



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

DECEMBER 2012

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)

58. Cartagena Spain - 12/2/2012
59. Freetown Sierra Leone - 12/2/2012
60. La Plata Argentina South - 12/2/2012
61. Madrid Spain Centro - 12/2/2012
62. Bacoor Philippines - 12/9/2012
63. Carigara Philippines - 12/9/2012
64. Choluteca Honduras Porvenir - 12/16/2012
65. Kinshasa DR Congo Mokali - 12/16/2012

New Districts

No new districts created in December 2012

Cities Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Aimogasta, Argentina (N/A, 10,418)
- Primavera do Leste, MT, Brazil (11th, 49,271)
- Veliko Tŕrnovo, Bulgaria (16th, 68,783)
- Meagui, Cote d'Ivoire (N/A, N/A)
- Shama, Ghana (61st, 23,298)
- Batam, Indonesia (16th, 587,227)
- Swakopmund, Namibia (5th, 25,047)
- Orlu, Nigeria (N/A, 142,792)
- San Juan, Zambales, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Taugtog, Zambales, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Feldioara, Romania (N/A, 5,685)
- Berdsk, Russia (N/A, 98,809)
- Rota, Spain (N/A, 29,169)
- Penal, Trinidad and Tobago (10th, 12,281)
- Lugazi, Uganda (28th, 34,500)
- Uzhorod, Ukraine (39th, 116,456)

Cities Recently Closed by the Church*

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

- *None reported in December 2012*

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

Church Reaches 3,000th Stake Milestone

On December 2nd, the Church created its 3,000th stake. Reaching the 3,000th stake milestone in 2012 was possible due to a recent acceleration in stake growth in the early 2010s after a slowdown in stake growth in the 2000s. The reduced number of new stakes created in the 2000s compared to the previous two decades and increasing numbers of stake consolidations resulted in it taking more time to grow from 2,000 to 3,000 stakes (18 years) than to grow from 1,000 to 2,000 stakes (15 years). In 2011 and 2012, the Church created 60 or more stakes per year; the highest numbers since 1998. Based on recent growth rates of the number of stakes increasing by approximately 50 a year, the Church will likely reach the 4,000th stake milestone in the early 2030s. The Church reached its 1,000th stake milestone in 1979 and its 2,000 stake milestone in 1994.

Church Experiences Acceleration of Stake Growth in 2012

2012 was a significant year for stake growth. The Church organized more new stakes in 2012 than in any year since 1998. 65 new stakes were organized in 34 countries and territories. No other year in Church history has had as many countries have a new stake created in a single year as in 2012. In recent years, the Church has generally created at least one new stake in approximately 16 countries a year. The Church also created its first stake in more countries in 2012 than any

year since 1977 as the first stakes were organized in Botswana, Cape Verde, India, New Caledonia, and Sierra Leone.

First LDS Stake Created in Sierra Leone

On December 2nd, the Church created its first stake in Sierra Leone. Created from the Freetown Sierra Leone District, the new stake consists of eight wards (Belliar Park, Congo Cross, Dwarzak, Freetown, Goderich, Hill Station, Lumley and Mount Aureol) that operate on the west side of the city and includes approximately 2,250 members.¹ The creation of the new stake is particularly impressive considering the Church divided the original Freetown Sierra Leone District a year ago to create a separate district for the eastern side of Freetown where seven branches continue to operate. The Church has had an official presence in Sierra Leone since 1988 and created a separate mission headquartered in Sierra Leone in 2007. There are now three districts, one stake, and over 10,000 members in the country. A map of LDS units in Sierra Leone can be found [here](#).



First LDS Branch Created in Gabon

In mid-December, the Church created its first official branch in the Central African country of Gabon. Latter-day Saints have resided in Gabon for approximately three decades although no official presence had been established until this year due to difficulties obtaining government recognition. A local African member was called to serve as branch president of the newly organized Libreville Branch which has only a couple dozen attending church services. Missionaries report plans to assign the first proselytizing missionaries to Gabon sometime in the coming months.



Church Growth Developments in Rwanda

Missionaries serving in the Uganda Kampala Mission report that three Rwandan members just began their missions. The Church called its first member from Rwanda on a mission earlier this year. All four full-time missionaries from Rwanda are currently serving missions in other countries in Africa. The Church also recently assigned its first proselytizing missionaries to Rwanda and created a second branch in the country, the Kigali 2nd Branch. At year-end 2011, there were 90 members on church records in Rwanda.

Updated LDS Membership by Language Use Figures Released on Ids.org

A recently posted infographic on Ids.org provides an updated list of the 10 most spoken languages of nominal LDS membership. These languages include English (6.481 million), Spanish (4.567 million), Portuguese (1.188 million), Tagalog (206,000), Cebuano (161,000), Ilokano (127,000), Japanese (122,000), Samoan (117,000), Tongan (95,000), and French (94,000). In this most recent list, French overtook Korean as the language with the tenth most speakers among nominal LDS membership. The infographic can be found [here](#).

Proselytizing LDS Missionaries Return to Turkey

Young proselytizing missionaries recently returned to Istanbul, Turkey after a period of several months without proselytizing missionaries in the country. Missionaries currently serving in Istanbul report that good record keeping in area books and diligent efforts from international church leaders and missions presidents for prospective Turkey-bound missionaries to learn the Turkish language has resulted in good continuity of teaching investigators and building up the Church. In October 2011, the Church received official government recognition in Turkey and the first proselytizing missionaries arrived in February 2012.



¹ Avant, Gerry. "Church Organizes 3,000th Stake in Sierra Leone," Church News and Events, 2 December 2012. <http://www.lds.org/church/news/historic-milestone-sierra-leone-stake-marks-churchs-3000th>

NEW RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

[Analysis of LDS Growth in Kyiv, Ukraine](#)

The LDS Church in Kyiv, Ukraine extends more penetrating outreach than in any other Eastern European city and is one of only four cities in Eastern Europe that has a stake. This case study reviews past LDS growth in Kyiv and identifies successes, opportunities, and challenges for future growth. A comparative growth section compares the growth of the Church in Kyiv with other cities in the region and with other nontraditional Christian groups. A future prospects section provides an outlook for future growth.

[Analysis of LDS Growth in Metro Manila, Philippines](#)

With 21.7 million inhabitants, Manila is the world's ninth most populous urban agglomeration as of October 2012. The LDS Church has maintained a presence in Manila for over 50 years and initiated formal missionary activity in 1961. This case study examines congregational and stake growth trends within Metro Manila, highlights LDS growth successes, and analyzes opportunities and challenges for future growth. A comparative growth section compares the growth of the LDS Church in Metro Manila with other major cities in the Philippines and contrasts the size and growth of the LDS Church with other proselytizing Christian groups. Future prospects for LDS growth are summarized and conclude this case study.

[LDS Outreach among the Wayuu Amerindians in Colombia and Venezuela](#)

The Wayuu are an Amerindian people native to the Caribbean coast in the border region of Colombia and Venezuela. This case study reviews past LDS proselytism efforts in areas traditionally inhabited by the Wayuu and analyzes successes, opportunities, challenges, and future prospects for growth. A comparative growth section compares LDS outreach among the Wayuu to other Amerindian groups and contrasts church growth between the LDS Church and other nontraditional proselytizing faiths. Lastly, future prospects for LDS growth are provided.

[Prospective LDS Outreach Expansion in the Central African Republic and Gabon](#)

This case study reviews the history of the Church in the Central African Republic and identifies successes, opportunities, and challenges for the assignment of full-time missionaries and initiating national outreach expansion. The growth of select proselytizing Christian groups in these two countries is also discussed.

[Prospective LDS Outreach among the Fulani of West Africa](#)

This case study examines the population distribution of Fulani throughout Sub-Saharan Africa and identifies opportunities, challenges, and future prospects for LDS growth. A comparative growth section examines LDS efforts to reach other homogeneously Muslim peoples in Sub-Saharan Africa and highlights successes of Protestant groups evangelizing the Fulani in recent years.

[Successful LDS Outreach Expansion in Botswana](#)

This case study reviews past outreach expansion efforts in Botswana and identifies successes, opportunities, and challenges for growth. A comparative growth section compares the growth of the LDS Church in Botswana with other Sub-Saharan African countries and contrasts LDS growth in Botswana with other proselytizing Christian groups. A future prospects section predicts the outlook for LDS growth in the coming years.

[Understanding YSA Activity Challenges in the United States](#)

In this case study, religiosity among young adults in the United States is explored followed by activity trends among young adult Latter-day Saints. Challenges for young single adults to remain active are identified and discussed. Recommendations to improve member activity rates among this demographic are provided.

[The 3,000th Stake Milestone: Analysis](#)

This case study provides a historical overview of stake growth since the Church's organization and a synopsis of the worldwide distribution of stakes at present-day. Lists of countries with a stake and the year the first stake was organized, countries with the most stakes, and countries with the most members without a stake are provided. Factors that influence the rate of stake growth are analyzed and prospects for future stake growth are discussed.