



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on Church Growth and Missionary Work for
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

May 2026

WELCOME!

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide monthly updates on the growth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and missionary news stories and present a synopsis of recently completed educational resources and research. We are a privately funded initiative that provides resources online without cost. The Cumorah Foundation is not authorized or approved by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or any other group.

CHURCH GROWTH DEVELOPMENTS

New Stakes

(provided with chronological ranking and date of creation)

26. Harare Zimbabwe Kuwadzana - May 3rd, 2026
27. Kinshasa DR Congo Mont Amba - May 9th, 2026
28. Ammon Idaho Centennial Ranch - May 17th, 2026
29. Mount Airy North Carolina - May 17th, 2026
30. Bouafle Cote d'Ivoire - May 24th, 2026
31. Sipsev Alabama - May 17th, 2026
32. Nsukka Nigeria - May 24th, 2026
33. Spruce Grove Alberta - May 24th, 2026
34. Raleigh North Carolina East - May 31st, 2026
35. Gulf of Fonseca Honduras - May 31st, 2026
36. Maputo Mozambique Magoanine - May 31st, 2026
37. Polochic Guatemala - May 31st, 2026

New Districts

8. Wewak Papua New Guinea - May 18th, 2026
9. Kwale Kenya - May 24th, 2026
10. Lukalaba DR Congo - May 31st, 2026

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

Stakes

10. Ashton England
11. Poole England
12. Taichung Taiwan South

Districts

3. Planaltina Brazil
4. Ndola Zambia
5. Sinfra Cote d'Ivoire
6. Monjaras Honduras

Locations Recently Closed by the Church

Cities where the only ward or branch was closed; some of these cities may continue to have a dependent unit and/or missionaries assigned.

- Ulladulla, Australia
- Petrozavodsk, Russia

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

(Locations where the first ward, branch, or member group was recently organized)

- Tori Bossito, Benin
- Ilebo, DR Congo
- Kakona, DR Congo
- Kasasa, DR Congo
- Misamba, DR Congo
- Tshimbulu, DR Congo
- Adama, Ethiopia
- La Sabana, Honduras
- Kangeta, Kenya
- Narok, Kenya
- Zomba, Malawi
- San Jorge, Nicaragua
- Shendam, Nigeria
- Guabo, Panama
- Agrumara, Papua New Guinea
- Krinjambi, Papua New Guinea
- Mundomundo, Papua New Guinea
- Owando, Republic of the Congo
- Yuarma, Papua New Guinea
- Balasan, Philippines
- Princess Urduja, Philippines
- São Tomé, São Tomé and Príncipe

NEWS AND UPDATES

2025 State-by-State Church-Reported Statistics for the United States

Membership Growth

Year-end 2025 state-by-state statistical data for the United States was published by the Church in April 2026. Church membership was essentially flat in 2025, declining by just 186 members nationwide. This indicates that additions to Church membership records were nearly offset by removals, notwithstanding a 17% increase in convert baptisms in North America over 2024. The flat membership total suggests that increases from convert baptisms were approximately offset by losses from deaths, membership record adjustments, and other removals. However, Churchwide statistics do not suggest that 2025 experienced substantially more membership record removals than normal, as the difference between the combined total of children of record and convert baptisms and the net worldwide membership increase was approximately 100,000 for 2025—a figure that primarily reflects deaths and membership record removals, including resignations and administrative record adjustments—and is similar to most years since 2013.

Several long-term demographic and administrative factors likely contributed to the flat membership total. These may include declining birth rates, lower marriage rates among young adults, later ages at marriage, higher divorce rates, an aging membership, longstanding challenges with retaining members into adulthood, and possible efforts during 2025 to update membership records by removing deceased members or unbaptized children of record who had reached age eight.

Regionally, the Church reported its highest annual membership growth rates in the Northeast, Central, and South. In contrast, the highest percentage membership declines were geographically dispersed rather than concentrated in any one region. Likewise, the largest numerical membership losses occurred primarily in western states with historically large Latter-day Saint populations. Readers should also note that the District of Columbia and several states with the highest percentage growth rates have relatively small Church memberships. At year-end 2025, the District of Columbia, Rhode Island, and Delaware each had fewer than 10,000 members.

Although the slight decline in 2025 appears to be an anomaly following gains of more than 60,000 members in both 2023 and 2024, the broader trajectory has been one of steadily slowing growth. During most of the 1990s and 2000s, annual membership gains generally ranged between 90,000 and 100,000 despite the Church having millions fewer members in the United States than today. Annual gains declined to approximately 40,000 by the late 2010s before briefly rebounding after the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2025 figures underscore the extent to which long-term U.S. membership growth has slowed over the past several decades. Whether 2025 proves to be a one-year anomaly or the beginning of a new pattern will likely become clearer as additional state-by-state membership statistics are released over the next several years.

2025 MEMBERSHIP GROWTH BY STATE

Rank	Highest % Growth	Largest Net Increase	Highest % Decline	Largest Net Decline
1	District of Columbia (+9.32%)	Texas (+3,564)	Mississippi (-1.79%)	Washington (-3,690)
2	Rhode Island (+3.37%)	Florida (+2,165)	New Hampshire (-1.58%)	California (-2,991)
3	Delaware (+2.61%)	Idaho (+1,856)	Oregon (-1.56%)	Arizona (-2,695)
4	Massachusetts (+2.08%)	New York (+1,499)	Washington (-1.31%)	Oregon (-2,354)
5	Tennessee (+1.85%)	Utah (+1,236)	Wyoming (-1.26%)	Nevada (-1,255)
6	New York (+1.65%)	Tennessee (+1,126)	Alaska (-1.22%)	Wyoming (-853)
7	Arkansas (+1.36%)	Missouri (+1,098)	New Mexico (-1.08%)	Colorado (-777)
8	Missouri (+1.32%)	North Carolina (+830)	Maine (-0.96%)	New Mexico (-752)
9	Florida (+1.23%)	Massachusetts (+601)	Montana (-0.76%)	Hawaii (-530)
10	Texas (+0.91%)	Arkansas (+511)	North Dakota (-0.75%)	Alaska (-413)

Congregational Growth

Despite virtually no net change in Church membership in the United States during 2025, the Church reported a net increase of 63 congregations, increasing from 14,578 to 14,641, or 0.43%. Congregational growth rates were highest in South Carolina (+7.23%), Tennessee (+4.31%), Oklahoma (+4.26%), Arkansas (+3.95%), and Idaho (+3.85%). Idaho nevertheless accounted for the vast majority of net congregational growth, adding 49 congregations and comprising nearly 78% of the net increase nationwide. Florida reported the second-largest numerical increase with nine new congregations, followed by South Carolina (+6), while Colorado, Montana, and Tennessee each added five.

The 2025 congregational data indicate that organizational growth continued despite essentially flat membership totals, although growth was highly concentrated in a relatively small number of states. The strongest percentage increases occurred primarily in the South and Idaho, whereas the largest numerical increases were led overwhelmingly by Idaho. Congregational declines were most pronounced in Vermont (-10.00%), Maine (-3.70%), Oregon (-3.14%), South Dakota (-3.13%), and Louisiana (-1.89%), although most of these states had relatively few congregations and correspondingly small numerical losses. In terms of raw numbers, the largest declines occurred in Utah (-21), California (-14), Arizona (-12), and Oregon (-9). Thus, while percentage declines were highest in smaller states, the largest numerical decreases occurred primarily in western states with historically large Latter-day Saint populations.

A closer examination of congregational changes indicates that most organizational growth occurred through the creation of wards rather than branches. Nationwide, the Church added 55 wards compared to just eight branches, with wards accounting for nearly 90% of the net increase in congregations. Moreover, several states with the strongest organizational growth—including Idaho and Texas—reported increases in wards while simultaneously reducing the number of branches. These trends suggest that congregational growth in many areas was accompanied by the maturation of existing Church organization, as many branches were converted into wards rather than simply increasing the total number of congregations. During the past 15 years, growth in the number of branches has remained essentially flat, whereas nearly all net congregational growth has resulted from the creation of additional wards. Based on tracking of newly organized congregations, many new branches in the United States are language-specific units, including Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Swahili, and other language congregations. Many of these branches later mature into wards as local membership and leadership develop, contributing to the long-term increase in the number of wards.

Historical congregational data indicate that organizational growth has slowed substantially over the past four decades. Because Church statistical reports were published every two years prior to 1999, annualized rates of congregational growth are used for comparison. During the late 1980s and 1990s, the Church added an average of approximately 220 congregations annually in the United States. The net increase in the total number of congregations decreased to approximately 216 per year during the 2000s and approximately 99 per year during

the 2010s. Since year-end 2020, net congregational growth has averaged only about 36 congregations annually. Nevertheless, the increase of 63 congregations in 2025 represented an improvement over the modest net declines reported in 2022–2024. Despite essentially flat membership growth during 2025, the continued addition of congregations suggests that the Church remains engaged in gradual organizational expansion in many areas of the United States, particularly where increasing active membership, leadership development, improving local accessibility to Church services, and language-specific outreach warrant the organization of additional congregations.

2025 CONGREGATIONAL GROWTH BY STATE

Rank	Highest % Congregational Growth	Largest Net Congregational Increase	Highest % Congregational Decline	Largest Net Congregational Decline
1	South Carolina (+7.23%)	Idaho (+49)	Vermont (-10.00%)	Utah (-21)
2	Tennessee (+4.31%)	Florida (+9)	Maine (-3.70%)	California (-14)
3	Oklahoma (+4.26%)	South Carolina (+6)	Oregon (-3.14%)	Arizona (-12)
4	Arkansas (+3.95%)	Colorado (+5)	South Dakota (-3.13%)	Oregon (-9)
5	Idaho (+3.85%)	Montana (+5)	Louisiana (-1.89%)	New York (-2)
6	Montana (+3.70%)	Tennessee (+5)	New York (-1.37%)	Louisiana (-1)
7	Florida (+3.24%)	Hawaii (+4)	Arizona (-1.33%)	Maine (-1)
8	Ohio (+3.13%)	Missouri (+4)	California (-1.27%)	South Dakota (-1)
9	Hawaii (+2.82%)	North Carolina (+4)	Virginia (-0.47%)	Vermont (-1)
10	Alabama (+2.74%)	Ohio (+4)	Utah (-0.39%)	Virginia (-1)

Stake Growth

Despite essentially flat membership growth during 2025, the Church reported a net increase of 33 stakes in the United States, increasing from 1,709 to 1,742, or 1.93%. This represented one of the strongest years for stake growth in more than two decades. Utah accounted for the largest numerical increase with seven new stakes, followed by Idaho (+5), Missouri (+3), and Virginia (+3). Arizona, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas each added two stakes, whereas Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Kansas, Maine, Montana, South Carolina, and Washington each added one. California was the only state to experience a net decline in stakes, decreasing by two.

Percentage increases in the number of stakes were highest in Maine (+50.00%), Oklahoma (+18.18%), Tennessee (+16.67%), Missouri (+15.79%), Arkansas (+14.29%), Kansas (+14.29%), Virginia (+13.64%), South Carolina (+10.00%), Montana (+7.69%), and Hawaii (+6.25%). Most of these states had relatively few stakes, so the organization of a single additional stake produced a comparatively large percentage increase. Unlike membership and congregational growth, stake growth was geographically widespread and almost entirely positive, with only one state reporting a net decline. These data suggest that the Church continued to strengthen its organizational structure in many areas of the United States despite little overall change in national membership during 2025. Moreover, these findings further support a decreasing number of congregations assigned per stake. The average number of wards per stake in the United States steadily increased from 6.73 in 1987 to a peak of 7.90 in 2013. Since then, however, the trend has reversed, declining to 7.36 in 2025. This suggests that stake organization has recently outpaced ward growth, resulting in somewhat smaller stakes on average than were typical a decade ago.

Historical stake data indicate a different long-term pattern than congregational growth. Because Church statistical reports were published every two years prior to 1999, annualized rates of stake growth are used for comparison. During the late 1980s and 1990s, the Church organized an average of approximately 15-16 new stakes annually. Annual stake growth averaged 16 per year during the 2000s and 19 per year during the 2010s.

Since year-end 2020, net stake growth has averaged approximately 16-17 stakes annually, indicating that stake organization has remained comparatively stable despite a substantial slowdown in membership and congregational growth. The organization of 33 new stakes during 2025 represented the second-largest annual increase since 2000 and suggests that the Church has continued to strengthen its organizational structure by creating additional stakes even as overall membership growth has slowed.

2025 STAKE GROWTH BY STATE

Rank	Highest % Stake Growth	Largest Net Stake Increase	Highest % Stake Decline	Largest Net Stake Decline
1	Maine (+50.00%)	Utah (+7)	California* (-1.36%)	California* (-2)
2	Oklahoma (+18.18%)	Idaho (+5)	—	—
3	Tennessee (+16.67%)	Missouri (+3)	—	—
4	Missouri (+15.79%)	Virginia (+3)	—	—
5	Arkansas (+14.29%)	Arizona (+2)	—	—
6	Kansas (+14.29%)	Oklahoma (+2)	—	—
7	Virginia (+13.64%)	Tennessee (+2)	—	—
8	South Carolina (+10.00%)	Texas (+2)	—	—
9	Montana (+7.69%)	Arkansas (+1)	—	—
10	Hawaii (+6.25%)	Colorado (+1)	—	—

**No other state reported a decline in the number of stakes*

Taken together, the 2025 data indicate that although membership growth in the United States was essentially flat, the Church continued to expand its organizational structure through the creation of additional congregations and stakes. See the end of the newsletter for graphs and charts displaying these data.

Additional Noteworthy Growth Developments in May 2026

Seychelles Assigned to the Kenya Nairobi East Mission

The Seychellois Creole-speaking African island nation of Seychelles (population: 123,000) was recently assigned to a mission for the first time. Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles visited Seychelles in October 2025 and met with a small group of Latter-day Saints in the capital city of Victoria who appear to operate as a member group, now under the supervision of the Kenya Nairobi East Dispersed Members Unit—what was previously the mission branch for the Kenya Nairobi Mission. Prospects for rapid Church growth appear limited based on trends in other developed island nations and French-speaking departments in the Indian Ocean, such as Mauritius and Réunion, where growth has generally been modest over the past several decades. Translation of Church materials into Seychellois Creole—a French-based creole language—may also be an important factor for future missionary efforts.

First Branch Organized in São Tomé and Príncipe

The Church organized its first official branch in the Portuguese-speaking African island nation of São Tomé and Príncipe (population: 210,000) in May of 2026. The São Tomé Branch was organized under the Angola Luanda Mission and includes the capital city of São Tomé and surrounding communities. Most of the country remains under the administration of the Angola Luanda Dispersed Members Unit. The Angola Luanda Mission has overseen missionary efforts in São Tomé and Príncipe since the mission's creation in 2013. In March 2015, the mission president visited the country, met with isolated members, and conducted a sacrament meeting. In 2017, the first known Latter-day Saint from São Tomé and Príncipe began missionary service in the Cape Verde Praia Mission. Progress accelerated in 2025 when the first full-time missionaries were assigned to the country. Later that year, Elder Ronald A. Rasband dedicated the nation for missionary work, the first convert baptisms were performed, and the Church organized a member group.

Temple Announced for Otavalo, Ecuador

The Church announced plans to construct a new temple in Otavalo, Ecuador, on May 14th. The new temple is the Church's third temple in Ecuador and will likely serve the four stakes in the Otavalo/Ibarra area and one stake and one district in southern Colombia. Otavalo has long been regarded as one of the strongest areas for the Church in Ecuador due to its high member activity rates, mature local leadership, and unusually high proportion of Latter-day Saints in the general population (estimated at approximately 10% during the early 2010s). The Otavalo people have been uniquely receptive to the Latter-day Saint missionary efforts since the earliest days of the Church in Ecuador. Additional information about the Church's growth among the Otavalo Quichua people can be found [here](#).

New Resource

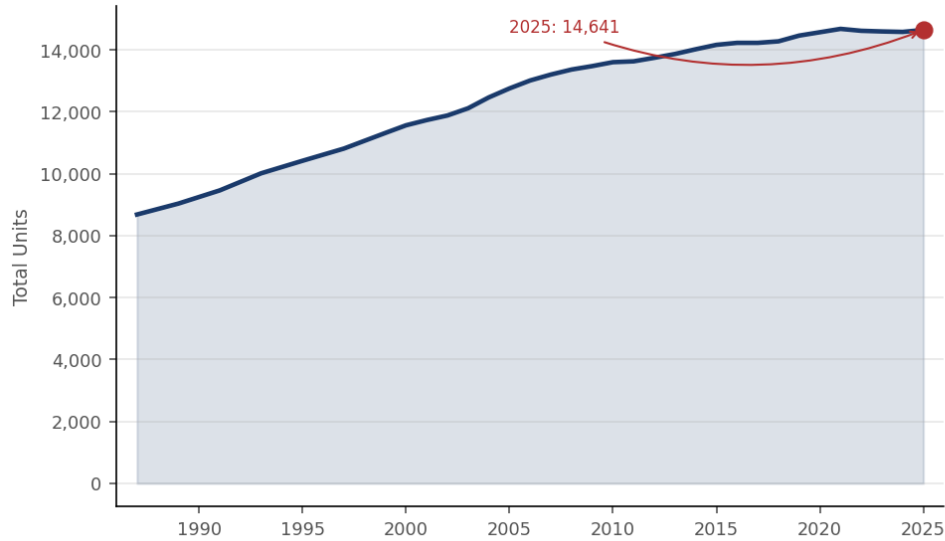
Comprehensive Historical U.S. Church Statistics Database Completed

The Cumorah Foundation recently completed a comprehensive historical database of state-by-state Church statistics for the United States. The database includes annual membership totals, congregations (with ward and branch breakdowns when available), stakes, districts, and missions for all 50 states and the District of Columbia, with data spanning nearly four decades. Compiled from the retired *Deseret News Church Almanac* series and the Church's official Newsroom website, the database also includes reconstructed ward and branch totals for 2012–2017 based on individual unit creations, consolidations, and closures. To our knowledge, this is the most comprehensive publicly available historical database of Church statistics for the United States ever assembled. It provides a valuable resource for researchers, historians, journalists, and Church members interested in analyzing long-term trends in Church growth and organizational development. The database is available for viewing in Google Sheets and may also be downloaded in Microsoft Excel format. Access the database [here](#).

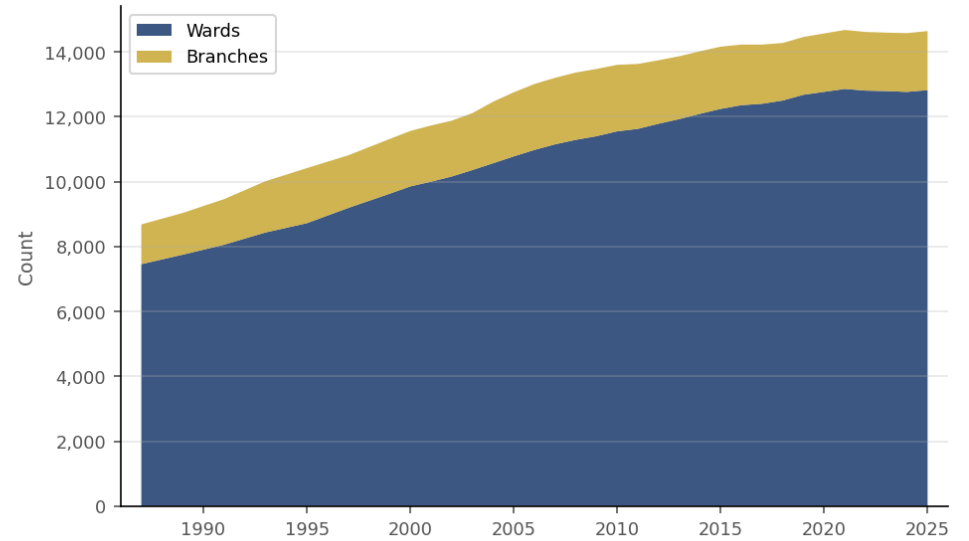


The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints U.S. Organizational Growth - Congregations & Stakes, 1987-2025

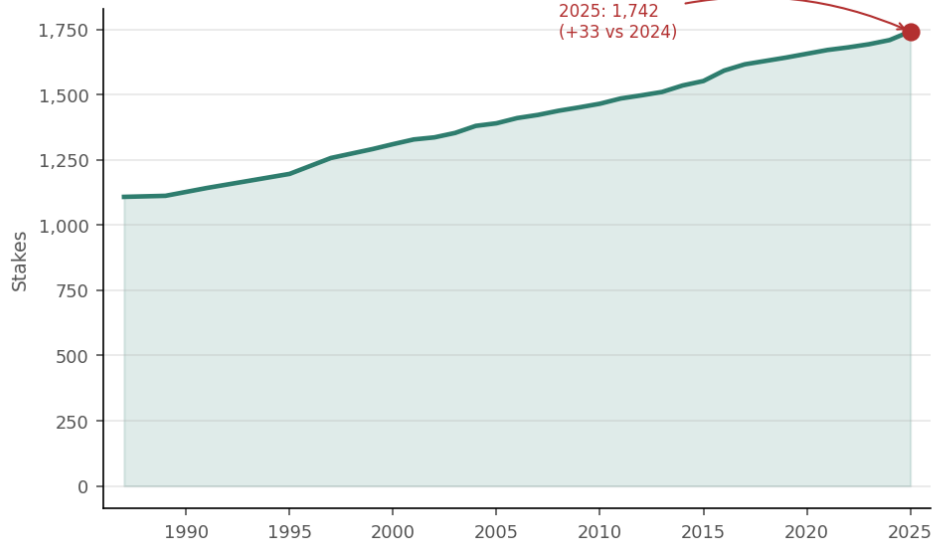
A. Total Congregations (Units)



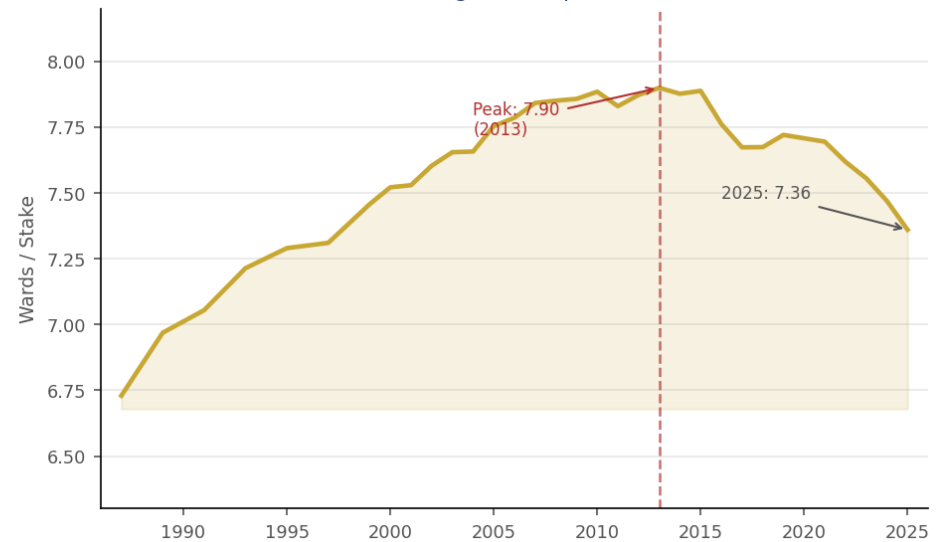
B. Wards vs. Branches



C. Total Stakes

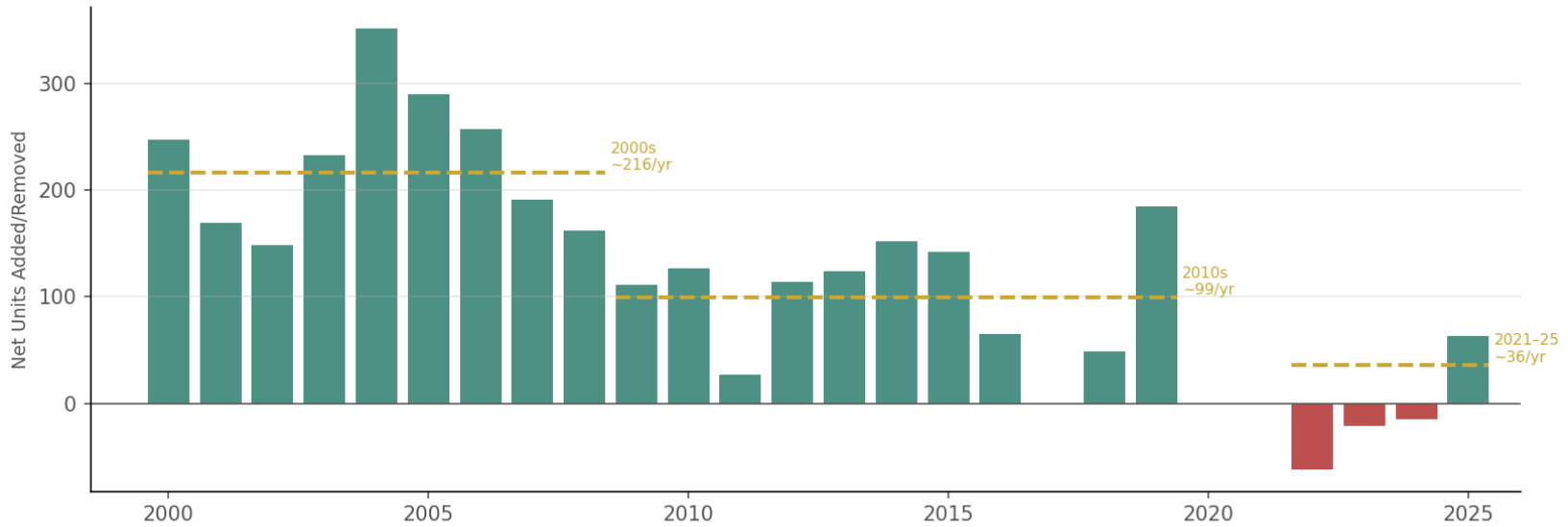


D. Average Wards per Stake



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints U.S. Annual Congregational & Stake Growth, 2000-2025

A. Annual Net Congregational Change



B. Annual Net Stake Change

