



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

August 2017

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)

- 37. Eagle Mountain Utah Nolen Park - Aug. 27th, 2017
- 38. Lethbridge Alberta YSA - August 27th, 2017

New Districts

- 15. Ladysmith South Africa - July 30th, 2017
- 16. Mauritius - July 30th, 2017
- 17. Phuthaditjhaba South Africa - August 13th, 2017

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

No discontinued stakes or districts reported in August 2017

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

(city population rank, most recent population estimate)
precise population data from www.citypopulation.de

- Van Buren, Arkansas (22nd, 22,791)
- Monte Carmelo, Minas Gerais, Brazil (75th, 40,100)
- Luzimangues, Tocantins, Brazil (127th, 1,224)
- Mahapleu, Cote d'Ivoire (N/A, 14,921)
- Denkyira, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Akpabuyo, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Amamong, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Ogbomosho, Nigeria (28th, 405,000)

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

- Yakutat, Alaska (96th, 662)
- Den Helder, Netherlands (61st, 57,207)

Nepali Translation of the Book of Mormon Completed; LDS Apostle Visits Nepal

The Church has published the translation of the Book of Mormon into the Nepali language after the initial project began seven



years ago. Nepali is the 111th translation of the Book of Mormon. The translation is available to view online [here](#). Moreover, print copies of the Nepali translation of the Book of Mormon were recently delivered to members in Nepal when LDS apostle Elder D. Todd Christofferson met with members in Kathmandu. Elder Christofferson also met with the president of Nepal during his trip. With over 15 million native speakers, and millions of additional second language speakers, Nepali was previously among languages with the most speakers without a translation of the Book of Mormon. The Church operates only two Nepali-speaking branches worldwide: the Kathmandu Branch in Kathmandu, Nepal, and the Crossroads Square Branch in Salt Lake City, Utah. However, there are hundreds of Nepali-speaking members who reside in other congregations.

First LDS District in Mauritius Organized

The Church organized its first district in Mauritius in late July. Located in the Indian Ocean east of Madagascar, Mauritius has a predominantly Indian population of 1.3 million people. There are three branches and 512 members in Mauritius. The country is assigned to the Madagascar Antananarivo Mission.



New Branch in Koidu, Sierra Leone

The Church organized its first official branch in Koidu, Sierra Leone during the month of August. The organization of the new branch occurred shortly after the first full-time missionaries were assigned to the city. Koidu was previously the fourth most populous city in Sierra Leone without an LDS presence.



Progress in Lesotho and South Africa

The South Africa Durban Mission reported several significant church growth developments during the past couple months. During August, the Church organized two new branches in Maseru, Lesotho - the Thetsane Branch and the Khubetsoana Branch. There are now five branches in Lesotho. Additionally, two new districts were organized during July and August, namely the Ladysmith South Africa District and the Phuthaditjhaba South Africa District. The mission also reported that the Book of Mormon is currently being translated into the Sesotho language.



Third Branch Created in St Vincent and the Grenadines

Yesterday the Church organized its third branch in the Caribbean nation of St Vincent and the Grenadines. The new branch was organized in the third most populous town of Georgetown. A member group previously operated in Georgetown since as early as 2013. The last time a new branch was created in St. Vincent and the Grenadines was in 2006. The Church reported 653 members in St. Vincent and Grenadines at year-end 2016. The country pertains to the recently organized Barbados Bridgetown Mission.



2015 Philippine Census Numbers

The 2015 Philippine census reported 196,303 Latter-day Saints, or 27% of LDS membership as of year-end 2015. The results of the 2015 Philippine census indicate that the highest percentages of self-identified Latter-day Saints are located in Bacolod City (0.76%), Zambales (0.73%), and Ilocos Norte (0.65%). Among administrative divisions with self-reported Latter-day Saints, Basilan, Lanao del Sur, and Romblon have the lowest percentage of Latter-day Saints (less than 0.01%). There were no self-affiliated Latter-day Saints in Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, City of Isabela, or Batanes on the 2015 census. The Church's nationwide member activity rate in the Philippines is approximately 20-25%. Sacrament meeting attendance has also significantly increased in the Philippines during the past five years by approximately 30,000.



New Branch in Albania

The Church in Albania organized the Korçë Branch during August. The Church has reported frequent convert baptisms, especially among youth, in the recently opened cities of Korçë and Pogradec. Moreover, both of these cities have vibrant youth and seminary/institute programs. The last city in Albania to have had a branch organized in it for the first time was Berat in January 2016. Albania has been the only country in Southeast Europe to have experienced measurable "real growth" in the Church during the past decade. There are now approximately 2,900 members, six wards, and seven branches in Albania.



2009 Finland Census Numbers



We recently obtained information from the 2009 Finland census in regards to the number of self-identified Latter-day Saints in the country. The 2009 census reported 3,239 Latter-day Saints in Finland, or 71% of church-reported membership at the time. This is one of the highest percentages in the world of church-reported membership self-affiliating on a government census. We estimate that approximately 35-40% of church-reported membership regularly attend church in Finland.

NEW RESOURCES

Recent LDS Growth Developments in Mali

Inhabited by 17.5 million people, Mali is a landlocked country in West Africa whose population is predominantly Muslim (94.8%) with small numbers of Christians (2.4%) and followers of indigenous beliefs (2.0%). French is the official language and four indigenous languages are spoken by more than one million people, including Bambara, Fulani languages, Dogon languages, and Soninke. Muslims comprise approximately 95% or more of the population of two of these ethnolinguistic groups (Soninke and Fulani).

Several significant LDS growth developments have recently occurred in Mali such as government registration, the organization of the first official branch, and plans to assign full-time missionaries. This case study reviews the Church's history in administrating Mali. Recent LDS growth developments in Mali are summarized. Translations of basic proselytism materials in indigenous languages are identified. Opportunities for expanding an official LDS presence and achieving growth are explored. Challenges for growth are discussed. The growth of other proselytizing Christian groups that operate in Mali is summarized. Limitations to this case study are described and prospects for an LDS establishment in Mali is predicted.

Recent LDS Growth Developments in Guinea

Inhabited by 12.1 million people, Guinea is a country located in West Africa supporting a population that is 87% Muslim, 9% Christian, and 4% followers of indigenous religions. Conakry is the capital of Guinea and had an estimated population of 2.3 million people as of January 2017. French is the official language and there are two indigenous African languages spoken by more than one million people (Eastern Maninkakan and Pular).

Several significant LDS growth developments have recently occurred in Guinea. Notable examples include the first visit to the country by an LDS apostle, the organization of the first branch, and the assignment of the first full-time missionaries. This case study reviews the Church's history in Guinea. Recent LDS growth developments in Guinea are summarized. Translations of basic proselytism materials in indigenous languages are identified. Opportunities for expanding an official LDS presence and achieving growth are explored. Challenges for growth are discussed. The growth of other proselytizing Christian groups that operate in Guinea is summarized. Limitations to this case study are described and prospects for an LDS establishment in Guinea is predicted.

Rapid Congregational Growth Continues in Nigeria



The Church in Nigeria continues to report rapid congregational growth. One of the most significant developments during August was the organization of the first branch in the city of Ogbomoso. Inhabited by over 400,000 people, Ogbomoso was previously the seventh most populous metropolitan area in Nigeria without an official LDS presence.

There have now been 63 new wards and branches created in Nigeria during 2017 – the largest increase in the number of congregations of any country (with the exception of the United States) since the Church in the Philippines reported an increase of 106 congregations during the year 2000.

2016 Australian Census

The 2016 Australian Census reported 60,864 Latter-day Saints - approximately 41% of church-reported membership in Australia in 2016. To contrast, the number of Latter-day Saints reported by the 2006 Australian census constituted 45% of church-reported membership at the time. We estimate that 25-30% of church-reported membership in Australia regularly attend church.

