



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

December 2013

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)

- 39. Round Rock Texas East - 11/24/2013
- 40. El Alto Bolivia Litoral - 12/01/2013
- 41. Escuintla Guatemala - 12/01/2013
- 42. Apia Samoa Central - 12/08/2013
- 43. Lome Togo - 12/08/2013
- 44. Nuku'alofa Tonga Malapo - 12/08/2013
- 45. San Gabriel Philippines - 12/08/2013
- 46. Kumasi Ghana Dichemso - 12/15/2013
- 47. St George Utah Boulder Ridge - 12/15/2013

New Districts

- 7. Obuasi Ghana - 12/22/2013

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

- Reconquista Argentina District
- Konongo Ghana District
- Las Vegas Nevada Sandstone Stake

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Caldas Novas, Goias, Brazil (17th, 67,714)
- Asutsuare, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Mpraeso, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Odumase, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Ascoli Piceno, Italy (N/A, 49,697)
- Ala-Uli, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Ipil, Philippines (318th, 17,166)
- Nabua, Philippines (N/A, 80,111 [municipality pop.])
- Texas City, Texas (69th, 45,099)

Locations Recently Closed by the Church¹

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

- Washington Court House, Ohio (125th, 14,192)
- Waynesburg, Pennsylvania (337th, 4,176)
- Colonia Dieciocho de Julio, Uruguay (N/A, N/A)
- Florencio Sánchez, Uruguay (65th, 3,587)
- Pueblo Noblia, Uruguay (N/A, N/A)

First Stake Created in Togo

On December 8th, the Church organized its first stake in Togo from the Lome Togo District. The Church in Togo organized its first and only district in Lome in December 2009 making just four years for the district to become a stake - perhaps the shortest period of time in the history of the Church in modern times for a district to become a stake in a country that has previously never had a stake organized before. The Church has also experienced rapid congregational growth as the number of branches has increased from one in 2005 to five in 2012 and 12 in late 2013. The new stake has eight wards and four branches.



Large Numbers of Covert Baptisms in French Polynesia

Missionaries serving in French Polynesia report that the Tahiti Papeete Mission has had over 800 covert baptisms in 2013 - a significant achievement considering there were 22,700 members at year-end 2012. Convert

¹ *Cities where the only ward or branch was closed; some of these cities may continue to have a dependent unit and/or missionaries assigned

retention appears to be good for most areas as evidenced by the creation of two new wards this year on Tahiti.

Full-time Missionary Force Numbers Approximately 83,000

In an [LDS Church News Article](#) published in late December, the Church reported that the number of members serving full-time missions nearly totaled 83,000 and that an additional 12,000 members had received mission calls and were awaiting entry into a MTC. To contrast, there were only 58,990 members serving full-time missions at year-end 2012. This indicates that the full-time missionary force increased by as much as 24,000 missionaries, or 40.7%, during 2013 - the largest numerical increase and one of the largest percentage increases in the number of members serving full-time missions ever experienced. It is anticipated that the number of members serving full-time missions will grow less rapidly in 2014 although many more missions will likely be organized next year.

LDS Branch Created in Texas City, Texas

In December, the Church organized a new branch in Texas City, Texas. Inhabited by over 45,000, Texas City was previously the most populous city in Texas without its own LDS congregation. There remain eight additional cities in Texas with over 20,000 inhabitants without an LDS congregation. Click [here](#) to access a map displaying the ten most populous cities in Texas without their own LDS congregations.

Sacrament Meeting Attendance Surpasses 100,000 for the Europe Area

Church leaders in the Europe Area report that sacrament meeting attendance recently surpassed 100,000 for the first time ever. Member activity rates range between 25% and 35% for most countries as current area sacrament meeting attendance accounts for only 22% of year-end area membership for 2012 (~450,000). The Europe Area Presidency has primarily focused on increasing the number of active members within its jurisdiction through member-missionary efforts and reactivation work. Successes increasing the number of active members have been evidenced by the creation of new stakes in France, Italy, and Spain within the past two years.

Reaching the Nations: International Church Growth Almanac: 2014 Edition Available on Kindle

We have recently published our two-volume almanac exploring how contextual factors have influenced LDS growth by country and world region. Click on the links below for Volume I and Volume II to order on amazon.com.

- [Volume I](#)
- [Volume II](#)

Surge in Melchizedek Priesthood Holders in Liberia

Missionaries in Liberia report that during December, 144 male members were sustained to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood in district conferences for the two districts in Monrovia. Both districts appear close to becoming stakes in the near future, especially with so many prospective Melchizedek Priesthood holders recently sustained. The Church once operated a stake in Monrovia between 2000 and 2007 but discontinued the stake due to leadership development problems and remote location.



Map Displaying the Status of LDS Outreach by Major Metropolitan Area in South Asia and Southeast Asia

We have completed our map of South Asia and Southeast Asia displaying metropolitan areas with one million or more inhabitants and the status of LDS outreach. Only 26 of these 97 cities have a known LDS congregation operating. The map can be accessed [here](#).

NEW RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

[LDS Outreach among the Aymara of the Andes](#)

Native to the arid Altiplano of South America, the Aymara are one of the most populous Amerindian groups in Latin America with approximately three million people residing primarily in Bolivia and extreme southeastern Peru. This case study presents a brief summary of the Aymara people followed by a synopsis of the history of Aymara-specific LDS outreach and church growth. Past growth successes are described and opportunities and challenges for future growth are analyzed. The growth of the Church among other Amerindian peoples in South America is summarized and the growth and size of other missionary-oriented Christian groups that target the Aymara is provided. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[LDS Outreach among the Quechua of Peru](#)

Numbering over 10 million, the Quechua constitute a collection of Amerindian peoples that reside in the Andes of South America. This case study reviews the background of the Quechua people and the history of LDS outreach among the Quechua in Peru. Past missionary and church growth successes are described and opportunities and challenges for future growth are discussed. The growth of the Church among other Amerindian peoples in South America is compared to LDS growth among the Quechua. A brief synopsis of the growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups among the Quechua is provided. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[LDS Outreach Expansion in Slovakia](#)

Although the Church established a brief, minimal presence in Slovakia during the early twentieth century, a permanent official presence was not reestablished until the early 1990s. The Church organized branches in three cities within less than five years but did not open any additional cities until the mid-2000s and experienced virtually stagnant membership growth between the mid-1990s and mid-2000s. Within the past five years, the Church has experienced a significant acceleration in opening additional cities to missionary work and augmenting membership growth. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Slovakia. Past outreach expansion successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for national outreach expansion and future growth are analyzed. The growth of the Church in Slovakia is compared to other countries in the region and to other nontraditional proselytizing Christian groups who maintain a presence in Slovakia. Limitations to this case study are reviewed and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[Top Five Encouraging LDS Growth and Missionary Developments in 2013](#)

This case study reviews five of the most encouraging LDS growth and missionary developments for the year 2013. Limitations to these developments are identified.

[Recent Church Growth and Missionary Developments in Thailand](#)

The LDS Church has experienced slow membership and congregational growth in Thailand for the majority of its over half-a-century presence. Notwithstanding these challenges, missionaries and members in 2013 reported substantial progress reversing slow to stagnant growth trends as evidenced by a revitalization of member-missionary work, several districts rapidly achieving the minimal standards to become stakes, and efforts by mission leaders to open member groups in additional locations. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Thailand. Past church growth and missionary successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for future growth are discussed. A comparative growth section compares church growth and missionary activity in Thailand to other Southeast Asian countries and summarizes the growth and size of other Christian denominations that operate in Thailand. Limitations to this case study are identified and the outlook for future growth is predicted.

[Recent Missionary Successes in Tuvalu](#)

Inhabited by 10,700, Tuvalu is a tiny island archipelago nation located in Polynesia. The first Tuvaluan Latter-day Saints joined the Church in Tonga and Fiji and returned to Tuvalu in the early 1980s. In 1984, the Church organized a branch in Funafuti, Tuvalu. At the time there were approximately two dozen members. The Church experienced very slow or stagnant membership growth until the early 2010s when membership growth substantially accelerated. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Tuvalu and identifies factors that have driven accelerated membership growth. Recent growth successes and opportunities and challenges for future growth are provided. The growth of the Church in other island nations with a minimal LDS presence is compared to the Church in Tuvalu. A summary of the growth of other missionary-focused groups that operate in Tuvalu is provided. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[Stagnant LDS Growth in Mindanao, Philippines](#)

Inhabited by approximately 22 million, Mindanao is the second largest island in the Philippines. The LDS Church has maintained a presence in Mindanao since as early as 1968 and achieved rapid growth during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s but has experienced stagnant growth since 2000 as evidenced by no additional stakes or districts organized and a net decrease in the number of wards and branches over the past decade. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Mindanao and identifies past missionary and church growth successes. Opportunities and challenges for growth are analyzed. The growth of the Church in other regions of the Philippines is compared to growth experienced in Mindanao and the size and growth of other outreach-focused Christian groups is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

NEW RESOURCES (continued)

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MISSIONARY WORK AND CHURCH GROWTH (MISSIOLOGY)

- [Members-to-Units Ratio](#)
- [Most Populous Unreached Cities](#)
- [Percentage of Members in the Population](#)
- [Perpetual Education Fund](#)
- [Resignation and Excommunication](#)

