

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.



China

Population: 1355.69 millions (#2 out of countries)

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Geography

Area: 9,596,960 square km. The world's fourth largest country and occupying a large portion of East and Central Asia, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is a nation of great diversity in terrain and climate. The most densely populated areas in eastern China have temperate to sub-tropical climates with monsoon rains in the summer and dry weather in the winter. The Tibet Plateau, which consists of semi-arid plains and rugged peaks with little vegetation, subject to cold winters and mild summers, is the dominant geographic feature of western China. Rugged mountain ranges stretch from the Tibetan Plateau toward the fertile plains in the east. Large arid basins with remote mountain ranges are found in the northwest where the Taklamakan Desert is located. The Gobi Desert stretches into China along the Mongolian border. Manchuria experiences extreme ranges in temperature from hot, humid summer months to cold, dry winter months. The North China Plain and Sichuan Basin are densely populated. Major rivers include the Yangzi, Huang, Chang Jiang, and Xi Jiang. Typhoons, floods, tsunamis, droughts, and earthquakes are natural hazards. Environmental issues vary by region and include pollution, acid rain, inadequate supplies of potable water, desertification, deforestation, and soil erosion. The Three Gorges Dam was completed in 2008 and became fully operational in July 2012. It remains a subject of environmental debate due to the flooding of vast areas of riverfront, the displacement of millions who once lived in the area now occupied by the reservoir, and the threat to endangered species. The dam has provided hydroelectric power, thus reducing air pollution, and reduces flooding along the Yangtze River, which has affected millions in the past. China is administratively divided into twenty-three provinces, five autonomous regions, and four municipalities. China claims Taiwan as a province, although the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China maintain two separate administrations, with the latter based on the island of Taiwan. Land and border disputes continue in several regions along the Indian and Pakistani border and in additional locations.

Peoples

Han Chinese: 91.6%

Zhuang: 1.3%

Other: 7.1%

Most the population is Han Chinese. Other large minority ethnicities include Zhuang, Manchu, Hui, Miao, Uighur, Tujia, Yi,

Mongol, Tibetan, Buyi, Dong, Yao, and Korean. Most of these ethnic groups live near border regions or in a patchwork of communities, such as the Hui. The government over the past several decades has moved Han Chinese throughout the country in an effort to increase national stability and mute regional ethnic differences in culture and identity.

Population: 1,384,688,986 (July 2018)

Annual Growth Rate: 0.37% (2018)

Fertility Rate: 1.6 children born per woman (2018)

Life Expectancy: 73.7 male, 78.1 female (2018)

Languages: Mandarin Chinese is the official language and used in all schools, but 276 indigenous languages are spoken in China. Many of these languages use the simplified Chinese character script officially adopted by China. Native speakers of Chinese languages number approximately 1.3 billion (94.5%). Languages with over one million speakers include Mandarin Chinese (904 million), Wu Chinese (81.4 million), Yue Chinese (62 million), Jinyu Chinese (46.9 million), Xiang Chinese (37.3 million), Hakka Chinese (43.5 million), Min Nan Chinese (27.6 million), Gan Chinese (22.1 million), Zhuang dialects (14.9 million), Min Bei Chinese (11.0 million), Uighur (10.1 million), Min Dong Chinese (10.0 million), Hmong/Miao dialects (7.7 million), Mongolian (6.0 million),Huizhou Chinese (4.6 million), Tibetan dialects (4.3 million), Min Zhong Chinese (3.5 million), Bouyei (2.9 million), Dong dialects (2.9 million), Korean (2.7 million), Pu-Xian Chinese (2.5 million), Nuosu (2.0 million), Bai dialects (1.9 million), Hani (1.7 million), Kazakh (1.5 million), Tai Nua (1.3 million).

Literacy: 96.4% (2015)

History

China, the “Middle Kingdom,” or ä¸åœ‹, was viewed by Chinese as the center of civilization and center of the known world. Although China has experienced its share of internal and external conflicts, China on the whole has historically been a relatively peaceful nation without the expansionistic aims of an Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Genghis Khan, or Tamerlane to carve out a vast empire of subject peoples; many of its actions—from the construction of the Great Wall of China to the Sino-Japanese Wars—have been primarily defensive. China was home to some of the most advanced civilizations in the ancient world but did not establish its current boundaries until the twentieth century. This is reflected to this day by the fact that over 80% of the citizens of modern China are Han Chinese. Even Tibet was incorporated into the Mongol Empire and then inherited by the Yuan Dynasty of China founded Kublai Khan, rather than being conquered by the Chinese, and the ongoing dispute over Taiwan is viewed by the Chinese as a matter of territorial integrity.

Ancient Chinese civilizations thrived in the east and went through multiple cycles of unification and division from several centuries before Christ until the establishment of the Song Dynasty in the tenth century. China once held large portions of Southeast Asia in its sphere of influence, and surrounding peoples with which the Chinese came into contact—Koreans, Japanese, Vietnamese, and others—adapted much from Chinese language, culture, and technology. The defeat of the Chinese armies at what is now Talas, Kyrgyzstan, by the Arabic Abbasid Caliphate in 751 AD ended Chinese hopes of hegemony in Central Asia. The Mongols invaded in the thirteenth century and established the Yuan Dynasty under Kublai Khan. The Ming Dynasty began in the fourteenth century and reestablished Chinese rule. In the seventeenth century, the Qing Dynasty came to power and expanded China’s border to include Mongolia. Significant population growth occurred during the following two centuries due to favorable climatic conditions for farming, peace, and intensive agricultural activity in river valleys. European powers, especially the United Kingdom, occupied large regions of China and fought for greater influence and power in the nineteenth century in several military conflicts, including the Opium Wars. The decline in Chinese military power in the nineteenth century appeared largely the byproduct of Qing resistance to adopt foreign technology to modernize the military to safeguard against foreign intrusions. Chinese resistance to foreign domination culminated in the Boxer Rebellion of 1898–1901. In 1912, the Republic of China was established thereby ending the Qing Dynasty. During the first half of the twentieth century, Chiang Kai-Shek and the Nationalists attempted to unify China and fought the communists lead by Mao Zedong. War with Japan occurred from 1937 to 1945 and ended only with the Japanese surrender at the end of World War II. Following the Second Sino-Japanese War, civil war broke out until 1949. Communist forces overpowered the Nationalists, who fled to Taiwan and maintained the Republic of China, whereas the Communists established the People’s Republic of China on the mainland.

Mao Zedong sought to rapidly modernize China and attempted to outcompete the world's leading agriculture producing nations through the Great Leap Forward. The program instituted massive agrarian reforms and established communes in an effort to increase crop yield and productivity but resulted in tens of millions of deaths due to famine caused by drought, poor agriculture practices, and the shipment of food by government officials to certain areas to fabricate unexpectedly abundant harvests. Mao also initiated the Cultural Revolution, which aimed to erase China's cultural history and traditions through destruction of historical sites, the banning of art and literature seen as a threat to the communist state, and the production of art and literature supporting the communist and socialist cause by state-sponsored writers and artists. Mao's legacy resulted in little improvement for the everyday lives of most Chinese and no significant economic growth occurred. Deng Xiaoping came to power in 1976 following Mao's death and brought about major economic and social reforms that prepared for the modernization of China. In 1979, the controversial state-sponsored family planning program called the One Child Policy came into effect, which limited Chinese couples to have just one child to slow population growth. In 1989, anti-government protesters clashed with law enforcement and military in the Tiananmen Square Massacre, which reaffirmed China's intolerance toward rapid social change and rebellion. Rapid economic growth has occurred in the 1990s until present, as many institutions have become decentralized and a free-market economy has been established. However, little improvement has occurred in regards to democratic freedoms as the communist party has sought to retain control through advancement of free-market economic policies, and continues to regard political freedoms as an existential threat.

China's current status as a developing nation is a historical anomaly. China was a world leader in technology and development through much of its history, although China's rapid growth and strong economy suggest that it is on track to again take a preeminent place among the nations. By the late 2010s, China was well on its way to join the United States as a superpower given its rapid economic development, large, modernized military force, enormous population, and vast international interests throughout the world.

Culture

Traditional Chinese values focus more on stability, harmony, order, and societal good, and less on change, innovation, and personal liberties, like Western societies. The Chinese people have experienced a long and illustrious history with no tradition of democracy in the Western sense. Most modern Chinese appear to be generally content with their government and accept various controls as necessary to maintain order. Chinese cultural values often emphasize the importance of emulating exemplars of the past and revering ancestors. Change and innovation were often viewed less positively than in the West, although numerous important inventions that have benefited the West—the adjustable plow, the stirrup, and thousands more—were invented in China.[1] To this day, Chinese demonstrate dedication and love of learning. Chinese pupils and students at all levels often study much longer than their Western counterparts, and Westerners are sometimes regarded as less disciplined. Principles of personal, family, and national honor and behavior according to socially accepted principles are very important to Chinese.

Few foreigners have succeeded in mastering the intricacies of Chinese language and protocols. Even the depth of a bow has significant meaning depending on the age, status, and relationship of individuals. To the civilized Chinese, foreigners were regarded largely as barbarians. These social barriers have begun to break down with government policies encouraging Han Chinese to intermarry with ethnic minorities, especially in Tibet and Xinjiang, as well as increasing cross-cultural relationships among Chinese working and studying overseas.

Confucianism and Daoism originated in China. Confucianism provided the source and philosophy for government and society for nearly two millennia and served as the basis, at least in part, for a well-ordered system of civil service exams for prospective public servants under the emperors. The ideals of the proper Confucian gentleman, or Junzi, continue to significantly influence Chinese culture. Communist reforms have removed much of the previous role religion played in culture and daily life. Han Chinese are the most influential ethnic group. Historically, China was a technologically advanced civilization and was the first to invent paper, printing, the compass, and gunpowder and boasts a proud, ancient tradition of astronomy. Scholarship and interest in science continue today. Soccer, martial arts, and many Western sports are popular recreational activities. China hosted the 2008 Olympic Games, which brought increased worldwide attention and awareness of the country. Alcohol consumption rates are moderate, whereas cigarette consumption rates are high. Chinese customs and culture have preferred males over females—especially in the countryside—resulting in a disproportionate number of males due to gender-selective abortions (which are illegal), and a gender imbalance with many men unable to marry. The One Child Policy was replaced by

the Two Child Policy in 2016 albeit this change has not resulted in consistent increases in the number of births.

Economy

GDP per capita: $16,700 (2017) [28% of U.S.]

Human Development Index: 0.752 (2017)

Corruption Index: 39 (2018)

The economy has transformed dramatically over the past forty years from a centralized, closed system to a free-market economy with international investment and trade. Hundreds of millions have relocated from rural areas to cities and eastern provinces for better employment, creating major demographic and ecological challenges. China has the world's largest workforce and is capable of leading the world economically if development continues. In mid-2010, China overtook Japan to become the world's second largest economy after the United States, and China was poised to overtake the United States as the world's largest economy by 2020. China's per capita income under a controlled economy and communist government is now more than twice the per capita income in India, the world's largest democracy, although both nations have similarly-sized populations and started at approximately the same level of income and development at independence in the late 1940s after World War II.

The environmental impact of mass population migrations has been devastating. The economy has rapidly transformed into being dominated by services and industry. Services generate 51.6% of the GDP, whereas industry produces 40.5% of the GDP. Services employ 43.5% of the labor force, whereas industry and agriculture each account for approximately 28% of the workforce. GDP growth rates have ranked among the highest worldwide for several decades despite China's massive population. Only 3.3% of the population lives below the poverty line (2016), but many experience poor living conditions. Primary agriculture products include rice, wheat, potatoes, and corn. Major industries include mining, metal, machinery, textiles, oil and oil products, toys, electronics, food processing, vehicles, spacecraft, and telecommunications equipment. Primary trade partners include the United States, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Germany.

With a centralized government with few checks and balances, corruption is apparent in many aspects of society. As China integrates into the global economy, much of the nation's wealth is controlled by a small subset of the population. China has struggled to fight drug trafficking, especially heroin originating from Southeast Asia. Human trafficking of Chinese in nations around the world for exploitation and a poor human rights record are major international concerns. China has experienced some success in addressing organized crime in some of the larger cities. However, there has been only a slight improvement in the reduction of perceived corruption levels in China during the 2010s per data obtained from Transparency International.

Faiths

Folk religionist: 21.9%

Buddhist: 18.2%

Christian: 5.1%

None: 53.0%

Christians

Denominations – Members – Congregations

Catholic – 9,000,000

Protestants (all denominations) – 58,040,000

Orthodox – 20,000

Seventh Day Adventists – 458,940 – 4,496

Latter-day Saints – 12,000 (estimate) – 100+ (estimate – includes branches and groups)

Religion

A 2007 survey found that 31% of Chinese citizens over sixteen years of age were religious believers. Traditional Chinese religion consists of a mix of Confucian ideals, Buddhism, Taoism or Daoism, and folk traditions. In 2007, a public opinion polling firm based in China concluded 11%–16% of adults identify as Buddhists and less than 1% consider themselves Taoist. Most religiously active Chinese follow an agglomeration of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism. Muslims primarily consist of the Hui and Uighurs, who reside in north and northwestern China in the Ningxia Hui and Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regions. The largest Protestant denomination is Baptist, followed by Lutheran. In recent years, many religious groups report rapid increases in followers.[2] However, the Chinese government has appeared to underestimate the number of religious believers, which most recently was estimated at more than 200 million. Freedom House estimated there are more than 350 religious believers nationwide, including 191-258 million Buddhists, hundreds of millions of followers of folk religions, 60-80 million Protestants, 21-23 million Muslims, 7-20 million Falun Gong followers, and 12 million Catholics.[3]

Religious Freedom

Persecution Index: 27th (2019)

There has been a significant tightening of government control regarding religious freedom in China within the 2010s, and the severity of persecution for religious believers significantly worsened in 2018. The constitution protects the freedom of religious belief but restricts religious activity and expression to “normal religious activities.” There is no sense of what “normal” means in this regard. There is no state religion. Communist party members and those who serve in the military are required to be atheists and are not permitted to participate in religious practices. Five state-sanctioned religious groups (Buddhist, Taoist, Muslim, Catholic, and Protestant) are registered as patriotic religious organizations that may register individual congregations and operate places of worship or assembly. No other religions are permitted to obtain legal status unless they register under one of the five state-sanctioned groups. Proselytism may occur in a private setting or registered place of worship. Foreigners are banned from proselytism and face many restrictions interacting with local citizens. Many Christians meet in unregistered house churches. Significant amounts of paperwork must be completed in order to establish a place of worship with the government. The government has targeted many Protestant groups that hold home meetings and are not registered with the government. Muslims in some areas are restricted in their ability to perform pilgrimages, and some individuals are not permitted to enter local mosques. The government has also required in recent years the installment of surveillance cameras in churches to monitor the activities of Christians. The recent implementation of revised religion laws have resulted in the closure of many places of worship for a variety of faiths. There were numerous reports in 2018 that indicated widespread efforts by government authorities who have sought to have many Chinese renounce their faith in writing. Members of many religious groups have been imprisoned by government authorities for failing to comply with local laws and regulations pertaining to religious practice and generally serve prison sentences in labor camps. There are credible and numerous reports of the government orchestrating organ harvesting of religious prisoners while in state custody. There appear to be approximately 800,000 to two million Uighurs and Kazakhs who are detained in specially built detention facilities due to their religion and ethnicity. Recently revised regulations prohibit children under age 18 from participation in religious activities and mandate that government permission must be granted for religious believers to travel abroad. According to the constitution and law, religiously active Chinese are not to be under any foreign religious authority, resulting in religious groups such as Catholics having many underground clergy. The distribution of religious literature is controlled by the government. Registered religious groups may produce and gather materials for the use of their members. Unregistered religious groups may have religious texts confiscated.[4]

Largest Cities

Urban: 43%

Guangzhou, Shanghai, Beijing, Tianjin, **Xiamen,** Chengdu, **Wuhan,** Hangzhou, **Chongqing,** Shenyang, **Shantou,** Xi'an, Nanjing, Qingdao, **Zhengzhou, Wenzhou, Harbin, Hefei, Changsha, Dalian, Shijiazhuang, Fuzhou, Jinan, Taiyuan, Kunming, Ürümqi, Nanchang, Changchun, Zibo, Nanning, Ningbo, Guiyang, Xuzhou, Lanzhou, Tangshan, Huizhou, Anshan, Luoyang, Jiangyin, Taizhou, Baotou, Xinxiang, Yantai, Linyi, Nantong, Huainan, Huai'an, Cixi, Liuzhou, Weifang, Yangzhou, Haikou, Hohhot, Baoding, Anyang, Xiangyang, Hengyang, Daqing, Datong, Yiwu, Zhuhai, Handan, Jiaozuo, Jilin, Xiangtan, Guilin, Yinchuan, Huaibei, Xingtai, Mianyang, Bengbu, Ganzhou, Xining, Putian, Tai'an, Yancheng, Wuhu, Maoming, Yichang, Zhangjiakou, Zhanjiang, Qinhuangdao, Zhuzhou, Nanyang, Nanchong, Zunyi, Kaifeng, Jingzhou, Jining, Rizhao, Changde, Weihai, Changzhi, Lianyungang, Ma'anshan, Baoji, Zhenjiang, Cangnan, Chifeng, Jinzhou, Shaoyang, Wanzhou, Benxi, Pingdingshan, Changshu, Yibin, Qiqihar, Suqian, Suzhou (Anhui), Fuyang, Panjin, Qingyuan, Tengzhou, Zaozhuang, Pingxiang, Yingkou.**

Cities listed in **bold** do not have an English-speaking official congregation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for foreigners.

Ten of the 117 cities with one million or more inhabitants have an English-speaking branch. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the national population resides in the 117 most populous cities. Less than half of cities with one million or more inhabitants have an official branch for Chinese members.

Church History

President Brigham Young first considered sending missionaries to China in 1849. Three years later, three missionaries were called to preach in China. The missionaries arrived in Hong Kong in 1853 and only remained for two months, as they were unable to learn the language, the English-speaking population was unreceptive, and political instability was too great for travel outside of Hong Kong. Church leaders visited China a few times during the first half of the twentieth century to assess conditions for missionary work, but no missionaries were called. In 1949, the Church opened the Chinese Mission with headquarters in Hong Kong. A Church presence was established also in Macau, but the Church had little contact with the People's Republic of China until the late 1970s. Since 1989, the Church has sent members to work as English teachers in universities. In 1986, branches were organized in Beijing and Xi'an as non-Chinese members moved to China temporarily for work, and Chinese joined the Church elsewhere and returned to their homeland.[5] In 1996, President Hinckley briefly visited China by invitation to Shenzhen to visit Chinese folk villages modeled after the Polynesian Cultural Center in Hawaii.[6] No proselytism has occurred in the People's Republic of China. Non-Chinese members have moved to China for employment. Greater freedom was granted to Chinese members in the 2000s, which permitted the operation of segregated congregations from the foreign members and the baptism of new converts into the Church through family connections. In 2013, the Church launched a website called Mormons in China to explain the Church's operations in China and provide contact information for PRC leadership in China for citizens who joined the Church abroad and were returning to their home country. This website was later renamed https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/China. The Church has historically experienced a positive and respectful relationship with the Chinese government. However, tightening of religious freedom restrictions also appeared to apply to Latter-day Saints in the late 2010s. For example, Chinese members in 2019 reported greater barriers to worship in Chinese congregations, which resulted in the closure of some branches by local government officials in certain areas of the country.

Membership Growth

Church Membership: ~12,000 (2019)

By year-end 2000, there were likely over 1,000 Church members. In 2010, membership was approaching 10,000. Growth has occurred from foreigners—primarily Westerners—moving for temporary employment, Chinese who joined the Church abroad and return, and converts from part-member families. In the 2010s, the number of foreign members in China appeared to decline due to trade tensions between China and the United States. However, the number of PRC members has appeared to continue to increase. The number of PRC members appeared to surpass foreign members sometime in the early 2010s. In 2013, the Church reported that thousands of PRC citizens have joined the Church abroad, primarily in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia.[7]

In 2019, one in 115,000 was estimated to be a Latter-day Saint on Church records.

Congregational Growth

Branches and Groups: 100+ (2019)

The Church organized its first English-speaking branches for foreigners in Beijing in 1985 and Guangzhou in 1994. The Beijing China International (English) District was organized in 1998 and administered the entire country. The first branch in Shanghai appeared to be organized prior to 2000. With greater economic development and foreigners who worked in China, the Church organized branches in several additional cities such as Tianjin (1999), Shenzhen (2003), Nanjing (2007), Suzhou (2007), Qingdao (2007), and Xian (2007). In 2008, a second district international (English) district was organized in Shanghai to accommodate growth. There were multiple English-speaking branches in some Chinese cities by the early 2010s such as Beijing (3) and Shanghai (3). Two district branches met administrative needs for members living in remote cities with too few members to justify the creation of a branch. In late 2009, the Beijing China International (English) District Branch had eleven organized groups. In 2010, the district based in Beijing had eight branches, and the district in Shanghai had six branches. In 2010, 14 branches functioned for English-speaking nonmainland Chinese. In 2011, two additional international districts were organized in Shenzhen and X'ian (Central China International).

The Church organized its first English-speaking branches in several additional cities in the 2010s, such as Hangzhou (2010), Chengdu (2011), Dongguan (2014), and Shenyang (2018). The district branch for the Shanghai China International District closed in 2017 due to realignment of the international districts. In 2019, the Central China International District included all areas of China outside of the boundaries of other English-speaking international districts. The Church closed two additional English-speaking branches due to foreign members leaving the country, such as the Beijing 4th Branch in 2017 and the Hongqiao Branch in Shanghai in 2019.

The first branches for PRC members in China were organized in 2004.[8] In 2008, Elder Russell M. Ballard reported that there were approximately twenty small branches for Chinese members in mainland China that had government authorization to meet.[9] The number of branches for PRC citizens appeared to increase to over sixty by the late 2010s. The Church operated eight districts in China for PRC citizens as of mid-2018.[10] Many Chinese members meet in groups throughout the country. Thus, the number of cities with a PRC congregation (branch or group) may be as high as 50-75. Reports available suggest flexible methods by the Church to meet member needs given significant distance between congregations and many cities with very few active members.

Activity and Retention

Activity rates appear moderate or slightly higher than in most nations, but membership experiences high turnover due to the transient presence of most foreigners, such as English teachers and families temporarily employed in China. Unknown inactive or less active members may greatly exceed the number on congregational roles due to the lack of any mechanism to track those who lose contact with the church. Reports regarding the size of congregations for PRC citizens indicate that most branches and groups have small memberships and low church attendance. Each of the international branches in Beijing appeared to have over one hundred active members in the early 2010s. Some branches like the Xi'an Branch had fewer than thirty active members in 2009. The total number of active foreign members appears to be around 1,000. The total number of active membership in China is unclear, but likely no more than 30% of members regularly attend church.

Language Materials

Languages with Latter-day Saint Scripture: Chinese (traditional), Chinese (simplified), Mongolian, Korean.

All Church scriptures are available in Chinese (both traditional and simplified characters), Mongolian, and Korean. Most Church materials are available in Chinese. A large selection of audio-visual materials is available in Mandarin and Cantonese. There is a growing number of materials available in simplified characters. Few materials have been translated into Kazakh, such as the sacrament prayer translations, the Articles of Faith, a family guide book, a family history book, a teaching guidebook, the Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith pamphlet, Gospel Fundamentals, and selected hymns and children's songs.

Meetinghouses

The Church has not built any meetinghouses in mainland China. Congregations meet in government-approved locations. Some members worship in the privacy of their homes.

Health and Safety

Strict obedience to government policies pertaining to religious conduct is required for the perpetuation of positive relations between the Church and the government. Deviation from government-approved activities jeopardizes the legitimacy of any Church activity among Chinese citizens and foreigners, is against Church policy, and poses risks to individual members. Other religious groups that have disregarded local laws or suffer poor relations with the government have had many members arrested and sentenced to labor camps for charges of disrupting public order.

Pollution and the negative environmental impact of rapid industrialization over the past several decades have led to deteriorated health for many Chinese. Most of the largest cities have poor air quality. The leading cause of death is respiratory and health diseases resulting from air pollution.

Humanitarian and Development Work

As of 2009, the Church had conducted at least twenty-six humanitarian or development projects in China. These projects primarily consisted of book donations to school libraries, English and educational training, clean water projects, emergency relief, and wheelchairs.[11] In 1998, the Church donated $15,000 for humanitarian assistance for flood victims.[12] In 2018, the Church reported at least 618 humanitarian and development projects completed in China, which primarily consisted of community projects and wheelchair donations.[13]

Opportunities, Challenges, and Prospects

Religious Freedom

The amount of religious freedom and tolerance for both local and foreign members to worship—albeit always separately—has been a major opportunity the Church gained in the 2000s, which has been essential for current and future church growth. Chinese officials have permitted local members to share the gospel with family members. Nonnatives do not appear to face proselytism restrictions among foreigners. Many Chinese members join the Church abroad in nations with greater religious freedom and later return to China. Foreign members may receive training and visits from international Church leadership. Government does not permit international Church leaders to train and meet with local Chinese members. Despite progress achieved in the 2000s and for most of the 2010s, the significant tightening of religious freedom in the late 2010s among PRC citizens has posed challenges for the Church to not only grow and expand into additional locations, but maintain the operation of previously established congregations. This development indicates that religious freedom conditions can quickly change and may result in greater restrictions in the future. Moreover, the Church used to publish the email address for the China Area Unit Director when its original Mormons in China website was launched. However, this email address is no longer available to the public on the website as of 2019. Given significant religious freedom restrictions and lack of direct access to Church leadership and congregation locations, it is difficult for members of the Church to locate the nearest congregation. It is unclear whether recent efforts of video surveillance of worship services have affected Latter-day Saint congregations.

Cultural Issues

In addition to increasing materialism and consumer-oriented culture in many of the largest cities, most Chinese are not religious due to the communist legacy. Many of the urban areas in which the Church would be most likely to receive permission to begin mission outreach work have highly secularized populations that have little exposure to religion. The high percentage of nonreligious does have the potential for difficulties with traditions that may interfere with Latter-day Saint teachings, but the Church will likely face challenges in motivating potential converts to fully embrace the gospel and make necessary changes in lifestyle to not only remain active in the Church but also serve as leaders and teachers for others. Most Chinese find Christianity peculiar and are very surprised when they encounter someone who attends a church regularly. Latter-day Saint emphasis on the family resonates well with many Chinese and is of central importance to current and future outreach. The One Child Policy has created many demographic challenges regarding the male-female gender ratio. In the long term, this may lead some male members unable to marry due to a shortage of Chinese women in some areas.

The drinking of green tea is a cultural practice prohibited by Church teachings and can be source of tension as well as a testimony building issue for investigators, new converts, and less active members. High smoking rates and moderate alcohol use pose challenges for many to who habitually engaged in these practices prohibited by the Church.

Traditional Chinese religion is a syncretic mix of Confucian philosophy, Buddhism, Taoism, and folk traditions. All of these religions are primarily individual and meditative, with little emphasis on organized worship. Many Christian principles, such as the existence of an all-powerful God instead of a nebulous harmony of the universe, need for a Savior, and even the existence of sin, are foreign to many Chinese. In particular, the break of Christianity from the tradition of ancestors, the concept of a caring God who can hear and answer prayers, the need for organized worship and service in the Church, principles of divine authority, and the idea of one true church as opposed to the development of personal worldview from syncretic elements of competing faiths and philosophies, all pose challenges for many who contemplate conversion. Chinese have their own strong sense of ethics and morality, although the need for such behaviors tends to be explained by the need for societal order, achieving harmony, maintaining order, and following the pattern of the heavens, in contrast to Judeo-Christian concepts of obedience, sin, repentance, and judgment, although considerable commonality exists when semantic barriers are bridged.

While historically very family-oriented, secularization in China has led to an increasing gap between traditional values and contemporary behaviors. In China, 70% of Beijing residents reported sex before marriage in 2005, compared to just 15% in 1989.[14] A poll of 900 female university graduates in Shanghai conducted by journalism professor Liao Shengqing and reported in the People's Daily Newspaper found that 70% think that one-night stands are not immoral.[15] The information age has resulted in greater exposure for the Church and greater opportunities for sharing the gospel, even as some problematic behaviors contrary to church teachings have become more prevalent. However, the Church has taken significant strides to block its internet content in mainland China given religious freedom restrictions imposed by the government.

National Outreach

With the exception of personal contacts of members, the entire population of 1.38 billion remains unreached by mission outreach. Only 1% of the population would be a Latter-day Saint if the Church's entire worldwide membership of sixteen million lived in China. If missionary work occurred in cities with an established English-speaking branch, 11% of the national population would have access to mission outreach. No more than eighteen percent of the population would be reached if the Church extended formal missionary efforts in locations where branches for PRC citizens operate. The Church has made considerable progress among natives in cities with English-speaking branches and also has designated congregations for Chinese members in most of these locations.

The Church will face major mission logistic challenges once full-time missionaries serve in China as China's population exceeds that of North and South America combined by almost 400 million. Current international mission resources could not efficiently administer to such as large population even if they were all entirely dedicated to China. If the average of one mission per 3.56 million people in North and South America were applied to China, the Church would need to create 389 missions; just eighteen shy of the worldwide total in 2020. Even if there was one mission per eighteen million people (the mission-population ratio in Japan), the Church would need to operate 77 Chinese missions.

Traditional Latter-day Saint paradigms of missions staffed primarily by full-time proselyting missionaries are unlikely to be implemented in China for two reasons. First, the strong preference given to native Chinese and the heavy restrictions on foreigners, especially as relates to proselytism, will require that outreach efforts be conducted primarily, and likely exclusively, through native leaders and native member-missionaries. Second, the worldwide missionary force has plateaued in recent years due to declining birth rates and slower growth, and the Church has lacked the free resources and manpower to assign missionaries even to some unreached nations that allow proselyting, like Burkina Faso and Chad at present or Kyrgyzstan in the 1990s. The limited Latter-day Saint mission resources that could potentially be mobilized are wholly inadequate to the serve China's vast population. For both legal and practical reasons, future mission outreach in China will inevitably depend primarily upon the outreach of local members. Denominations like the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, which grow primarily through local member outreach, have therefore experienced considerable outreach advantages over The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints due to the traditional Latter-day Saint dependence on full-time foreign missionaries and the lack of comparably well-organized member-missionary programs and resources. Effective future mission outreach will require wise appropriation of limited native missionary manpower, effective and independent congregational member-missionary programs, and the development of a self-sustaining native Chinese missionary force.

Although China ranks the fourth largest in geographic size, most regions are sparsely populated. The western half of China accounts for about 10% of the population as the southwest is mountainous and the northwest is primarily desert. Ninety percent (90%)of the population lives in the eastern half of China. The most densely populated areas include the Sichuan Basin, coastal areas between Beijing and Hong Kong, and interior areas between Shanghai, Beijing, and Zhengzhou. Half the national population resides in eight of the twenty-two mainland provinces, which include Guangdong (112 million), Shandong (100 million), Henan (96 million), Sichuan (83 million), Jiangsu (80 million), Hebei (75 million), Hunan (69 million), and Anhui (63 million). Mission planners can maximize the scope of potential mission outreach by allocating resources and development work to these most populous provinces.

Large Chinese communities exist in most nations around the world and currently provide a portal to mission outreach to mainland China within the confines of Chinese law. There are more than one hundred Chinese-speaking wards and branches in Taiwan. Taiwan provides many opportunities to reach mainland Chinese visitors and families who have PRC citizen relatives. Several nations with only a few hundred Latter-day Saints have Chinese Latter-day Saints, such as Greece and Cyprus. Chinese-speaking congregations have been organized in the United States, where there has been a significant increase in the number of Chinese-speaking wards and branches. In the early 2010s, there were fourteen Chinese-specific congregations in the United States (12 Chinese, 2 Mandarin), whereas in late 2019, there were twenty-four Chinese-specific congregations in the United States (14 Chinese, 10 Mandarin). Chinese-specific outreach efforts in the United States continue to be productive in many areas, such as in southern California where the Yale (Mandarin) Ward had 171 convert baptisms, thirteen members served full-time missions, and fourteen families were sealed in the temple all within the first decade of the congregation's operation.[16] The Church operates Chinese-specific congregations in several additional countries, including Canada (6), Australia (4), Malaysia (2), New Zealand (1), and Singapore (1). One Mandarin-speaking branch operates in Hong Kong. Missionaries over the past decade have been called in increasing numbers to serve Mandarin-speaking missions in areas throughout the United States, Europe, and Southeast Asia. Chinese-speaking congregations outside of China and Chinese mission outreach worldwide help coordinate efforts for members returning to mainland China and provide outreach among the large Chinese population living abroad.

Ethnic minority groups with significant Latter-day Saint memberships outside China may be more receptive to future mission outreach initiatives even if they tend to reside in less-densely populated areas that would ordinarily not receive outreach for decades following the initial start of proselytism. The Church has well-developed leadership and mission outreach capabilities in South Korea and Mongolia. Korean and Mongolian Chinese number in the millions and sometimes travel to these two nations. These individuals may join the Church outside the country and return home and help prepare to establish the Church in rural or isolated locations in Inner Mongolia or along the North Korean border. In 2009, South Korea alone had over 600,000 Chinese foreign residents. Seventy-one percent (71%) were ethnic Koreans, most of whom resided in the Seoul area.[17] In 2019, the number of Chinese foreign residents in South Korea totaled 1.07 million.[18] Some mission outreach among this group has occurred through both member referrals and missionary proselytism.

Member Activity and Convert Retention

The source of converts from the relatives of members has likely resulted in high convert retention and strong member activity among this group. However, members baptized abroad who return to China are the most likely to go inactive, as many live in areas where there is no congregation or few members to provide fellowshipping. Furthermore, many are unaware of any Church presence in China and do not have contact information for congregations, which is even more challenging to obtain once members return to China unless they have established contact with local leadership.

Ethnic Issues and Integration

Government policy prohibiting the assembly of citizens and foreigners in the same congregation has reduced potential ethnic integration issues. Ethnic issues may be somewhat present in international branches, as members come from many nations. For example, many Korean, Filipino, and American families attend the international branches.

Non-Han Chinese comprise 8.4% of the national population, and most of these ethnic groups have no known Latter-day Saints and have received no mission outreach. Potential ethnic integration issues may arise in remote provinces with high ethnic diversity and an increasing percentage of Han Chinese. Xinjiang and Tibet have at times experienced violence between these Uighurs, Tibetans, and Han Chinese. Ethnic minority groups in eastern China may be prone to marginalization by outreach efforts targeting Han Chinese who primarily populate urban centers.

Language Issues

Chinese is the oldest continuously used writing system in the world. Modern Chinese employs a logographic script with over 47,000 monosyllabic characters, although many are variants, and full literacy requires knowledge of only 3,000–4,000 characters. The first printing press was designed in China long before its invention in the West, although the vast number of characters made the press much less practical for Chinese than for alphabetic scripts. Written Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and scripts of some other small East Asian languages have borrowed heavily from Chinese characters.

The Chinese languages constitute a set of languages using the same writing system but different speech. The same text can generally be understood by both Mandarin and Cantonese speakers, although the spoken languages are mutually unintelligible. Government efforts for nationwide use of Mandarin Chinese reduce the initial need for a wide range of language resources for mission outreach efforts as well as the much greater homogeneity of the Chinese population compared to that of the second most populous nation of India. The Church possesses a large body of previously translated Chinese ecclesiastical materials in traditional characters. The Church has recently begun to increase the scope of materials in simplified characters and completed the full translation of the Book of Mormon in 2001. The demand for traditional character materials from the more numerous Chinese church membership in Taiwan and elsewhere has diminished.

The use of Chinese characters among many of China’s minority languages greatly reduces the demand for translating Church materials. If nonnative missionaries were allowed to proselyte in China, the Church would face major challenges in accommodating to regional dialects of the Chinese language and may standardize missionary work in Mandarin until missionaries began speaking and teaching in regional Chinese dialects. Audio-visual materials are only available in Mandarin and Cantonese. Language materials already translated into Mongolian, Korean, and Kazakh allow for greater potential outreach among these groups within the confines of Chinese law.

No LDS materials have been translated into Zhuang, Miao, Uighur, Tibetan, Buyei, Nuosu, Dong, Bai, and about 200 additional languages, many of which have hundreds of thousands of speakers. Most of these languages have adopted their own unique writing script, such as Nuosu, or utilize a modified Latin script. Proficiency and use in Mandarin Chinese as a second language varies by linguistic group.

Missionary Service

No proselytism occurs in the People’s Republic of China. The first full-time missionary to serve from China completed his mission in 2006. As of 2010, fewer than one hundred members from China were returned missionaries. By the end of March

2010, forty-two missionaries from mainland China were serving full-time missions, many in the United States and Canada. Compared to the number of PRC members, there has consistently been a sizable number of members who serve full-time missions from China in other nations.

Leadership

Elder Chu-Jen Chia became an Area Authority Seventy in the late 1990s and has directed the affairs of the Church in China during the 2000s. Church leaders in Hong Kong and Taiwan have provided assistance developing local leadership. Chinese members in leadership positions experience high levels of autonomy and stewardship over their congregations. However, the lack of training and experience in leadership for many Chinese members poses challenges for consistency and quality. International branches benefit from many members who have lived in areas where the Church runs administrative functions smoothly. Inadequate local leadership for foreign members becomes an issue only in areas where total foreign members is extremely limited.

Temple

China pertains to the Hong Kong China Temple district. Although many aspects of religious freedom are suppressed and the few members live long distances apart and in too few numbers to create stakes, the nearby temple, which is easily accessed by train throughout much of eastern China, provides unique opportunities for new members to participate in temple ordinances. Detailed family histories and records provide an ample supply of family history names of Church members to perform temple ordinances in behalf of in the Hong Kong China Temple. Restrictions on the movement of religious believers by the Chinese government in the late 2010s may indicate some difficulties for regular temple attendance.

Comparative Growth

Due to its large geographic size, enormous population, and government restrictions, China remains one of the least reached nations by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There remain many cities with over three million people where a branch of the Church (whether for foreigners or PRC citizens) has never operated. Hong Kong has had an official Church presence for seventy years and had approximately 25,000 members in 2018. One in 289 in Hong Kong is nominally a Latter-day Saint. If the Church in China had the same ratio there would be 4.8 million members nationwide. The number of Church members in China is comparable to that of India. Membership growth in China during the 2000s was among the most rapid among nations with fewer than 10,000 members. China is perhaps the only nation in which the Church's steady growth in recent years has been significantly influenced by natives joining the Church outside the country and returning in large numbers.

Larger Christian denominations tend to have had a presence for several decades or were first established prior to the communist takeover. Many of these groups enjoy government registration and can operate under fewer restrictions than The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Seventh-Day Adventists in particular have achieved significant breakthroughs in legal status and outreach and have reported steady growth. An underground Protestant "house church" movement claims between forty and one hundred million participants, although reliable figures are not available, as many of these groups operate outside of the law. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints maintains one of the most positive and respectful relationships with the Chinese government and is careful to observe all government regulations and restrictions, while remaining one of the smallest Christian groups in China.

Future Prospects

Government policy and law currently forbid proselytism by foreign or native missionaries and restricts the communication between Chinese nationals and international Church leaders. The greatest limitations for future growth are an insufficient supply of local leadership, limited opportunities for mentoring and training from regional and worldwide Latter-day Saint leadership, restrictions on the importation and distribution of scriptures and church literature, and the significant tightening of religious freedom conditions by government officials and legislation since the late 2010s.

Prospects for full recognition of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and permissions for foreign missionaries in the medium term appear to be slim to none. However, there is a more favorable outlook for continued growth through legal means of members sharing their beliefs with family members and the resultant increase in authorized congregations or small meeting groups. The quiet, rapid growth of Latter-day Saint membership in China over the past decade has occurred principally through the relatives of current members and provides an excellent outlook for future long-term growth and sustainability regardless of changes in religious freedom conditions. Furthermore, outreach to Han Chinese outside mainland China continues to expand in vision with the calling of Chinese-speaking missionaries to serve in many nations around the world in addition to the creation of Chinese-speaking congregations abroad. The increase in full-time missionaries who serve from China is a major success that will promote long-term growth, increase future leadership manpower, and provide returned missionaries with valuable experience in Church administration in areas where the Church is most established in the United States and other nations in which they may serve.

In contrast to the entry of the Church into Russia following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, a basic administrative infrastructure is in place in many regions of China. The Church overall was not fully prepared to meet the needs and opportunities presented when Russia opened to missionary work and consequently experienced low retention, limited national outreach expansion following the first decade of formal missionary activity, and poor local leadership development. The Church has learned many lessons from Russia and has placed a stronger emphasis on member-missionary work in a family setting in accordance with government policy and local laws.

Regional Profiles

Although there are no prospects at present for the organization of formal full-time proselytizing missions in China, the continued growth through member-missionary outreach to relatives and the proselytism of Chinese residents overseas has resulted in the steady creation of new congregations since 2004. As Chinese continue to accept the gospel in their homeland or abroad, it is likely that congregations may eventually be organized in new provinces in coming years.

This section explores potential issues for church growth in different provinces of China through continued member-missionary efforts, although many provinces currently have no church presence. It also considers issues that may arise if more formal missionary work were permitted one day, although such prospects are presently remote. There is no formal missionary activity and no proposed plans from Church leadership for outreach in mainland China; local growth has resulted solely from the self-directed efforts of native members. The authors are solely responsible for any opinions expressed. All Church affairs are segregated between Chinese nationals and foreigners.

Anhui

Population: 62,548,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (99.3%), Hui (0.6%), other (0.1%)

Located in east central China south of Beijing, Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese constitute almost the entire population. Outmigration has significantly affected the demographic characteristics of the province, with the number of people who migrated out of the province increasing from 230,116 in 2000 to more than sixteen million in 2010.[19] Protestants have a strong presence in northern and central areas, whereas there are many Buddhists sites in southern Anhui. Catholics are primarily located in Bengbu. Very few Latter-day Saints have lived in this province. The homogeneous population reduces the potential for language and ethnic integration issues, but distance from church centers, significant outmigration, and few members in the province may make Anhui a lower priority for future outreach.

Beijing

Population: 21,707,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (95.9%), Manchu (1.7%), Hui (1.3%), Mongol (0.4%), other (0.7%)

The capital of China, Beijing is one of the largest cities and is central to future mission outreach nationwide. All major religious traditions in China have sites in Beijing albeit these sites are few in number. Nevertheless, four of the five officially recognized religions in the PRC are headquartered in Beijing.[20] Beijing is one of only two cities in China with at least two English speaking congregations. Chinese natives also meet in Beijing in multiple organized congregations. Due to its small geographical area and high population density, fewer outreach centers will be needed if formal missionary work occurs one day.

Chongqing

Population: 30,752,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (93.3%), Tujia (4.8%), Miao (1.7%), other (0.2%)

Located in the Sichuan Basin near the Three Gorges Dam, Chongqing has a Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese Majority with Tujia and Maio minorities. Chongqing has risen as one of the largest industrial centers in southwestern China. Most reported religious sites are Buddhist.[21] Chongqing had no branches organized for non-Chinese members in 2019. However its small geographic size and large population will likely make it a target for future mission outreach one day. Together with nearby Chengdu, Chongqing may one day serve as a center for Church operations in the Sichuan Basin.

Fujian

Population: 39,110,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (97.8%), She (1.0%), Hui (0.3%), Tujia (0.2%), Miao (0.2%), Zhuang (0.1%), Bouyei (0.1%), other (0.3%).

Located between Hong Kong and Shanghai bordering the East China Sea, Fujian is primarily Min-speaking Han Chinese. The She are a small minority and speak She and Hakka Chinese. Fujian numbers among the wealthiest provinces in China due to international trade given its geographical location on the coast of the Taiwan Strait. Given its high level of economic prosperity, many have moved to Fujian since 2000, particularly to the most populous cities of Fuzhou, Quanzhou, and Xiamen. Christians are concentrated along the coast. Interior areas appear to be predominantly Buddhist given data regarding the distribution and number of religious sites.[22] Few members appear to currently reside in the province albeit it is likely many converts have moved to Fujian given its economic prosperity. Latter-day Saint missionaries serving in New York City report that they frequently work with Fujian natives. Short-term growth may be achieved by Fujian locals joining the Church abroad and returning to their home province. Local full-time missionaries will likely be needed for initial outreach due to the widespread use of Min Chinese.

Gansu

Population: 26,257,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (90.6%), Hui (4.9%), Dongxiang (2.1%), Tibetan (1.9%), Tu (0.1%), Salar (0.1%), other (0.3%).

Located in north central China, Gansu is a large, sparsely populated province that is primarily Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese. Chinese Muslim peoples such as the Hui and Dongxiang account for 7% of the population. Gansu has one of the lowest standards of living in China and may be a suitable location for future humanitarian and development work. Agriculture is the primary sector of the economy. Most religious sites are Islamic.[23] There appear to be few Christians in the province, indicating a need for outreach approaches to focus on the religious background of non-Christians if missionary work were to occur in Gansu one day. Few if any members live in the province today.

Guangdong

Population: 111,690,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (98.0%), Zhuang (0.8%), Yao (0.2%), Miao (0.2%), Tujia (0.2%), Dong (0.1%), other (0.5%)

China's most populated province, Guangdong has a population greater than all but the eleven most populous nations worldwide. Located in southern China, Guangdong surrounds Hong Kong and Macao and is home to Guangzhou—the most populous urban agglomeration of the world with nearly forty-six million people. The population is almost completely Han Chinese, speaking Min, Hakka, Mandarin, and Cantonese. Christian growth in Guangdong appeared among the most rapid in China when the first missionaries arrived, but in recent years this growth has slowed substantially compared to other provinces.[24] The Church organized an English branch in Guangzhou in the past decade that has a large active membership. There are three English branches that operate in Guangzhou, Dongguan, and Shenzhen. Guangzhou is a significant center of strength among native Chinese membership and appears the most likely location in China to have a stake organized within the foreseeable future. Guangzhou would likely one day administer missionary activity in South China if permitted given its close proximity to Hong Kong and enormous population. The Church has many international members who claim ancestry from Guangdong and speak Cantonese.

Guangxi

Population: 48,850,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (62.8%), Zhuang (31.4%), Yao (3.2%), Miao (1.0%), Dong (0.7%), Mulao (0.4%), Hui (0.1%), other (0.4%)

Guangxi is an autonomous region in southern China bordering Vietnam and home of the Zhuang people. Han Chinese have a smaller presence than in most provinces or regions but constitute the majority and speak Mandarin, Cantonese, and Hakka Chinese. Zhuang account for a third of the population and have no Latter-day Saint materials available in their language. Other ethnic minorities constitute about 6% of the population. Most the population is Buddhist or Protestant. Zhuang primarily follow traditional religious beliefs called Buluotuo.[25] The Church appears to have never had a presence in Guangxi and has had few if any converts outside China among non-Han Chinese ethnic groups found in the region. Guangxi is also among the least Christian Chinese provinces. Nanning will be central to the establishment of any future outreach due to its large population and central location.

Guizhou

Population: 35,800,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (64.3%), Miao (11.4%), Buyi (7.2%), Dong (4.1%), Tujia (4.1%), Yi (2.4%), Gelao (1.4%), Hui (0.5%), Bai (0.5%),

Zhuang (0.2%), other (3.9%)

A mountainous province in southern China, Guizhou has a population that is less than two-thirds Han Chinese. Non-Han ethnic groups in Guizhou with over one million people include Miao, Buyi, Dong, and Tujia; the eponymous languages have no Latter-day Saint materials available. There are few Christians, but Christian sites comprise approximately half of all religious sites in the province.[26] Due to ethnic diversity, remote location, and few Latter-day Saints, outreach in Guizhou will likely occur among the last for Chinese provinces.

Hainan

Population: 9,258,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (83.6%), Li (14.6%), Miao (0.9%), Zhuang (0.5%), other (0.4%)

Hainan is a large island located in the South China Sea just off the mainland. Han Chinese form the majority and primarily speak Min Chinese. Li are a large minority who speak their own language into which no Latter-day Saint materials have been translated. Most Li follow traditional religious beliefs and Daoism. Hainan has an important Protestant legacy and most known religious sites in the province are Protestant.[27] However, there are few Christians in Hainan today. Latter-day Saints have a presence on Hainan among PRC members. Due to Hainan's separation from the mainland and comparatively small population, outreach may not occur for many years.

Hebei

Population: 75,195,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (95.8%), Manchu (3.0%), Hui (0.8%), Mongol (0.3%), other (0.1%)

Surrounding much of Beijing Municipality, Hebei has a Mandarin-speaking population that is almost entirely Han with small Manchu, Hui, and Mongol minorities. Agriculture has played an important role in Hebei's economy for centuries, but more recently industry has grown due to the large size of the population and its close proximity to Beijing and Tianjin. Several major religious traditions in China have a robust presence in Hebei, particularly Catholics and Muslims in Cangzhou.[28] Hebei provides excellent future mission outreach opportunities, as the province contains many large cities, a large population, and close proximity to Beijing. Local Chinese Latter-day Saints are established in several of the largest cities. In 2010, a missionary from Baoding was serving in the Salt Lake City area.

Heilongjiang

Population: 37,887,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (96.4%), Manchu (2.0%), Korean (0.9%), Mongol (0.3%), Hui (0.3%), Daur (0.1%)

Occupying the northeastern most area of China, Heilongjiang borders Russia and has a predominantly Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese population. The largest ethnic minority groups are Manchu and Korean. The largest oil field in China is located in

Heilongjiang and the province's economy is heavily influenced by agriculture, petrochemicals, and equipment manufacturing. The province is heavily Christian compared to other Chinese provinces, with 65.1% of known religious sites categorized as Protestant and 10.3% of known religious sites categorized as Catholic. Harbin and Mudanjiang are the most important Protestant centers in Heilongjiang.[29] Christians are most commonly found among Han Chinese. Heilongjiang is among the most remote provinces in eastern China, but the presence of several major cities will likely facilitate the growth and development of the Church in the future. Some of the first branches in China for PRC citizens were organized in Heilongjiang. Little language diversity will assist in mission efforts and reduce ethnic integration challenges.

Henan

Population: 95,590,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (98.8%), Hui (1.0%), other (0.2%)

The third most populous province in China, Henan has a homogenous Han Chinese population and a small Hui minority, all of whom speak Mandarin Chinese. Agriculture is the primary sector of the economy. Henan is in the heartland of China and has the highest percentage of Christians of any province in China. Nearly 88% of all religious sites are Christian. Protestants are the most visible religious group and have a widespread presence throughout Henan.[30] Nevertheless, Christians account for only 6-7% of the province population. Latter-day Saints operate no English-speaking branches in Henan, but there is a Church presence among PRC citizens. Distance from Beijing and Shanghai may reduce initial outreach, but Henan's large population will likely require at least half a dozen Latter-day Saint missions to reach most of the urban population.

Hubei

Population: 59,020,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (95.7%), Tujia (3.7%), Miao (0.3%), Hui (0.1%), Dong (0.1), other (0.1%)

Hubei is in central China and is predominantly Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese. Hubei is known for its hydroelectric industry. The population has experienced a net decline in the past two decades due to outmigration. Tujia account for the largest minority group that has no Latter-day Saint materials translated in their native language. Most religious sites are Buddhist or Daoist.[31] Capital of Hubei, Wuhan is one of the largest cities in China and is one of the most populous cities without an English branch. The Church among PRC citizens is minimally established. Outreach efforts in Wuhan alone will require a large amount of mission resources and local member participation and will likely influence the expansion of mission outreach in the large region between Shanghai and Chengdu.

Hunan

Population: 68,602,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (90.0%), Tujia (4.0%), Miao (3.1%), Dong (1.3%), Yao (1.1%), Bai (0.2%), Hui (0.1%), other (0.2%)

Located in southern China north of Guangzhou and home province of Mao Zedong, most of the population is Han Chinese, speaking Xiang Chinese and Mandarin Chinese. The largest ethnic minorities include Tujia, Miao, Dong, and Yao. Agriculture and mining are the main industries. Most religious sites are Buddhist, and there are concentrations of Protestants in Loudi, Hengyang, and Zhangjiajie.[32] The Church has no materials translated in any of the ethnic minority languages spoken in Hunan. The Church is minimally established among PRC citizens in Hunan. Due to distance from established Church centers

elsewhere in the country, Latter-day Saint mission efforts may be limited to the capital Changsha for many years. The large Xiang Chinese-speaking population will most likely require the use of native missionaries in any prospective proselytism in Hunan.

Inner Mongolia

Population: 25,286,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (79.5%), Mongol (17.1%), Manchu (1.8%), Hui (0.9%), Daur (0.3%), Evenki (0.1%), Korean (0.1%), other (0.2%)

Consisting of a large, sparsely populated region along the Mongolian border, Inner Mongolia is an autonomous region that is predominantly populated by Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese. Chinese settled the region in the past few centuries, whereas Mongolians have populated Inner Mongolia for millennia. Mongolians in Inner Mongolian tend to use the traditional Mongolian script and constitute the largest concentration of Mongolians in any area of the world. Only 2.6 million Mongolians live in the nation of Mongolia, sometimes referred to as Outer Mongolia, compared to more than four million in China's Inner Mongolia province. The Church has translated all Latter-day Saint scriptures and a wide range of materials into Mongolian as written in the Cyrillic script used since Soviet times in Mongolia proper but has no materials in the traditional Mongolian script used in Inner Mongolia. Inner Mongolia is known for its livestock and dairy production given its vast grasslands suitable for grazing. Given its arid climate and vast geographical size, Inner Mongolia is one of the most sparsely populated areas in China.

With the largest percentage of Mongolians of any region or province, Inner Mongolia may one day experience considerable church growth, as Mongolians have been uniquely receptive to the Church. Familial ties and the strong Latter-day Saint presence in neighboring Mongolia may facilitate greater outreach and growth than in other areas of China. The Trans-Mongolian Railway links Mongolian peoples between Ulan-Ude in Russia; Ulan Bator, Mongolia; and Jining, Inner Mongolia; China, and a mutual agreement between China and Mongolia allows visa-free travel to citizens of each. However, ties between Inner Mongolia and the nation of Mongolia have been attenuated by separation since the 1920s under Chinese and Russian spheres of influence, respectively, and family relationships between Mongolians in Inner Mongolia and Mongolia proper are now fairly remote after decades of separation. Mongolian trains run on the wider Russian gauge, whereas the Chinese side uses a smaller Russian gauge; the entire chassis must be changed at border crossings, which can take several hours. Furthermore, most of the population in Mongolia is concentrated in the north. The Gobi Desert and rugged mountains occupy much of the south of Mongolia and the northern portions of Inner Mongolia. Mongolian settlements on the Mongolian side and on the Chinese side are generally not in close proximity, and natural barriers as well as logistical difficulties serve to enforce the separation. The large Latter-day Saint membership in Mongolia proper has to this date not resulted in any known church growth in Inner Mongolia, notwithstanding kinship and a common language. The religious landscape of Inner Mongolia is also quite diverse, with sizable followers of all major religious traditions in China.

No Latter-day Saint congregations have ever appeared to operate in Inner Mongolia. Due to its large population and central location, a congregation may eventually be organized in the capital, Hohhot. Future ethnic integration issues between Han Chinese and Mongolians may occur. However, Mongolians appear to be relatively well integrated into China compared to some other groups due to longstanding ties and considerable Sinicization; China was ruled by the Mongolian Yuan dynasty founded by Kublai Khan from 1271 to 1368 AD.

Jiangsu

Population: 80,293,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (99.5%), Hui (0.2%), Miao (0.1%), Tujia (0.1%), other (0.1%)

North of Shanghai, Jiangsu is one of the most densely populated and homogenously Han Chinese provinces. Jiangsu has the

highest GDP per capita of any Chinese province. Northern areas are predominantly Protestant, whereas southern areas are predominantly Buddhist.[33] The Church established an English-speaking branch in the 2000s for foreign members in Nanjing. Several congregations for PRC citizens appear to operate in Jiangsu. Future Latter-day Saint mission outreach would likely focus on Jiangsu given its large population, developed economic infrastructure, and close proximity to Shanghai.

Jiangxi

Population: 46,221,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (99.7%), She (0.2%), other (0.1%)

One of the most homogenously Han Chinese provinces, Jiangxi is north of Guangzhou and west of Shanghai. Gan and Mandarin Chinese are most commonly spoken. The province is much less developed than other provinces in eastern China. Although Jiangxi is close to some of China's largest cities, it remains as one of the poorer provinces. Jiangxi has a large rural or small city-dwelling population, which will one day require many outreach centers. Buddhist predominates in Jiangxi and there is a significant Protestant presence in Xinyu.[34] Initial efforts will most likely concentrate on the capital, Nanchang. The Church operates no English-speaking congregations in Jiangxi, and has a minimal presence among PRC citizens.

Jilin

Population: 27,174,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (92.0%), Korean (3.8%), Manchu (3.2%), Mongol (0.5%), Hui (0.4%), other (0.1%)

Located in Manchuria along the North Korean border, Jilin consists of a Han population with visible Korean and Manchu minorities speaking Mandarin Chinese or Korean. Koreans are concentrated in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture along North Korean. Jilin shares many similarities with neighboring Manchurian provinces, yet has a smaller population. Manufacturing and agriculture are the primary industries. Jilin is heavily Protestant as 80.9% of known religious sites are Protestant. Important Protestant centers include Jilin, Changchun, Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, and Tonghua.[35] Christians are especially visible among Koreans. Government authorities have sought to sever ties of Korean churches with foreign countries, such as South Korea. There have been religious tensions given the province's close proximity to North Korea and efforts by Chinese Koreans to help North Korean defectors.[36] These concerns may limit or prohibit any future efforts by Latter-day Saints to rely on Korean membership and leadership to assist in future missionary activities in Jilin if permitted one day. The Church operates no English-speaking branches in Jilin, but there is a Latter-day Saint presence in multiple cities among PRC citizens. Formal mission outreach in Jilin will most likely occur from Heilongjiang or Liaoning Provinces and commence in the capital, Changchun.

Liaoning

Population: 43,689,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (84.8%), Manchu (12.2%), Mongol (1.5%), Hui (0.6%), Korean (0.5%), Xibe (0.3%), other (0.1%)

Located in southern Manchuria between North Korea and Inner Mongolia, Liaoning has a Han Chinese majority population with a significant Manchu minority and few Mongols, Hui, and Koreans. Mandarin Chinese is spoken by most. Many large cities, such as Shenyang, Dalian, and Anshan, are industrial centers, and Liaoning overall enjoys a higher standard of living than most other provinces. Establishing mission outreach centers in the many large cities concentrated between Shenyang and the Yellow Sea

allow for fewer mission resources to reach a large portion of the population. Protestant religious sites predominate in most areas except the west where most religious sites are Buddhist.[37] Christians are particularly concentrated among Koreans. All Latter-day Saint scriptures and many church materials are available in Korean and Mongolian. It is unclear how responsive Manchu will be to prospective outreach; Manchus are a distinct ethnic group distantly related to Mongolians and Turkic peoples but most now speak Mandarin. Prospects for future church growth in Liaoning appear high; Shenyang may one day become a church center for Manchuria. The Church organized its first English-speaking branch in Manchuria in Shenyang in 2018. Some of the oldest Latter-day Saint congregations for PRC citizens were organized in Liaoning.

Ningxia

Population: 6,818,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (64.8%), Hui (34.5%), Mongol (0.1%), other (0.6%)

With a relatively small population, Ningxia is in central China south of Inner Mongolia and is the Chinese administrative division with the highest percentage of Hui. Ningxia numbers among the poorest and least developed administrative divisions in China. The Han Chinese are the majority and have arrived in greater numbers through immigration. The Hui comprise a third of the population and descended primarily from Chinese traders along the Silk Road during the Middle Ages. Hui speak Chinese languages and do not require separate language materials for mission outreach. Religious sites are overwhelmingly Islamic (92.1%) and one-third of Ningxia's population identifies as Muslim.[38] Tensions between Hui and Han Chinese have been ongoing, and may result in ethnic integration challenges if a Latter-day Saint presence is established one day. Extending mission outreach among the Hui may be challenging due to their adherence to Islam and may include proselytizing restrictions, low receptivity, and ethnic integration challenges with Han Chinese in church congregations. Christian groups report little success working with the Hui. It is unclear whether there is any Latter-day Saint presence in Ningxia among PRC citizens, and there are no English-speaking branches in the region.

Qinghai

Population: 5,984,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (53.0%), Tibetan (24.4%), Hui (14.8%), Tu (3.6%), Salar (1.9%), Mongol (1.8%), other (0.5%)

Qinghai is located in western China, northeast of the Tibetan Plateau. Han Chinese form a slight majority, whereas the largest minority ethnic groups include Tibetans and Hui. Qinghai is one of the least developed and most rural provinces in China. Most religious believers are Buddhist or Muslim. Qinghai has one of the lowest percentages of Christians in China. Few large cities and a small population concentrated in rural areas require a greater number of mission outreach centers to effectively preach the gospel to the majority of the population if missionary work is permitted one day. Prospects for future Church establishment appear highest for the largest city Xining. No Latter-day Saint materials are available in Tibetan, Tu, or Salar, limiting outreach potential among these groups.

Shaanxi

Population: 38,354,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (99.5%), Hui (0.4%), other (0.1%)

Located in Central China and gateway to China's sparsely populated west, Shaanxi is a province with a fairly homogenous

population of Han Chinese. The ancient Chinese capital of Xi'an is located in Shaanxi and ranks as the tenth most populous metropolitan area in China. The province has numbered among the most densely populated Chinese provinces for millennia given its fertile plains near Xi'an. There is a significant diversity of religious sites in the province. Nestorian Christians reached Shaanxi in 635 AD, and both Catholics and Protestants have had a long-term presence on the densely populated Guanzhong Plain.[39] Latter-day Saints organized an English branch in Xi'an in 2007. There is a minimal Church presence among PRC citizens in Shaanxi.

Shandong

Population: 100,058,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (99.2%), Hui (0.6%), other (0.2%)

Occupying densely population areas between Shanghai and Beijing, Shandong is the second most populous Chinese province and among the most ethnically homogenous. Food manufacturing, agriculture, mining, and oil extraction drive the local economy in most areas. There are a variety of significant religious sites for Buddhists, Catholics, Muslims, and Protestants, albeit Protestant sites are most numerous. Protestants appear especially concentrated in southern Jining, northern Liaocheng, and northern Linyi.[40] Shandong also has a proud tradition of Confucianism as Confucius was born in Qufu. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints established an English-speaking branch in Qingdao in 2007. A branch for PRC citizens also operates in Qingdao. There are additional cities in Shandong with congregations for PRC citizens. Close proximity to Beijing and Shanghai together with its large population will likely facilitate mission outreach in Shandong prior to many other areas in China.

Shanghai

Population: 24,183,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (98.8%), Hui (0.3%), Tujia (0.1%), Miao (0.1%), Manchu (0.1%), other (0.6%).

China's second most populous city and center of finance, Shanghai is a municipality and enjoys the highest standard of living among all of China's administrative divisions and is a major cultural influence for the rest of the country. In addition to attracting many migrant workers from across China, Shanghai has a strong foreign community primarily consisting of Westerners, Koreans, and Taiwanese. The most commonly spoken languages are Wu and Mandarin Chinese. There is significant diversity in religious traditions and Christians have a rich legacy of proselytism and church growth particularly during the first half of the twentieth century.[41] Shanghai's large, centralized population allows for fewer outreach centers than many other areas of the country, but rising materialism and secularism may significantly reduce receptivity to the Church prior to any formal missionary activity. The Church possesses some of its strongest foreign and native congregations in Shanghai, creating infrastructure of continued growth. The Church organized the Shanghai China International (English) District in 2008 and in 2019 had two English-speaking branches in Shanghai. Outreach among migrant workers in Shanghai may one day facilitate the introduction of the Church into other provinces.

Shanxi

Population: 37,024,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (99.7%), Hui (0.2%), other (0.1%)

Located between Beijing and Xian, Shanxi Province has a Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese population and few large cities.

Mining and agriculture dominate the economy. Despite low levels of economic development, the provincial population has steady increased since 2000. Religious sites are nearly equality divided amongst three groups: Buddhists, Protestants, and Catholics. Low ethnic diversity help simplify outreach efforts, but Shanxi will likely be a low priority due to its few large cities and distance from large cities in neighboring provinces. The Church operates no English-speaking congregations in Shanxi and maintains a minimal presence among PRC citizens in the province.

Sichuan

Population: 83,020,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (93.9%), Yi (3.3%), Tibetan (1.9%), Miao (0.2%), Tujia (0.1%), other (0.6%)

One of the most populous Chinese provinces, Sichuan is located in central China east of Tibet. Sichuan has the strongest and most developed economy in western China given ample natural resources and large labor force. Buddhism is the predominant religion of the region, and approximately 80% of religious sites are Buddhist.[42] The Han Chinese speak the regional dialect of Mandarin Chinese and account for almost the entire population. Yi and Tibetans constitute a small minority and speak their ethnic languages—both of which have no translated Latter-day Saint materials. Sichuan province is of major importance to future outreach in southern and central China due to its large population and location. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints organized one of its first branches for PRC members in Chengdu in the mid-2000s, followed by the creation of the first English branch in Chengdu in 2011. The Church has established a small but strong base of membership and leadership in Sichuan able to support multiple congregations for PRC citizen members.

Tianjin

Population: 15,569,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (97.4%), Hui (1.4%), Manchu (0.6%), Mongol (0.2%), other (0.4%)

China’s fourth most populous city and an important economic center in north China, Tianjin is a municipality with a homogenous Mandarin-speaking Han population and a small Hui minority. The city has played an important role in China’s relationship with Western Europe and North America. As such, it has been the scene of significant Christian missionary activity and anti-Christian riots since the 1800s. There have particularly been tensions between Catholics and government authorities in recent years.[43] The Church has had an English-speaking branch functioning in the city since 1999 and has maintain a branch for PRC Latter-day Saints for approximately one decade. Tianjin will likely require fewer outreach centers and has the potential for self-sustaining church growth due to its centralized population, lack of ethnic and linguistic diversity, and emerging Latter-day Saint community.

Tibet Autonomous Region

Population: 3,371,000 (2018)

Peoples: Tibetan (90.5%), Han (8.2%), Hui (0.4%), other (0.9%)

Occupying the Tibetan Plateau between the Indian subcontinent and central China, Tibet is geographically one of the largest administrative divisions in China but has one of the smallest populations. Tibet is the administrative division in which there is the smallest percentage of Han Chinese. The population is nearly all Tibetan, but Han Chinese have been steadily immigrating due to government efforts to resettle Han Chinese to help better integrate Tibet into China. Throughout most of history, Tibet has

maintained its sovereignty and political affairs as a nation state but with significant influence from Mongolia, China, and Nepal. Tibetans regard the Dalai Lama—the religious and nationalistic head of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism—as a perpetual reincarnation of previous Buddhist sages.

Tibet's rural and relatively religious Buddhist population appears likely to be the most resistant to Latter-day Saint mission outreach in China, along with the Uighur in the northwest, given centuries of resistance to Christian missionaries. There is only one known Christian religious site in Tibet (the Catholic Yanjing Church), and Buddhist religious sites in Tibet constitute 99.8% of known religious sites.[44] Friction between Tibetans and recently immigrated Han Chinese presents difficulties. Ethnic and historic ties with Mongolians, who have been uniquely receptive to church teachings, may be a factor that may result in receptivity and interest. There have been few if any Tibetan Latter-day Saint converts nationwide, and there has never appeared to have been a Latter-day Saint presence in Tibet. Tibetans retain strong ties to their traditional culture and language. The government has also restricted access to Tibet since 2008 for security reasons. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints remains without Tibetan language resources, limiting outreach potential.

Xinjiang

Population: 24,467,000 (2018)

Peoples: Uighur (45.8%), Han (40.5%), Kazakh (6.5%), Hui (4.5%), Kyrgyz (0.8%), Mongol (0.7%), Dongxiang (0.3%), other (0.9%)

Encompassing the far northwestern deserts, basins, and mountains of Western China, Xinjiang is an autonomous region with no ethnic majority populated primarily by Muslim Turkic and Chinese peoples. Religious affiliation and ethnicity are highly correlated. The government has encouraged the immigration of Han Chinese from eastern provinces in order to reduce Uighur separatist tendencies and increase national integration. Han Chinese primarily reside in northern areas near Urumqi. Significant conflict and civil unrest has occurred in recent years between these two groups in Xinjiang and elsewhere. Today Uighurs and Han Chinese each account for over 40% of the population. The remainder of the population consists primarily of Turkic peoples or Muslim Chinese peoples, such as the Hui. With the exception of the Hui, each people speak their respective ethnic languages. Oil and natural gas primarily drive the economy. Islam is the dominant religion in Xinjiang and known Islamic religious sites constitute 99.4% of total known religious sites in the region.[45] Languages in Xinjiang that have Latter-day Saint materials include Chinese, Kazakh, and Mongolian. Future mission efforts among the Muslim-majority will likely encounter the same issues experienced by the Church in other Muslim-majority areas such as proselytizing and conversion restrictions, restricted religious freedom for non-Muslims, and challenges establishing a Latter-day Saint community consisting of former Muslim converts. Outreach conducted in Uighur and Mandarin Chinese can potentially reach at least 86% of the population in their native language. Remote location, sparse population, and long distance from more populated areas will challenge any future outreach. Initial efforts will most likely focus on the largest city, Urumqi. Missionary manpower and kin relationships from Mongolia and Kazakhstan may helpful in reaching non-Han Chinese ethnicities, although such relationships are generally remote. In the late 2000s, there was at least one Uighur convert who resided in Utah. No English-speaking congregations have ever operated in Xinjiang and any Latter-day Saint presence among PRC citizens appears minimal or totally absent.

Yunnan

Population: 48,005,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (66.6%), Yi (11.0%), Hani (3.5%), Bai (3.4%), Dai (2.7%), Zhuang (2.6%), Miao (2.6%), Hui (1.5%), Lisu (1.5%), Tibetan (0.3%), Bouyei (0.1%), other (4.2%)

Located in southern China bordering Burma, Laos, and Vietnam, mountainous Yunnan Province is one of China's most ethnically diverse provinces. Han Chinese account for two-thirds of the population, whereas one-third of the population consists of about twenty-five ethnic groups. The largest non-Han Chinese groups include the Yi, Bai, Han, Zhuang, Dai, and Miao. The region is known for illicit drug trafficking and the spread of HIV/AIDS. There is significant religious diversity in Yunnan, with Daoist religious sites concentrated in Baoshan, Protestant religious sites concentrated in north-central and south-central areas,

Islamic sites clustered in north-central and north-east areas, and Buddhists sites concentrated along the border with Myanmar. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has no materials translated in any languages spoken by non-Han Chinese and has had no past experience proselytizing these ethnic groups. Many of these groups have active Christian adherents. Remote location, lower standards of living than most provinces, and mountainous terrain will further limit future outreach in Yunnan. The Church has a small presence among nonforeigners in Kunming and has had missionaries from the city serve in the United States in recent years.

Zhejiang

Population: 56,570,000 (2018)

Peoples: Han (97.8%), Miao (0.6%), Tujia (0.4%), She (0.3%), Bouyei (0.2%), Dong (0.2%), Zhuang (0.1%), Yi (0.1%), Hui (0.1%), other (0.2%)

Zhejiang Province is located just south of Shanghai, and the homogeneous population consists of Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese. Significant industrial development has occurred in recent years, particularly in port cities. Significant population growth has occurred due to migration. Daoist religious sites are heavily concentrated in the southeast near Wenzhou, and Buddhist sites are heavily clustered in north-eastern areas along the coast. Protestant sites are scattered throughout the province, and Wenzhou especially is known as “China’s Jerusalem” due to its significant Christian presence.[46] Little ethnic and language diversity may facilitate future Latter-day Saint outreach efforts. The Church organized an English-speaking branch for foreigners in 2010 in Hangzhou and operates several congregations for PRC citizens in multiple cities. Close proximity to Shanghai, high standards of living, and a larger Christian community than many other provinces may facilitate future church growth.

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