make available.

Here's an overview of several large denominations and the resources they use in their own practices.

The denominations and church bodies I researched were several different ones: the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Southern Baptist Convention, the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church in the USA, and the Catholic Church. I did try to locate Catholic resources, but the Vatican website was not helpful. The church bodies are listed in order of their domain registrations, with the oldest or largest churches first.

Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LCMS)

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod was formed in 1962 as a merger of the Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and the North States and the Lutheran Church in America (LCA). They changed their name on their 100th anniversary in 2008. It was the first church organization I researched to register a domain - lcms.org in 1992. They currently have 2.5 million baptized members and 10,000 congregations.

Presbyterian Church in the USA (PCUSA)

The Presbyterian Church in the USA was formed in 1983 as a merger between the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education in the USA (northern and southern). There currently are 2.3 million members and 12,000 congregations. They registered their domain (pcusa.org) in 1993.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was formed in 1988 as a merger of three church bodies - the American Lutheran Church (ALC), the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC). Their website is www.elca.org.

members and over 10,500 congregations across the United States and the domain (elca.org) was registered in 1995.

United Methodist Church (UMC)

Organized in 1968, the worldwide membership of the United Methodist Church has over 12 million members and there are 41,425 congregations. They registered umc.org in 1995.

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS)

Founded in 1850, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod comprises 1.5 million members and almost 500,000 baptized members, worldwide. They registered WELS.net in 1995.

Episcopal/Anglican Church (ECUSA)

The Anglican Church traces its heritage back to 1562 and now has 80 million members and 110,000 churches that are part of the Anglican Communion. The Episcopal Church in the United States (ecusa.anglican.org) accounts for over 2 million members and over 7,000 congregations. To the website, 47% of Episcopal churches maintain websites. They registered episcopalchurch.org in 1995 and 1997, respectively.

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC)

The Southern Baptist Convention formed in 1845 and now consists of over 16 million members and more than 42,000 congregations. They registered sbc.net in 1999.

United Church of Christ (UCC)

Organized in 1957, the United Church of Christ has over 1.1 million members and 14,000 congregations. They registered ucc.org in 2005.