

PINE RIDGE, SD INFORMATIONAL SHEET

Demographics

The Pine Ridge Reservation is located in southwestern South Dakota on the Nebraska state line and about 50 miles east of the Wyoming border. Pine Ridge is home to the Oglala Lakota Sioux, which has a total tribal membership of 17,775. The reservation's fascinating history includes the victory at the Battle of Little Big Horn and the devastating massacre at Wounded Knee. Today, the total land area of the reservation is 2.8 million acres, with 1.7 million acres tribally or individually owned. The land is the economic base of the reservation, as the major occupation is cattle ranching and farming. But employment is the exception at Pine Ridge, where the unemployment rate hovers near 85 percent. Pine Ridge is one of the poorest communities in the country, with 97 percent living below the federal poverty level and an average family income of just \$3,700 per year. Further struggles in this community include an adolescent suicide rate that is four times the national average, and high rates of alcoholism, heart disease, cancer and diabetes. Despite these struggles, Pine Ridge residents cling to their resilient spirit and cultural pride. Come to Pine Ridge for an eye-opening experience, including opportunities to bless these hurting people with your service and to show the love of Jesus to this community.

About the Ministry

Participants serve in a variety of ways during a YouthWorks mission trip. Students may spend all week at one service site or switch between sites during the week. Examples of service sites that your students may participate at are Kids Club and Work Projects. Kids Club is a hands-on program led by your youth offering high-energy games, crafts, skits, songs and interactive lessons all designed to help kids learn about Jesus. Work projects may include painting houses, performing minor home repair, cleaning up debris, volunteering in community gardens or other projects in the community. They are all blessings to the community and people in need. We cannot confirm until all groups arrive exactly what service opportunities your students will be a part of during the week. We ask that you come with a willing and flexible spirit!

Activities

Evening activities during a YouthWorks week are designed to give participants insight into the lives of local residents and the culture of the area. A list of evening/cultural activities we have done in the past include: go on a scavenger hunt at Wall Drug; go on a hike in the Badlands; take part in a worship service; attend a community cookout. These are examples of what your group might partake in during your mission week. These examples are subject to change due to weather or availability. In case of change, suitable substitutes will be provided. We try to arrange for free evening activities, but from time to time, an additional cost may be required for an activity. Please plan to bring an additional \$10 per person to cover any extra costs. We will confirm the details closer to your trip.