Reaching the Nations International Church Growth Almanac

Country reports on the LDS Church around the world from a landmark almanac. Includes detailedanalysis of history, context, culture, needs, challenges and opportunities for church growth.

Russia

Population: 142.47 millions (#10 out of countries)

By David Stewart and Matt Martinich

Geography

Area: 17,098,242 square km. Spanning North Asia and much of Eastern Europe, Russia is the world's largest country and borders China, North Korea, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, and Norway. Russia includes one exclave, the small oblast of Kaliningrad (formerly the East Prussian region of Königsberg) on the Baltic Sea. As a result of its sheer geographic size, Russia experiences a myriad of climates and terrains. The remote Arctic Ocean coastline experiences arctic conditions. Several large islands in the Arctic Ocean are under Russian control such as Novaya Zemlya ("New Land") and Novosibirskiye Ostrova ("New Siberian Islands.") Siberia accounts for a large portion of Russian territory and consists primarily of tundra, boreal forest, plains, and mountain ranges which experience subarctic climate. Located in Central Russia, the Ural Mountains divide Russia between Europe and Asia. Western Russia comprises plains and forest subject to temperate climate. Southern Russia consists of semi-arid grasslands known as steppes and highlands or mountainous terrain, such as in the Caucasus and in some border regions of Central Asia. Notable rivers that traverse the landscape include the Don, Volga, Irtysh, Ob, Yenisei, Lena, and Amur. Permafrost, volcanoes, earthquakes, flooding, and forest fires are natural hazards. Environmental issues include pollution, deforestation, soil erosion, and the contamination of soil and groundwater from radioactive waste, pesticides, and other chemicals. Russia is administratively divided into 46 oblasts, 21 republics, nine krays, four autonomous okrugs, two federal cities, and one autonomous oblast.

//

Population: 138,739,892 (July 2011)

Annual Growth Rate: -0.47% (2011)

Fertility Rate: 1.42 children born per woman (2011)

Life Expectancy: 59.8 male, 73.17 female (2011)

Peoples

Russian: 79.8%

Tatar: 3.8%

Ukrainian: 2%

Bashkir: 1.2%

Chuvash: 1.1%

other/unspecified: 12.1%

Russians primary descended from Slavic peoples and populate all inhabited areas of Russia, although approximately two-thirds of the population lives in European Russia. Tatars and Bashkirs are Turkic ethnic groups which primary inhabit central Russia north of the Kazakhstani border. Ukrainians are concentrated in areas bordering Ukraine. The Chuvash are a Turkic ethnic group which populate areas between the Volga Region and Siberia. Remaining peoples are categorized as Turkic, Uralic, Altaic, Caucasian, Paleo-Siberian, and Slavic ethnicities. Ethnic groups with populations over half a million in order of descending population include Russians, Tatars, Ukrainians, Bashkirs, Chuvashs, Chechens, Armenians, Mordvins, Avars, Belarusians, Kazakhs, Udmurts, Azerbaijani, Mongols (Buryats and Kalmyks), Mari, Germans, Kabardians, Ossetians, and Dargins.[1]

Languages: Russian (83.2%), (Tatar (4%), Ukrainian (2%), Chuvash (1.2%), Bashkort (1%), Chechen (1%), Armenian (0.8%), Belarusian (0.6%), Avar (0.5%), other (5.7%). Russian is the official language. 100 languages are spoken. Languages spoken by over one million speakers include Russian (116 million), Tatar (5.35 million), Ukrainian (2.94 million), Chuvash (1.64 million), Bashkort (1.38 million), Chechen (1.33 million), and Armenian (1.13 million).

Literacy: 99.4% (2002)

History

The first known Russian state was established in 862 in Eastern Europe, which was later superseded by the rise of Kyivan Rus in 962. Based in present-day Ukraine, Kyivan Rus endured as the dominant political power in Eastern Europe until the twelfth century when Mongol invasions weakened the state. Greek Orthodox Christianity spread to eastern Russia in the tenth century and heavily influence the development of Russian architecture, culture, art, language, and music. The Mongols destroyed the major cities and towns of eastern Russia in the thirteenth century with the exception of Pskov and Novgorod and maintained control until 1480. Moscovy rose to political and diplomatic power in the early sixteenth century and Russian territorial claims pushed eastward through military advances, especially under Ivan IV, or "Ivan the Terrible," Russia's first tsar. Stability and relative peace in the young Muscovite state were achieved with the accession of the Romanov Dynasty in 1613. Peter the Great (1689-1725) emerged as a major reformer of the government and society by encouraging modernization and adopting Western-style military force and education system. The Russian capital was relocated from Moscow to St. Petersburg, increasing interaction with Western Europe. Catherine the Great perpetuated expansionist policies and influenced Russia with her love of education, art, and literature. Alexander I defeated Napoleon's armies and conquered much of the Caucasus. Alexander II emancipated the serfs in 1861 and continued Russian territorial expansion into Central Asia, Siberia, and northeast Asia. In 1905, Russia lost the Russo-Japanese war. Some democratic freedoms and a constitution were granted by Tsar Nicolas II as a result of the Russian Revolution. The rise of the Bolshevik Party under Vladimir Lenin lead to the 1917 Revolution and culminated in the removal of Tsar Nicolas II from the throne. Lenin's Red army gained total control of power over Russia despite war with Poland and gained territory in the Caucasus, Belarus, and Ukraine. In December 1922, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed.

Lenin died in 1924 and Josef Stalin became the head of the Soviet government . Stalin ruled with an iron fist until his death in 1953 and initiated wide-reaching economic and agricultural policies of centralization, including collectivization of the population to work on state farming and industrial projects. Tens of millions perished from starvation, forced resettlement, liquidations carried out by the secret police, and as a result of World War II as Nazi Germany invaded western Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. During the Cold War era, the Soviet Union and the United States fought several proxy wars primarily in Asia aimed at expanding or protecting their respective ideologies and spheres of influence, and stockpiled thousands of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union fought an unsuccessful war in Afghanistan in the 1980s, weakening the Soviet's military might and morale. Economic stagnation occurred during the 1970s. In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev instituted economic and political reforms known as glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring). The Communist Party agreed to give up its monopoly on power in February 1990. Independence movements in subsidiary republics and an attempted coup in Moscow in August 1991 precipitated the dissolution of the Soviet Union into fifteen independent republics, the largest and most populous of which was the Russian Federation. Boris Yeltsin was elected president of Russia in 1991 and was nearly overthrown in an armed insurrection headed by parliament in 1993 which was blocked by the military.[2] Violence in northern Caucasus republics has continued since the early 1990s, primarily in Chechnya and Ingushetia. Notwithstanding the change to a nominally democratic government in the early 1990s and economic growth for most years, Russia continues to have a poor human rights record and struggles to fully support democratic freedoms and government infrastructure.

Culture

As one of the world's most powerful nations with one of the world's most influential cultures for centuries, Russia has heavily influenced the development of culture throughout Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and to a lesser extent the Far

East and Western Europe. Music, art, literature, philosophy, sports, science, and architecture are proud Russian traditions. Most are nominally Orthodox Christian although participation and the power of the Russian Orthodox Church are substantially increased since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Traditional cuisine consists of vegetables, mushrooms, fish, berries, honey, and grains. Kvass, a drink made from fermented bread, is commonly consumed. Rates of abortion, divorce, cigarette consumption, alcohol consumption, and opiate usage are high.

Economy

GDP per capita: $15,900 (2010) [33.5% of US]

Human Development Index: 0.719

Corruption Index: 2.1

With abundant natural resources and a large population, Russia is the world's largest oil producer, second largest natural gas producer, and the third largest exporter of steel and aluminum. Russia produces the fifth most electricity worldwide and has the largest proven natural gas reserves and the eighth largest proven oil reserves. Additional natural resources include rare earth elements, valuable minerals, coal, fresh water, and timber. The economy has transitioned from an isolated, centrally-planned system to an increasingly market-based system integrated into the global economy. Dependence on the export of minerals and fossil fuels has resulted in vulnerability for the Russian economy to oscillate with fluctuations in world prices for these commodities. The global financial crisis in the late 2000s severely affected the economy, with the annual GDP real growth declining by 7.9% in 2009. Long-term economic problems include widespread corruption, a shrinking workforce, an aging population, geographic barriers preventing greater natural resource extraction, and poor economic conditions for smaller companies. Services employ 58% of the work force and generate 62% of the GDP whereas industry employs 32% of the work force and generates 34% of the GDP. Mining, machinery, military defense, shipbuilding, transportation equipment, medical instruments, textiles, and handicrafts are major industries. Agriculture employs 10% of the work force and generates 4% of the GDP. Common crops include grain, sugar beets, sunflower seed, vegetables, and fruit. Beef and milk are common agricultural products. German, China, the Netherlands, Italy, and Ukraine are the primary trade partners.

Corruption is perceived as widespread and present in all areas of society and government. Human trafficking for the commercial sexual exploitation of women and children and the forced labor of men and women is an ongoing concern which targets rural populations and migrants from neighboring nations, particularly in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and North Korea. Government officials have done little to address the issue and pass legislation to provide assistance to victims of human trafficking. Russia is a major supplier of some chemicals used to produce synthesized drugs such as heroin and a major consumer of opiates. Illicit drug trafficking is a major concern as Russia is a transshipment point for opiates, cocaine, and cannabis.

Russians and foreigners experience greatly increased personal liberties today compared to the Soviet era; however, some limitations exist. Most Russians are supportive of the overall direction and economic growth and stability present leadership has brought; however, many are also deeply skeptical regarding perceived endemic corruption in the governmental apparatus generally. Much of the privatization of state industry has benefited politically influential oligarchs. National and regional political offices continue to be filled largely by former Communist party functionaries, albeit under the banners of new political parties. Freedom of press, especially as regards to pieces critical of the government and investigations into government corruption, continues to be restricted; many journalists investigating corruption matters have died or disappeared under suspicious circumstances, and serious investigations by the government or prosecution of persecutors have been infrequent. Foreigners traveling in Russia are generally well advised to avoid political discussions, and especially to avoid criticism of the government or political figures, to avoid any military installations, and to avoid taking photos of objects like bridges or installations which may be perceived (sometimes unknown to foreign visitors) to have strategic or military value.

Faiths

Christian: 74% (less than 10% are practicing)

Muslim: 10-15%

Buddhist: 1%

other/none: 10-15%

Christians

Denominations Members Congregations

Russian Orthodox 100,000,000

Evangelicals 1,636,627

Catholic 600,000

Jehovah's Witnesses 162,182 2,339

Seventh Day Adventists 53,682 714

Latter-day Saints 20,276 116

Religion

The Russian Orthodox Church remains a major societal influence despite over 70 years of communist rule. 72% of the population is nominally Russian Orthodox, although only 7% of Orthodox Christians are observant. The Slavic population is homogenously Orthodox Christian. There are approximately two million Protestants and 600,000 Catholics. Practitioners of non-Christian religions are generally from Turkic ethnic groups and are primarily Muslim. The estimated Muslim population ranges from 10 to 23 million and is concentrated in the North Caucasus, Volga-Ural region, and the largest cities. Immigrant workers originating from the Caucasus and Central Asia constitute a sizeable portion of the Muslim population. The Buddhist population is estimated to number one million. Most Buddhists are from indigenous Siberian ethnic groups and are concentrated in the regions of Buryatiya, Tuva, and Kalmykiya. Jews are estimated to number between 250,000 and one million; many of which reside in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Indigenous religious traditions continue to be followed by some in the Russian Far East, Siberia, and the sparsely populated Arctic Ocean coast. In 2010, the government reported 23,494 registered religious organizations, most of which were Russian Orthodox (12,586), Muslim (3,815), Protestant (3,410), Jehovah's Witnesses (402), Jewish (286), Orthodox Old Believers (283), Catholic (240), and Buddhist (200).[3]

Religious Freedom

Persecution Index:

The constitution protects religious freedom and the government generally upholds this right for most of the population. In practice the government has not always treated religious minorities with equal standing with traditional denominations. Citizens may change their religious affiliation, choose not to practice any religion, proselyte, and follow their religion's teachings. The government reserves the right to regulate these freedoms as necessary to maintain morality, health, the constitutional structure of the government, public order, national defense, and government security. To register with the government as a local religious organization, a religious group must have at least ten citizen members and be a branch of a centralized organization or have operated in the locality for at least 15 years. To register as a centralized religious organization, a religious group must have at least three local organizations and have operated within Russia for at least 50 years. The government restricts religious freedom for several religious groups by banning the dissemination of their literature. not permitting registration with the government. refusing to grant building permits, access to land, and places of worship. detaining individuals. and limiting or refusing to grant visas for foreign religious workers. The law stipulates that violators of religious freedom will be prosecuted, but does not clarify specific penalties. Inconsistencies in enforcing laws which protect freedom for religious minorities most commonly occur in regional and municipal governments, largely due to increased pressure from local religious authorities. There has been little effort by the federal government to address discrimination and violations of religious freedom on a local level.

The Russian Orthodox Church has entered into many exclusive agreements with the government that have granted greater privileges than other denominations. In recent years, government leaders have frequently consulted with Russian Orthodox Church leaders regarding government policies. Orthodox Christmas and the date of founding of the Russian Orthodox Church are national holidays. The 2002 Law on Countering Extremist Activity was originally designed to curtail terrorist activity, but has been applied to religious groups deemed deviant by the government, namely Islamic sects, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Scientologists. There has been some religious instruction in public schools in recent years. Foreign religious workers may spend only 90 of every 180 days within Russia on a business or humanitarian visa, resulting in a severe limitation for religious groups such as the Catholic Church and the LDS Church that rely on foreign workers to operate.

There have been frequent reports of harassment of religious minorities by law enforcement, ongoing property disputes and difficulties for many religious communities to obtain land, construct, or operate meetinghouses and ongoing property disputes, and societal abuse of religious freedom which have included beatings, persecution, damage to meetinghouses, discrimination, and intimidation. Societal abuse of religious freedom has targeted non-Orthodox religions. It is often difficult to ascertain the motivation behind societal abuse of religious minority groups due to the simultaneous occurrence of racism, xenophobia, and religious bigotry. Muslim-majority areas, especially Chechnya, have also experienced some societal and local government abuse of religious freedom targeting those not complying with Shari'a law. In 2010, the government banned 18 Muslim groups

which were deemed terrorist organizations.[4]

Largest Cities

Urban: 73%

Moscow, St. Petersburg, Novosibirsk, Yekaterinburg, Nizhniy Novgorod, Kazan, Samara, Omsk, Chelyabinsk, Rostov-na-Donu, Ufa, Perm, Volgograd, Krasnoyarsk, Voronezh, Saratov, Tolyatti, Krasnodar, Izhevsk, Yaroslavl, Ulyanovsk, Barnaul, Irkutsk, Khabarovsk, Tyumen, Vladivostok, Novokuznetsk, Orenburg, Kemerovo, **Naberezhnye Chelny**, Ryazan, Tomsk, Penza, **Astrakhan**, Lipetsk.

Cities listed in **bold** have no LDS congregations

33 of the 35 cities with over half a million inhabitants have an LDS congregation. 29% of the national population resides in the 35 most populous cities.

LDS History

The LDS Church has considered Russia a significant priority for missionary work since as early as the 1840s. Joseph Smith called Orson Hyde and George J. Adams to serve in Russia but their mission never came to fruition due to the martyrdom of Joseph Smith in 1844. A Swedish LDS missionary visited St. Petersburg in 1895 and baptized the Lindelof family. Elder Francis M. Lyman visited in 1903 and the Lindelof family fled the country following the Revolution of 1917. The first Russian natives were baptized into the LDS Church in the 1980s in Europe, primarily in Finland and Hungary. The first convert baptism in Russia in modern times occurred in St. Petersburg in early 1989.[5] Elders Russell M. Nelson and Hans B. Ringger visited Moscow in 1987 and contacted the Council of Religious Affairs; they returned again in 1989.[6] To receive recognition for a congregation to formally operate, the Church had to have at least 20 adult Soviet citizen members in a single political district, which the Church gradually accumulated over time.[7] In 1990, Elders Nelson and Ringger held a member meeting in St. Petersburg (Leningrad) and met with leaders from the Council on Religious Affairs. Elder Nelson rededicated Russia for missionary work in St. Petersburg on April 26th, 1990, near the location where Russia was originally dedicated for missionary work in 1903. Registration for the first LDS congregation was obtained in September 1990 in St. Petersburg. At the time, missionary work and church meetings were conducted in private in members' apartments.[8] The Russian Republic of the Soviet Union recognized the LDS Church in mid-1991, the same time that the Mormon Tabernacle Choir performed in Moscow's Bolshoi Theater.[9] Seminary and institute began in 1993. In 1995, Siberia was opened to missionary work and the first convert baptisms took place.[10] Foreign members and three humanitarian senior couple missionaries facilitated the establishment of the Church in the Russian Far East in Vladivostok in the mid-1990s. At the time, the region was not assigned to a mission and reported directly to the Asia North Area. LDS apostle Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin visited Vladivostok in 1996.[11] In 1998, the Church was granted official recognition as a centralized religious organization[12] and the Russian government began requiring religious workers to leave the country every 90 days to renew their visas.[13] In 2000, Russia was assigned to the Europe East Area with headquarters based in Moscow.[14] President Gordon B. Hinckley visited Moscow, Russia in 2002, becoming the first LDS Church president to do so.[15] President Hinckley visited members in Vladivostok in 2005.[16] Russian members played a major role in the dedicatory celebration and services of the Helsinki Finland Temple in 2006[17] and the Kyiv Ukraine Temple in 2010.

Missions

In 1990, the Finland Helsinki East Mission administered northwestern Russia whereas the Austria Vienna East Mission administered southwestern Russia.[18] In 1992, the Church organized missions in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Additional missions were organized in Samara (1993), Novosibirsk (1994), Rostov (1994), Yekaterinburg (1995), Moscow South (1997) [renamed Moscow West in 2006], and Vladivostok (1999). In 2012, the two missions based in Moscow were consolidated into a single mission.

Membership Growth

LDS Membership: 21,023 (2010)

The most rapid membership growth occurred in the early 1990s. Latter-day Saints numbered 300 in mid-1991.[19] In early 1992, half of Russia's 600 Latter-day Saints resided in St. Petersburg.[20] There were 1,900 members in 1993, increasing to 8,000 in 1997. By year-end 2000, there were 13,509 members. Annual membership growth rates increased at moderate to high rates in the early 2000s (10-12%), but slowed dramatically for the remainder of the decade (3.9% in 2003, 2.1% in 2006, 1.7% in 2009). Membership stood at 16,638 in 2002, 18,269 in 2004, 19,180 in 2006, and 19,946 in 2008. During the 2000s, the annual increase in nominal membership declined from approximately 1,600 in 2001 to 300 in 2009. There were 1,900 members in Moscow in 2003.[21] In 2009, one in 6,875 was nominally LDS.

Congregational Growth

Wards: 6 Branches: 101

The Leningrad Branch was assigned to the Baltic District of the Finland Helsinki East Mission in 1990.[22] By mid-1991, LDS branches were functioning in St. Petersburg (2), Moscow, and Vyborg.[23] A year later, the number of branches in St. Petersburg increased to six.[24] In early 1993, Moscow had 15 small branches;[25] a dramatic increase from just one less than two years earlier. By mid-1993, additional branches of the Russia Moscow Mission were established in Nizhny Novgorod, Samara, Saratov, and Voronezh.[26] The first LDS branch was organized in Vladivostok in the mid-1990s.[27] Siberia was opened to missionary work in 1995. In 1997, plans were made to open Tula, Kaluga, and Smolensk to missionary work.[28] Missionaries began opening additional cities in Siberia in 2000 and the early 2000s, such as Ulan-Ude.[29]

There were 33 branches in 1993, increasing to 96 in 1997 and 112 in 2000, mainly reflecting the opening of new cities for missionary work as large cities experienced slowing growth and congregational consolidations. There were 15 branches in St. Petersburg by the summer of 1994; however, over a period of several years the number of branches was consolidated to five, where it remained in late 2010. Similar consolidations occurred in Moscow and other large cities due to difficulty retaining new converts, the loss of previously active members, and decreasing numbers of convert baptisms.

The number of branches totaled 120 in 2002 and declined to 115 in 2003, 114, in 2004, and 113 in 2005. There were 121 branches in 2006, and 129 branches in 2007 and 2008. Tthe number of branches reached a high of 131 in mid-2009, but declined to 126 at year-end 2009 and 116 at year-end 2010. In late 2009 and 2010, the number of branches declined as a result of most branches without a local member serving as branch president becoming dependent branches or groups. Some congregations were also consolidated in an effort to increase the size of active membership to provide better social interaction among members, such as in Ulan-Ude.

In 1993, there were five districts, increasing to seven in 1997. By 2000, the number of districts increased to 13. There were 13 districts in early 2011; districts were headquartered in Moscow (1993), St. Petersburg (1993), Samara (1996), Saratov (1996), Rostov (1997), Novosibirsk (1997), Yekaterinburg (1999), Chelyabinsk (2000), Perm (2000), Krasnoyarsk (2001), Omsk (2001), Volgograd (2002), and Togliatti (2004). During the early and mid-2000s, districts were consolidated in Moscow (Moscow North and Moscow South) and St. Petersburg (St. Petersburg North and St. Petersburg South). A district operated in Vladivostok in the mid-1990s[30] but was likely discontinued in the late 1990s or early 2000s. In 2010, two districts were discontinued in Ufa (1999) and Moscow West (2006). In 2011, the first stake was organized in Moscow and included the following six wards and three branches: The Arbatskii, Kakhovski, Moscow (English), Rechnoy, Sokolnicheskii, and Zelenogradsky Wards and the Perovo, Podolsk, and Universitetski Branches. In 2011, the Chelyabinsk Russia District was discontinued and in early 2012, the Perm Russia District was discontinued.

Finding

Full-time LDS missionaries generally solicit members for referrals to find investigators. Street proselytism and other finding methods have not been well developed in most Russian missions. There is a general perception among many LDS missionaries that tracting is less-effective or is not culturally accepted by Russians, although the Jehovah's Witnesses in particular have used this method with great success. A survey by the mission president in Saint Petersburg in 1993 found that the average missionary companionship reported contacting only five non-members per day. Although comprehensive data from other areas is not available, surveys of returned missionaries from other Russian missions and time periods suggest that this rate of contacting is not atypical, and that few Russian missions have achieved high levels of outreach to the surrounding population.

With relatively few active members and only limited independent finding efforts by LDS missionaries, LDS growth has experienced a large disadvantage compared to organizations like the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Seventh Day Adventists which systematically utilize tracting and community outreach. Some special events conducted by the Church have provided opportunities to find investigators. Over 700 attended a Christmas Creche exhibit held in a new LDS meetinghouse in Rostov in 2000.[31] In 2002, 200 of the 350 who attended a missionary concert in Novosibirsk were nonmembers.[32] Missionaries volunteered in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg to celebrate the 300 year anniversary of the city of St. Petersburg.[33] With small missionary complements, reliance primarily on finding through the small number of active members, and relatively little scope or consistency of independent missionary finding methods, LDS missions have reached only a small segment of the Russian population after more than twenty years or proselytism. Service projects have also presented some finding opportunities. With a few noteworthy exceptions, LDS missions in Russia have not demonstrated a clear vision or strategic plan for "sounding the gospel in every ear" and reaching a broad section of the Russian population.

Activity and Retention

Member activity and convert retention rates have been consistently low, resulting in a crisis of numerous unit consolidations in large cities within several years of the Church's arrival. Church conferences and meetings have been moderately attended. Over 200 attended a young single adult conference for members in Western Russia, Armenia, and Belarus in 2000.[34] 80 youth from the Russia Rostov Mission attended a youth conference in Taganrog in 2001.[35] 115 members attended a young single adult conference for the Russia Novosibirsk Mission in 2001.[36] Approximately 2,200 attended a special meeting with President Hinckley in Moscow in 2002.[37] 200 attended a special meeting with President Hinckley in Vladivostok in 2005.[38]

Nearly 200 attended a youth conference in Novosibirsk in 2005.[39] The average number of members per congregation increased between 1993 and 2009 from 121 to 163. 1,289 were enrolled in seminary and institute during the 2008-2009 school year, increasing to 1,444 during the 2009-2010 school year.

Missionaries serving in some cities report member activity rates as low as 10%, such as in Perm where there fewer than 20 active members in 2010. 20 of the 200 members of the Novokuybishevsk Branch attended church meetings in early 2011. 20 members attended a member meeting in Petrozavodsk with the mission president in 2001.[40] The Pervouralsky Branch had seven active members in late 2010. Many branches in the Russia Moscow West Mission had 15 to 20 active members in early 2011. There were 20-25 active members in the Petergof Branch in late 2010. The Kurgan Branch had approximately 20 active members and four active priesthood holders in mid-2010. The Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Branch had approximately 55 active members in late 2010. In mid-2010, 50 of the more than 350 members in the Vladivostok Branch were active. The Ussuriysk Branch had 40-50 active members in early 2011. 25-30 attended church meetings in the Tula Branch in mid-2010. The Balakovo Branch had 20 active members in 2010. Some branches in the larger cities such as Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Saratov have between 50 and 75 active members. Most wards in Moscow appear to have between 50 and 100 active members.

In general, active church membership in the largest Russian cities has experienced little increase since the late 1990s, and in some cases has actually declined notwithstanding continued increase in nominal membership. Many of Russia's most populous cities have experienced a decline in the number of LDS congregations operating. In 2001, there were eight branches in Yekaterinburg whereas in 2010 there were three. During this same time period, the number of branches in St. Petersburg declined from thirteen to nine, in Ufa from four to one, in Novosibirsk from five to three, and in Samara from four to two. Rostov has experienced no change in the number of LDS congregations over the past decade whereas Saratov has been the only city with over one million inhabitants to have an increase in the number of LDS branches during this period from four to six. There were 500 LDS members in St. Petersburg in 1992 and 1500 by mid-1994, with subsequent growth to over 2,000 members in the 2000s. However, only an estimated 250 members were attending church regularly in St. Petersburg in late 2010, approximately half of the number that attended fifteen years earlier. Nationwide active membership is estimated at 3,500-4,500, or 17-23% of total church membership.

Language Materials

Languages with LDS Scripture: Russian, Ukrainian, Armenian

All LDS scriptures and most church materials are available in Russian, Ukrainian, and Armenian. Belarusian materials include a family guidebook, the Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, family history forms, and the Articles of Faith. The Liahona magazine has monthly issues in Russian and Ukrainian and four issues a year in Armenian.

Meetinghouses

Most LDS congregations have met in rented spaces or renovated buildings. In recent years, increasing numbers of church-built meetinghouses have been completed, but at times have gone unoccupied for extended periods of time as local governments refuse or delay the issuing of occupancy permits. In early 2011, there were approximately 100 LDS meetinghouses nationwide.

Health and Safety

In 1998, two LDS missionaries serving in Saratov were kidnapped for four days and were safely released.[41] That same year, a group of drunken men stabbed one missionary to death and wounded another in Ufa.[42] In the late 1990s, two missionaries in the Russia Novosibirsk Mission were assaulted in their apartment and one was injected with an unknown substance which was later found to be novocaine once he returned to the United States. Missionaries serving in the Russia Samara Mission in 2011 reported that they were not allowed to enter some neighborhoods or cities because of threats of violence.

Humanitarian and Development Work

Over 100 humanitarian and development projects have been carried out by the Church in Russia in recent years. Activities have included the donation of clothing, computers, furniture, and medical equipment to orphanages, hospitals, and local aid organizations,[43] in addition to numerous local service initiatives. In 1991, the Church donated 23 tons of food to local Latter-day Saints and nonmembers in Vyborg, St. Petersburg, and Tallinn, Estonia.[44] Later that year, an addition 40,800 pounds of food were shipped.[45] In September 1993, the Church shipped over 16 tons of clothing and shoes for the needy to St. Petersburg.[46] In 1997, members in Danville, California collected and shipped hundreds of clothing items and quilts to orphaned children in Russia.[47] In 2000, humanitarian service missionaries and local members provided education on Down syndrome to 100 local parents of affected children.[48] Members in Nizhny Novgorod assembled 800 hygiene kits for local organizations to distribute to the needy.[49] In 2001, the Church donated 37,000 pounds of food, clothing, and shoes to distribute to the needy in Nizhny Novgorod.[50] Over 40 Relief Society members and young women made quilts for a local orphanage in 2002.[51] The Church provided clothing donations, used computers, sewing machines, hygiene kits, and newborn kits to the small town of Karabanova.[52] In 2003, the Church provided new hospital beds, medical supplies, and clothing to a children's hospital in Ryazan.[53] Members and missionaries cleaned a park in St. Petersburg as part of a citywide service day

in 2005.[54]

Opportunities, Challenges and Prospects

Religious Freedom

The LDS Church has experienced significant religious freedom and meaningful government cooperation in recent years, but nonetheless government regulations mandating that foreign religious workers must leave Russia every 90 days pose major financial, logistical, and administrative challenges as the Church relies heavily on non-native full-time missionaries to staff its eight missions. Full-time missionaries generally travel to nations in Eastern Europe or Kazakhstan to have their visas renewed and are often away from their assigned areas for several days to a week, resulting in significant disruptions to missionary work. Local officials in several regions have refused to register LDS congregations in the past. A government authority labeled the LDS Church as an "extremist and destructive" cult in 2000. LDS missionaries have been detained in the past for no particular cause and then urged by local police to stop their activities and released.[55] The Church began attempting to register a congregation in Kazan, Tatarstan in 1998 and in 2002 the congregation remained unregistered. In Chelyabinsk, the local Department of Justice rejected the Church's application to register, stating that church activities are not permitted by federal law.[56] The Church eventually won at a trial to be registered in Chelyabinsk in the early 2000s. The Church has been persecuted in some areas, but in 2004 it was noted that missionary visas were more easily obtained and that residency permits for missionaries were generally obtained without complications.[57] At times local authorities have denied the LDS Church permission to purchase land to build meetinghouses.[58] Infringements on religious freedom and political instability in some lesser-reached and unreached administrative divisions of Russia have contributed to a lack of an LDS presence in such locations.

Cultural Issues

The LDS Church has generally been viewed as an American church and un-Russian, resulting in significant challenges for Russians to join the Church and maintain positive relations with friends and family. LDS proselytism paradigms are generally developed to suit those with a Protestant background, resulting in challenges tailoring missionary lessons and teaching approaches to Orthodox believers. Population decline sparked by low birth rates, low life expectancy rates, and emigration creates many societal problems which further challenge LDS missionary activity and the stability of LDS populations. High rates of cigarette and alcohol consumption pose significant obstacles for full-time missionaries and member missionaries to address with investigators and less-active members struggling to abstain from these and other prohibited substances. Abortion as a means of birth control is commonplace and is opposed to LDS teachings. Those who have participated in an abortion generally must be interviewed by a member of the mission presidency to be considered for baptism. Other common lifestyle practices such as casual sexual relations test many local Latter-day Saints' beliefs and testimonies and create additional barriers to overcome with many prospective members.

National Outreach

33% of the national population resides in cities with LDS congregations. 59 of the 164 cities with over 100,000 inhabitants have an LDS congregation and 78% of the national population resides in an administrative division with an LDS congregation. Only five cities with fewer than 100,000 inhabitants have an LDS congregation (Vyborg, Tosno, Gatchina, Tuapse, and Marks). These are small towns in close proximity to larger cities; Vyborg is near the Finnish border. Marks is the least populated city with an LDS congregation (32,600 inhabitants). Most of the population residing in cities with an LDS congregation are unaware of an LDS presence in their city and know little or nothing about the Church as generally only one LDS congregation operates and mission outreach has been occurred for no more than two decades, primarily working through acquaintances of the small number of active members with relatively little population-based outreach. Saratov Oblast, St. Petersburg, Rostov Oblast, and Samara Oblast appear to receive the greatest mission outreach as six or more LDS congregations operate in each city or oblast and the ratio of LDS congregations to population is more than one congregation per 600,000 inhabitants. Nizhny Novgorod Oblast, Kemerovo Oblast, Perm Kray, Krasnodar Kray, Moscow city, Chelyabinsk Oblast, and Sverdlovsk Oblast receive the least mission outreach among administrative divisions with at least two LDS congregations as each oblast, kray, or city has a ratio of less than one LDS congregation per million inhabitants. 21 oblasts (Irkutsk, Kaliningrad, Kaluga, Kurgan, Lipetsk, Magadan, Moscow, Novgorod, Orenburg, Penza, Pskov, Ryazan, Sakhalin, Smolensk, Tomsk, Tula, Tver, Tyumen, Ulyanovsk, Voronezh, Yaroslavl), five republics (Bashkortostan, Buryatia, Karelia, Tatarstan, Udmurtia), three krays (Altai Krai, Khabarovsk, Stavropol), and one okrug (Khantia-Mansia) have only one LDS congregation providing minimal mission outreach to 50 million people (35% of the national population). Notwithstanding close proximity to two LDS missions and a population of 6.75 million, Moscow Oblast is the least reach administrative division with one LDS congregation operating in Podolsk. 16 republics (Adygeya, Altai Republic, Chechnya, Chuvashia, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Kalmykia, Karachay-Cherkessia, Khakassia, Komi, Mari El, Mordovia, North Ossetia-Alania, Sakha, Tuva), 14 oblasts (Amur, Arkhangelsk, Astrakhan, Belgorod, Bryansk, Ivanovo, Kirov, Kostroma, Kursk, Murmansk, Oryol, Tambov, Vladimir, Vologda), three okrugs (Chukotka, Nenetsia, Yamalia), two krays (Kamchatka, Zabaykalsk), and the Jewish Autonomous District receive no LDS mission outreach and have a combined population of 31 million. Dagestan is the most populated administrative division without an LDS presence (2.74 million inhabitants).

The pace at which additional cities opened for missionary work slowed dramatically in the 2000s. Visas complications, a decline

in the number of missionaries worldwide, and administrative challenges requiring missionaries to assume leadership and ecclesiastical duties for their assigned congregations contributed to only a handful of cities opening in the mid or late 2000s such as Kemerovo, Novokuznetsk, and Stavropol. A handful of cities had their sole LDS branches discontinued or reverted to dependent branches or groups, including Angarsk, Blagoveshchensk, and Magadan. At present, full-time missionaries report few prospects for additional cities opening for missionary work as receptivity continues to wane, few native members serve full-time missions, leadership development problems in cities with LDS congregations are ongoing, LDS missionary manpower remains low, , and visa complications exact significant expenses and inconvenience for missionaries and mission leaders. In early 2010, full-time missionaries reported that mission leadership was considering opening Arkhangelsk to missionary work and that mission leaders occasionally met with a handful of members and investigators in Astrakhan. The majority of Russia's 105 unreached cities with over 100,000 inhabitants are in Moscow Oblast, oblasts surrounding Moscow, and the Volga region. Requirements in some areas for a minimum number of adult church members before a congregation can be registered or missionaries can be sent also presents obstacles, as local membership is difficult to build up without missionaries. Sometimes the Church has had to rely on the unpredictable process of members baptized elsewhere moving back to be able to open a congregation and send missionaries to a new city.

Low member activity, poor convert retention, stagnant growth in established areas have limited additional outreach. The high cost of meetinghouse construction, maintenance, and other expenses continue to be heavily subsidized by the international church. LDS assumptions of a church-owned meetinghouse for each congregation or region have made LDS outreach far more expensive and less feasible than the more self-sufficient models utilized by groups with more successful national expansion, especially Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists.

The size of a city's population does not always correlate with the number of nominal or active Latter-day Saints in Russia. Some of the strongest LDS congregations are located in some of the least populated cities with a church presence, such as Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk and Vyborg. Some of Russia's most populous cities (Kazan, Ufa, Voronezh, Krasnodar, Izhevsk, and Yaroslavl) have only one LDS congregation notwithstanding missionary work in these cities for over a decade.

The greatest LDS missionary outreach occurs in administrative divisions which generally have the highest percentage of ethnic Russians. Many of Russia's ethnic minority groups have little access to LDS mission outreach as they reside primarily in administrative divisions without a church presence, have no LDS materials in their native language, or reside far from mission outreach centers in administrative divisions with an LDS presence. It is unknown how most these ethnic groups will respond to mission outreach. Based on trends with other missionary-oriented Christian groups and the LDS Church in neighboring countries like Mongolia, efforts may be most successful among non-Russian ethnic groups in the Caucasus and Siberia. Political instability in some republics in the Caucasus and remote location for ethnic minorities in Siberia challenge LDS efforts to engage in proselytism among these people groups. The Buryats are a traditionally Buddhist Mongol ethnic group and constitute the largest ethnic minority in Siberia concentrated in Buryatia; the LDS congregation in Ulan-Ude has both Russians and Buryats. Many Turkic and Caucasian peoples are nominally Muslim and most have few if any Latter-day Saints and collectively number approximately 17 million. One LDS congregation operates in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan.

The Church maintains an internet site for Russia at http://www.latter-daysaints.ru/. The website provides Russian language local news, explanations of church doctrines, contact information to request visits from full-time missionaries, and links to church websites in Russian such as the meetinghouse locator site. Use of the website by local members and full-time missionaries offers additional opportunity to extend national outreach among internet users. Unfortunately, the site's name in English is of no meaning to most Russians, and reinforces the perceptions of many that the LDS Church as an American and not a Russian church, To date there has been no systematic development of member-missionary resources online in Russian.

Member Activity and Convert Retention

Quick-baptism tactics, minimal pre-baptismal teaching, socialization issues at church, cultural issues surrounding religion, lacking culturally-developed missionary approaches, member burnout as a result of overburdening active members with administrative duties, and members offending one another at church have each contributed to low member activity and poor convert retention rates in Russia over the past two decades. In general, Russian missions have not adopted the extreme level of quick-baptism tactics attested in many Latin American missions, yet a nominal emphasis on quality without clear standards and a continued focus on monthly baptismal goals as the central indicator of missionary success has led to converts even in low-growth areas being baptized without having established consistent habits of church attendance and scripture reading prior to baptism. Some missions during specific periods have implemented higher standards which have led to improved retention, yet such efforts have rarely persisted through mission president changes.

Full-time missionaries have often stepped in to assist with socialization, reactivation, and administrative duties, but this has often decreased local member self sufficiency regarding church callings and member-missionary work. Visa challenges and limited missionary manpower worldwide are issues which will likely strengthen the independence and self reliance of many LDS congregations in Russia as responsibilities increasingly devolve upon local members.

Increased prebaptismal standards and greater consistency in mission policies regarding convert baptisms appear to have addressed many challenges presented by quick-baptism tactics and the inadequate teaching of investigators and new converts. The number of convert baptisms has slowed dramatically to often less than 100 a year per mission due decreasing societal receptivity, a small missionary force, diversion of missionary resources away from proselytism to reactivation efforts and member training, and in many cases the lack of clear mission strategies for reaching local populations. . Baptizing smaller

numbers of converts which have a greater tendency to remain activity in the coming months a years is more effective that baptizing greater numbers of converts with few remaining active and developing meaningful church activity. Improving convert retention rates have not been reflected in congregational growth rates, in part as a result of mission and area policies. These policies have aimed to consolidate congregations to form large branches to offer more auxiliary programs and greater socialization opportunities or revert branches into dependent branches or home groups to minimize the administrative burden on the few local members in an area. Increasing seminary and institute enrollment in the late 2000s is a positive development as membership growth rates have continued to be very low. Additional students enrolling in seminary and institute appear to consist of active members, reactivated less-active members, recent converts, and investigators.

Ethnic Issues and Integration

Russia has historically faced significant challenges integrating differing ethnic groups into a single society and nation and continues to face these issues as indicated by the complex patchwork of administrative divisions, each with varying degrees of autonomy from the federal government. Non-Russian indigenous ethnic groups or immigrants account for nearly 30 million people. Foreign immigrants, especially from Africa and Asia, have experienced the greatest difficulty assimilating into society and are often ostracized and experience discrimination. LDS mission outreach has been most fruitful among ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, Armenians, and immigrants from Asia and Africa whereas outreach has been the least productive among Turkic and Caucasian peoples. Non-Slavic immigrant converts tend to have more itinerant lifestyles which can pose difficulties for fellowshipping, retention, and member development. It is difficult to ascertain whether the low success among indigenous ethnic minority groups in Russia is due to no mission outreach concentrated among Caucasian and Turkic groups, poor receptivity to LDS mission outreach based on their native cultures, or a combination of the two. Only one non-Russian speaking LDS congregation operates in Russia, an English-speaking congregation in Moscow. Expanding national outreach into areas with larger non-ethnic Russian populations will require the establishment of congregations conducted in the ethnic language of the area.

Language Issues

Translations of LDS materials are available in the native language of approximately 86% of the national population. Speakers of Russian as a second language may increase the percentage of the population potentially reachable by the Church to 90-95%. Consequently the Church has experienced few language issues in reached cities today. Translations of church materials into additional languages spoken in Russia are needed to reach lesser-reached areas and people groups. Fifteen languages without translations of LDS materials spoken by over 400,000 include in descending order by number of speakers: Tatar, Chuvash, Bashkort, Chechen, Avar, Erzya, Moksha, Mari, Kabardian, Osetin, Dargwa, Udmurt, Kumyk, Ingush, and Lezgi. Most of these languages have few or no Latter-day Saint speakers and are spoken in areas without LDS mission outreach at present, which will likely delay prospective translations of LDS materials in these languages for decades to come.

Missionary Service

The LDS Church has relied heavily on foreign missionaries to staff its full-time missionary force since the arrival of the Church in 1990. In early 1992, there were approximately 50 full-time missionaries serving in Russia.[59] The LDS missionary force mushroomed to 800 in Russia's seven missions in 1998.[60] The large size of the missionary force permitted the opening of dozens of cities throughout the country, but also fostered member dependence on full-time missionaries as several missionary companionships were assigned to single congregations. Changes in visa regulations and the plateauing of the worldwide LDS missionary force has led to a decline in the number of missionaries in Russia over the past decade to less than half of prior levels, as there were over 300 foreign full-time LDS missionaries in Russia in 2010.[61] The number of local members serving missions appears to have held steady or even increased in recent years, but Russian missionaries typically constitute only 10-20% of full-time missionaries in Russian missions. Continued emphasis on seminary and institute participation may contribute to greater numbers of local members serving missions.

Leadership

The LDS Church has struggled to keep priesthood holders active over the long-term regardless of whether they have served in leadership positions. One mission president reported that during his three-year tenure in the early 1990s, fourteen branch presidents went inactive or left the Church. Chronic leadership development and training issues in the largest cities have delayed the establishment of LDS stakes. In 2006, full-time missionaries reported that the Moscow Russia District had reached the needed numbers of active members and priesthood holders for a stake to be organized. In order to increase church growth prospects over the medium term, local and mission leaders decided to divide the district into two districts in hopes of establishing two stakes one day. In 2010, the districts were consolidated into a single district in preparation for the creation of the Moscow Russia Stake in 2011. Many anticipated the first stakes being organized in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Saratov, and Samara during the mid-1990s but as of early 2012 there was only one stake in Russia in Moscow. In early 2012, missionaries reported that mission presidents and area leadership were preparing several additional districts to become stakes, but only the St Petersburg Russia District appeared close to becoming a stake in the foreseeable future. Notwithstanding local leadership challenges, nearly all branches in Russia have native branch presidents; most do not have native counselors. Full-time missionaries often greatly assist in administrative and leadership positions as counselors in branch presidencies.

A handful of Russian members have served in international or regional church leadership positions. In 1995, Viacheslav I.

Efimov from St. Petersburg was called to preside over the Russia Yekaterinburg Mission.[62] In 2003, Albert Yergovich Aumeister from St. Petersburg[63] was called to preside over the Russia Rostov Mission[64] and Viktor Aleksandrovich Solomein from Yekaterinburg was called to preside over the Russia Moscow South Mission.[65] In 2008, Anatoly K. Reshetnikov from Saratov was called as an Area Seventy[66] and in 2009 Dmitry V. Marchenko from Moscow was called as an Area Seventy.[67]

Temple

Most of Russia is assigned to the Kyiv Ukraine Temple district. The St. Petersburg area is assigned to the Helsinki Finland Temple district and the Vladivostok area is assigned to the Seoul Korea Temple district. The Kyiv Ukraine Temple appears to be moderately utilized by Russian and Ukrainian members as indicated by four endowment sessions scheduled on Tuesdays through Fridays and five sessions scheduled on Saturdays. Distance, few active members, and travel expenses are major challenges that restrict temple attendance. Prospects for a temple in Russia will bemore likely once several stakes are organized in a single city, such as Moscow, Saratov, or St Petersburg.

Comparative Growth

Russia possesses the world's ninth largest population and has the forty-third most Latter-day Saints, thirty-second most congregations, eleventh most districts, and ninth most missions. In 2009, Russia was the country with the fewest Latter-day Saints with the most LDS missions and was the country with the most LDS members without an LDS stake; Cambodia was the country with the second most members without a stake, with approximately half as many members as Russia. Member activity rates in Russia have been lower than most of Eastern Europe and comparable to some nations in Latin America. Cultural, economic, and social conditions in Eastern Europe do not make prospects of establishing stakes and temples unattainable as LDS growth in Ukraine has made significantly larger achievements than in Russia, in proportion to local population, as indicated by the presence of a temple, a stake, and a church presence in all but approximately fifteen cities with over 100,000 inhabitants. The percentage of the population residing in cities with an LDS congregation is nearly identical for Russia and Ukraine however (34% in Ukraine, 33% in Russia). The extent of national outreach in Russia is comparable to much of Eastern Europe, but no other country in the region has as many full-time missionaries assigned and missions operating. Developing long-term local leadership has been one of the greatest challenges for the LDS Church in Russia, and has been more challenging that in most other nations. In the late 2000s and in 2010, Russia ranked among the countries with the most congregations consolidated year to year. Other nations in Eastern Europe generally experienced declining numbers of congregations in the late 2000s and in 2010 due to stagnant or declining attendance, low growth, and increased standards for LDS branches to operate, including the requirement. The percentage of members enrolled in seminary and institute is higher than in most of Europe and is comparable to the Baltic States and Ukraine. The percentage of Latter-day Saints in the general population is representative of Eastern Europe.

The growth of other missionary-oriented Christian groups has far outpaced the LDS Church despite fewer foreign full-time missionaries and lower costs. Much of the progress attained by these denominations occurred in the 1990s and these denominations have a presence in nearly all major cities throughout the country. Seventh Day Adventists reported two and half times as many members as Latter-day Saints, but six times as many congregations; as Adventists only report active members, it is likely that there are nearly ten times as many Adventists as Latter-day Saints in Russia. Adventists have experienced a decline in membership and the number of congregations over the past decade notwithstanding annual convert baptisms numbering in the thousands. Jehovah's Witnesses operate twenty times as many congregation as Latter-day Saints, baptize up to 6,000 converts a year, and have over 160,000 active members; however, Witness growth rates have fallen considerably since the early to mid 1990s. Witnesses and Evangelicals have reported slow, steady growth in recent years, but stable local church leadership, a high degree of local member involvement in missionary work, and the capability of local members expanding national outreach.

Future Prospects

The medium-term outlook for the growth of the LDS Church in Russia is poor due to slow growth, low receptivity, poor member activity, stagnant or declining attendance at LDS congregations in major cities over the past decade, ongoing leadership development challenges among local members, the continuing trend of congregation consolidations in major cities, high dependence on foreign missionary manpower to staff Russia's seven LDS missions, heavy visa restrictions for foreign missionaries leading to a decline in the full-time missionary force of more than 50% during the 2000s, limited vision for mission outreach, and the dramatic slowdown in opening new cities for missionary work during the 2000s and in 2010. Restarting dependent branches and home groups for members in areas distant from LDS meetinghouses in the largest cities, the development of proselytism approaches tailored to nominal Orthodox Christians, the development of coherent plans for mission and national outreach, and development and consistent application of baptismal standards requiring the development of gospel habits, are steps that may be needed for current challenges to be overcome. Increasing seminary and institute attendance in the late 2000s is a positive development that if sustained may indicate greater progress in retaining new converts, success in reactivation efforts, and greater potential for increasing the number of local members serving full-time missions. Additional LDS stakes may be organized within the coming decade, although insufficient numbers of active members and priesthood holders remain a major obstacle. Visa challenges and low receptivity will likely continue to limit the number of full-time missionaries the church can feasibly assign to Russia, which will likely result in very few cities opening for missionary work in the foreseeable future. No additional LDS missions appear likely to be organized in the medium term and additional mission consolidations are possible. Active members moving to cities without an LDS presence and holding cottage meetings in unreached cities with few members or investigators appear to offer the most favorable means of expanding national outreach in the coming years as it

does not draw away limited numbers of full-time missionaries and encourages self sufficiency in member-missionary work and leadership.

[1] "Demographics of Russia," Wikipedia.org, retrieved 17 March 2011. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Russia

[2] "Background Note: Russia," Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, 16 March 2011. http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3183.htm

[3] "Russia," International Religious Freedom Report 2010, 17 November 2010. http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148977.htm

[4] "Russia," International Religious Freedom Report 2010, 17 November 2010. http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148977.htm

[5] "History of Church in Russian republic," LDS Church News, 16 November 1991. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/20772/History-of-Church-in-Russian-republic.html

[6] "Registration of Leningrad Branch approved," LDS Church News, 29 September 1990. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/20180/Registration-of-Leningrad-Branch-approved.html

[7] Avant, Gerry. "Russia: An opening door," LDS Church News, 13 July 1991. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/20679/Russia--An-opening-door.html

[8] "Registration of Leningrad Branch approved," LDS Church News, 29 September 1990. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/20180/Registration-of-Leningrad-Branch-approved.html

[9] Avant, Gerry. "Church is recognized by Russian republic," LDS Church News, 29 June 1991. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/21491/Church-is-recognized-by-Russian-republic.html

[10] Rosen, Michael S. Von. "Handcart trek in Siberia - 'a demonstration of faith," LDS Church News, 8 March 1997. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/29360/Handcart-trek-in-Siberia---a-demonstration-of-faith.html

[11] "Former 'closed city' visited by Elder Wirthlin," LDS Church News, 7 December 1996. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/27214/Former-closed-city-visited-by-Elder-Wirthlin.html

[12] "Church formally recognized in Russia," LDS Church News, 23 May 1998. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/31351/Church-formally-recognized-in-Russia.html

[13] "Russia adopts new visa regulations," LDS Church News, 15 August 1998. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/30297/Russia-adopts-new-visa-regulations.html

[14] Lloyd, Scott. "European continent realigned into three new areas," LDS Church News, 16 September 2000. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/38475/European-continent---realigned-into-three-new-areas.html

[15] Stahle, Shaun D. "History-making trip - Church leader in Russia," LDS Church News, 14 September 2002. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/42432/History-making-trip--Church-leader-in-Russia.html

[16] Stahle, Shaun D. "Members wait with patient excitement," LDS Church News, 6 August 2005. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/47654/Members-wait-with-patient-excitement.html

[17] Stahle, Shaun D. "Temple dedicated in Helsinki, Finland," LDS Church News, 28 October 2006. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/49687/Temple-dedicated-in-Helsinki-Finland.html

[18] "Registration of Leningrad Branch approved," LDS Church News, 29 September 1990. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/20180/Registration-of-Leningrad-Branch-approved.html

[19] Avant, Gerry. "Church is recognized by Russian republic," LDS Church News, 29 June 1991. http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/21491/Church-is-recognized-by-Russian-republic.html

[20] Stout, Jan. "'Russians are looking for the truth'," LDS Church News, 15 February 1992.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/22739/Russians-are-looking-for-the-truth.html

[21] Edwards, Alan. "Center Stage: Fruits of prayer taking hold in Russia," LDS Church News, 6 September 2003.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/44277/Center-Stage-Fruits-of-prayer-taking-hold-in-Russia.html

[22] "Registration of Leningrad Branch approved," LDS Church News, 29 September 1990.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/20180/Registration-of-Leningrad-Branch-approved.html

[23] Avant, Gerry. "Russia: An opening door," LDS Church News, 13 July 1991.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/20679/Russia--An-opening-door.html

[24] Fidel, Steve. "Converts pioneer frontier in Russia," LDS Church News, 19 September 1992.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/22554/Converts-pioneer-frontier-in-Russia.html

[25] "Eight new missions announced," LDS Church News, 6 March 1993.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/23130/Eight-new-missions-announced.html

[26] "Growth of Church in 'that vast empire'," LDS Church News, 6 November 1993.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/23646/Growth-of-Church-in-that-vast-empire.html

[27] Cannon, Mike. "Many families in Russia blessed by relief effort," LDS Church News, 28 January 1995.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/26302/Many-families-in-Russia-blessed-by-relief-effort.html

[28] "Church to create eight new missions," LDS Church News, 1 March 1997.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/29769/Church-to-create-eight-new-missions.html

[29] "Ulan Ude members make friends while on the train," LDS Church News, 22 September 2001.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/40516/Ulan-Ude-members-make-friends-while-on-the-train.html

[30] "Former 'closed city' visited by Elder Wirthlin," LDS Church News, 7 December 1996.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/27214/Former-closed-city-visited-by-Elder-Wirthlin.html

[31] "'We are already feeling effects of a great spiritual event'," LDS Church News, 23 December 2000.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/39075/We-are-already-feeling-effects-of-a-great-spiritual-event.html

[32] "Missioanry concert makes friends," LDS Church News, 26 October 2002.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/42708/Missionary-concert-makes-friends.html

[33] "Missionaries pitch in during 300th anniversary," LDS Church News, 14 June 2003.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/43892/Missionaries-pitch-in-during-300th-anniversary.html

[34] "Conference proceeds in face of storm," LDS Church News, 3 June 2000.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/37894/Conference-proceeds-in-face-of-storm.html

[35] Savenko, Denis. "Youth conference on Sea of Azo," LDS Church News, 8 September 2001.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/40470/Youth-conference-on-Sea-of-Azo.html

[36] "YSA gather from far reaches to Novosibirsk," LDS Church News, 22 September 2001.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/40515/YSA-gather-from-far-reaches-to-Novosibirsk.html

[37] Stahle, Shaun D. "History-making trip - Church leader in Russia," LDS Church News, 14 September 2002.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/42432/History-making-trip--Church-leader-in-Russia.html

[38] Stahle, Shaun D. "Members wait with patient excitement," LDS Church News, 6 August 2005.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/47654/Members-wait-with-patient-excitement.html

[39] "Russian youth gather," LDS Church News, 27 August 2005.

http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/47755/-Russian-youth-gather.html

[40] "20 attend fireside in Russia," LDS Church News, 20 January 2001.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/39216/20-attend-fireside-in-Russia.html

[41] Dockstader, Julie A. "Kidnapped missionaries safe; two arrested," LDS Church News, 28 March 1998.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/31544/Kidnapped-missionaries-safe-two-arrested.html

[42] Weaver, Sarah Jane. "Whole Church will feel, mourn loss of missionary," LDS Church News, 24 October 1998.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/31366/Whole-Church-will-feel-mourn-loss-of-missionary.html

[43] "Projects - Russia," Humanitarian Activities Worldwide, retrieved 15 March 2011.
http://www.providentliving.org/project/0,13501,4607-1-2008-9,00.html

[44] "Food shipment eases Soviet hunger," LDS Church News, 30 March 1991.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/21004/Food-shipment-eases-Soviet-hunger.html

[45] "LDS food shipment bound for Russia," LDS Church News, 21 December 1991.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/21314/LDS-food-shipment-bound-for-Russia.html

[46] Stout, Mary Kay. "Russian members distribute bales of clothes and shoes among LDS, others," LDS Church News, 4 September 1993.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/23405/Russian-members-distribute-bales-of-clothes-and-shoes-among-LDS--others.html

[47] Gabriel, Ana. "Quilts become 'hugs' for Russian children," LDS Church News, 15 February 1997.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/29415/Quilts-become-hugs-for-Russian-children.html

[48] "Understanding Down syndrome," LDS Church News, 3 June 2000.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/37887/Understanding-Down-syndrome.html

[49] "800 hygiene kits help needy," LDS Church News, 24 February 2001.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/39379/800-hygiene-kits-help-needy.html

[50] "Church helps with aid to Russian city," LDS Church News, 18 August 2001.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/40358/Church-helps-with-aid-to-Russian-city.html

[51] "Baby quilts for Moscow orphanage," LDS Church News, 9 February 2002.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/41292/Baby-quilts-for-Moscow-orphanage.html

[52] Stahle, Shaun D. "Russian priest expresses gratitude," LDS Church News, 25 May 2002.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/41879/Russian-priest-expresses-gratitude.html

[53] "Russian hospital receives new beds," LDS Church News, 8 November 2003.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/44658/Russian-hospital-receives-new-beds.html

[54] "Summer Garden clean up," LDS Church News, 29 October 2005.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/48059/Summer-Garden-clean-up.html

[55] "Russia," International Religious Freedom Report, retrieved 22 March 2011.
http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2001/5744.htm

[56] "Russia," International Religious Freedom Report 2002, retrieved 22 March 2011.
http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2002/13958.htm

[57] "Russia," International Religious Freedom Report 2004, retrieved 22 March 2011.
http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2004/35480.htm

[58] "Russia," International Religious Freedom Report 2008, retrieved 22 March 2011.

http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2008/108468.htm

[59] "3 new missions established in Russia, Ukraine," LDS Church News, 15 February 1992.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/22627/3-new-missions-established-in-Russia-Ukraine.html

[60] "Russia adopts new visa regulations," LDS Church News, 15 August 1998.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/30297/Russia-adopts-new-visa-regulations.html

[61] "Russia," International Religious Freedom Report 2010, 17 November 2010.
http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148977.htm

[62] "New mission presidents," LDS Church News, 6 May 1995.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/26535/New-mission-presidents.html

[63] "New mission presidents," LDS Church News, 1 March 2003.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/43307/New-mission-presidents.html

[64] "New mission presidents for 105 missions," LDS Church News, 8 March 2003.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/43323/New-mission-presidents-for-105-missions.html

[65] "New mission presidents," LDS Church News, 22 March 2003.
http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/43395/New-mission-presidents.html

[66] "Dozens of leaders called to LDS posts," Deseret News, 6 April 2008.
http://www.deseretnews.com/article/695267901/Dozens-of-leaders-called-to-LDS-posts.html?pg=4

[67] "New leadership changes," Deseret News, 5 April 2009.
http://www.deseretnews.com/article/705295325/New-leadership-changes.html?pg=4