



# THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

April 2015

## WELCOME!

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide monthly updates on LDS Church growth 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)

10. Yamoussoukro Cote d'Ivoire - April 12th, 2015
11. Playa del Carmen México - April 26th, 2015
12. Taichung Taiwan South - April 26th, 2015

### New Districts

7. Bratislava Slovakia - March 29th, 2015
8. Lilongwe Malawi - March 29th, 2015
9. Daloa Cote d'Ivoire - April 12th, 2015

### Discontinued Stakes and Districts

2. Seoul Korea Gangseo Stake
2. Trenque Lauquen Argentina District
3. Mildura Australia

### Locations Recently Reached by the Church

(city population rank, most recent population estimate)  
precise population data from [www.citypopulation.de](http://www.citypopulation.de)

- Traralgon, Australia (52<sup>nd</sup>, 21,960)
- Baixo Guandú, Espirito Santo, Brazil (24<sup>th</sup>, 20,972)
- Barra Velha, Santa Catarina, Brazil (53<sup>rd</sup>, 21,320)
- São Lourenço da Serra, Sao Paulo, Brazil (321<sup>st</sup>, 12,719)
- Granby, Quebec, Canada (10<sup>th</sup>, 56,984)
- Bondoukou, Cote d'Ivoire (23<sup>rd</sup>, 58,297)
- Aseibu, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Osiem, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Juriquilla, Queretaro, Mexico (11<sup>th</sup>, 13,309)
- Efa, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Minoyan, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Chingshui, Taiwan (N/A, N/A)

### 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.*  
(city population rank, most recent population estimate)  
data from [www.citypopulation.de](http://www.citypopulation.de)

- Ajjaria Grande, Bolivia (N/A, N/A)
- Warisata, Bolivia (N/A, N/A)
- Golden, British Columbia, Canada (54<sup>th</sup>, 3,811)
- Horlivka, Ukraine (22<sup>nd</sup>, 263,647)

### Three New Temples Announced

The Church announced that three new temples will be constructed in the following locations:

- Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire
- Port-au-Prince, Haiti
- Bangkok, Thailand

The announcement of the new temples increases the total number of temples announced, under construction, or in operation to 173. All three of the nations where these three new temples will be constructed previously numbered among the 10 nations with the most Latter-day Saints without a temple.

### New Mission to Service the Turkic Nations

In an unprecedented announcement, the Church disclosed in mid-April plans to organize a new mission in mid-2015 to administer over 150 million people who reside in the Turkic nations of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Asia Minor. The Central Eurasian Mission will be headquartered from Istanbul, Turkey and include Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The new mission may also include Turkmenistan. Predominantly Muslim Turkic peoples constitute the majority of each of the nations within the new mission. The Church currently maintains a full-time missionary presence and an official presence

in only two of these nations (Kazakhstan and Turkey). All nations without an LDS presence in the new mission experience significant governmental restrictions on religious freedom that present serious challenges to establish the Church and assign missionaries. Additionally, the Church has yet to translate materials into the most commonly spoken indigenous languages of most of these nations. However, the decision to organize the new mission represents one of the most proactive instances of the Church in recent memory in laying the groundwork to expand its presence into vast unreached areas of Asia.

### First LDS District Created in Slovakia

The Church organized its first district in Slovakia on March 29th from a division of the Brno Czech District. The new district is headquartered in Bratislava and services the entire country of Slovakia. Four branches and two or three member groups operate within the new district. The organization of the new district is a major milestone for the Church in establishing Slovakian church leadership and laying the foundation for future growth.



### Second LDS District Created in Malawi

The Church organized its second district in Malawi on March 29th. The Lilongwe Malawi District was organized from four mission branches in the Zambia Lusaka Mission. Missionaries report that there are plans for additional branches to be organized in the Lilongwe area within the near future. The Church reestablished a branch in Lilongwe in 2007. Missionaries reported that 425 people attended the special conference to create the new district.



### Rapid Growth in Recently Reached City in Brazil

Missionaries serving in the Araripina Group in Pernambuco State report rapid growth. The group had 86 people attend church on a recent Sunday and paperwork has been submitted for the group to become a branch in the Juaziero Brazil District. The Brazil Area has numbered among the most successful and proactive administrative areas in the Church in opening new cities to missionary work. The Church in Brazil reached the milestone of 2,000 official congregations (wards and branches) in March. Brazil is the third country to reach the 2,000 congregation milestone.

### LDS Growth Developments in Cote d'Ivoire

The Church organized its first stake in Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) outside of the most populous city of Abidjan. The new stake was created in Yamoussoukro from the Yamoussoukro Cote d'Ivoire District. A new district was also organized the same day in nearby Daloa - a city where the Church organized its first six branches just last year. The Church also recently organized its first branch in Bondoukou. Bondoukou is the fourth city in Cote d'Ivoire to have its first LDS branch organized within the past four months and is the most remote city in the country with an official LDS congregation.



### City in Madagascar Receives Its First LDS Branch

The Church recently organized its first branch in the city of Moramanga, Madagascar. A member group operated in the city for several years prior to the organization of the new branch. Although the previous mission president made significant strides in expanding missionary work into previously unreached locations in Madagascar, the current mission president has taken a more conservative approach to growth and has focused on advancing districts to stakes. The advancement of the member group to a branch has appeared only possible due to progress in local leadership development.



### Stake Discontinued in South Korea

The Church reorganized wards and stakes on the western side of Seoul, South Korea in late April due to few active members in many of the wards and dwindling numbers of wards in individual stakes over the years. The Church discontinued the Seoul Korea Gangseo Stake and retained wards were reassigned to the Seoul Korea West Stake (formerly called the Incheon Korea Stake). The Church in South Korea experiences some of the lowest member activity rates in the world for the LDS Church primarily due to rushed prebaptismal preparation, many youth who joined the Church decades ago who quickly became inactive after baptism, and many active Latter-day Saint families moving out of the country over the years.



# NEW RESOURCES

## CASE STUDIES

### Analysis of LDS Growth in San Jose, Costa Rica

San Jose is the national capital and most populous metropolitan area in Costa Rica. Although several notable church growth developments have occurred within the past six decades, the Church in San Jose has a more limited presence than other major metropolitan areas in Central America. This case study reviews the history of the Church in San Jose. Church growth successes are discussed. Opportunities and challenges for future growth are analyzed. LDS growth in other major Central American metropolitan areas is compared to LDS growth in San Jose. The size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups that operate in San Jose are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

### Opportunities for LDS Outreach Expansion in Togo

Togo is inhabited by 7.4 million people and located in West Africa. The LDS Church in Togo has experienced rapid membership and congregational growth within the past decade. However, LDS missionary activity and the operation of congregations remain restricted to the capital city of Lome. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Togo. Recent church growth and missionary successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for future growth are explored. The growth of the Church in nearby West African nations is compared to the growth of the Church in Togo. The size and growth trends of other Christian groups that operate in Togo are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

### Opportunities for LDS Outreach Expansion in Cameroon

Cameroon is located in Central Africa and supports a population of 23.1 million. The Church in Cameroon currently experiences excellent opportunities to open additional locations in the country to missionary work and further saturate the two most populous cities due to the population exhibiting high receptivity to LDS outreach. This case study reviews the history of the Church's national outreach expansion efforts in Cameroon and identifies recent outreach expansion successes. An overview of the "Sunyani Model" for opening previously unreached cities in West Africa to missionary work is provided. Opportunities and challenges for opening additional areas of the country to missionaries are analyzed. Trends in outreach expansion and church growth in Cameroon are compared to other Central African countries with an LDS presence. The growth and size of other proselytizing Christian groups that operate in Cameroon is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and the outlook for church growth and national outreach expansion is predicted.

### Prospective LDS Outreach among the Gujarati People of India

Numbering over 50 million, the Gujarati are an Indo-Aryan people native to Gujarat State, India who traditionally speak the Gujarati language. The LDS Church maintains no presence within the Gujarati homelands and appears to have few, if any, Gujarati members worldwide. This case study reviews opportunities and challenges for future growth. The growth of the Church among other major peoples in India is reviewed and the size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups with a presence among the Gujarati is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

### Opportunities for LDS Growth in the Northern DR Congo

Landlocked in Central Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or DR Congo, is inhabited by 77.4 million people. No official LDS congregations have operated in the northern DR Congo until the organization of the Kisangani Branch in March 2015. The Church has excellent opportunities for growth in the northern DR Congo that have yet to be realized. This case study reviews the history of the Church in the northern DR Congo. Recent church growth and missionary successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for future growth are explored. The growth of the Church in other locations in the DR Congo is reviewed. The size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups that operate in the DR Congo are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

### Prospective LDS Outreach among the Tiv People of Nigeria

The Tiv are a black African people who traditionally reside in northeastern Nigeria. The LDS Church maintains no presence within the Tiv homelands and appears to have few, if any, Tiv members despite a large target population that is predominantly Christian. This case study reviews opportunities and challenges for future growth. The growth of the Church among other major peoples in Nigeria is reviewed and the size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups with a presence among the Tiv is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

### Stagnant LDS Growth in Serbia

Serbia is located in southeastern Europe and has a population of 7.2 million people. The LDS Church in Serbia has experienced stagnant growth since the late-1990s. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Serbia. Past church growth successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for future growth are examined. The size and growth of the LDS Church in other nearby European nations is reviewed. The size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups in Serbia is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

# UPDATED RESOURCES

## CASE STUDIES

### [The Opening of Tamale, Ghana to Missionary Work](#)

Tamale is a major city in northern Ghana and is the regional capital of the Northern Region. This case study reviews the recent establishment of an LDS missionary presence in Tamale and identifies successes, opportunities, and challenges for future growth. The opening of Tamale to missionary work is compared to the opening of other cities in Ghana to missionary work. The size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups in the Tamale area is summarized. Limitations to this case study are discussed and prospects for future growth are summarized.

## STATISTICAL PROFILES

We updated all country profiles to reflect year-end 2014 data available through [mormonnewsroom.org](http://mormonnewsroom.org). Click [here](#) to view the country page on [cumorah.com](http://cumorah.com) to access the statistical profiles.