



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

December 2014

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)

- 63. Taipei Taiwan South - November 30th, 2014
- 64. Alicia Philippines - December 14th, 2014

New Districts

No new districts were organized in November 2014

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

- 11. Kabul Afghanistan Military

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Veintiocho de Noviembre, Argentina (N/A, 6,145)
- Livramento de Nossa Senhora, Bahia, Brazil (76th, 19,108)
- Terenos, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil (47th, 7,275)
- Agona (near Elmina), Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Dunkwa-On-Offin, Ghana (51st, ~33,000)
- Chisec, Guatemala (78th, 12,775)
- San Agustín Tlaxiaca, Hidalgo, Mexico (26th, 10,496)
- Santiago Jamiltepec, Oaxaca, Mexico (37th, 10,107)
- Hunucma, Yucatan, Mexico (9th, 24,910)
- Kawerau, New Zealand (46th, 6,921)
- Ita Paso, Paraguay (N/A, N/A)
- Santa Cecilia, Philippines (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

- Joliette, Quebec, Canada (15th, 38,564)

Several New Mission to be Created in 2015

Reports received during December 2014 from members and full-time missionaries around the world indicate that the Church will organize several new missions in July 2015. The Official announcement for new missions will likely occur in the coming couple months. Some of these new missions include:

- Argentina Buenos Aries East
- Argentina Santa Fe
- Barbados Bridgetown
- California Modesto
- Costa Rica (2nd mission)
- Peru Trujillo North
- Portugal (2nd mission)
- Utah Logan
- Utah Orem
- Washington Yakima
- Wisconsin Appleton

Missionary Developments in the Guatemala Cobán Mission

In a major step towards conducting more effective proselytism with full-time missionaries among Amerindian peoples, the Guatemala Cobán Mission recently announced that some new missionaries who are already fluent in Spanish will begin receiving their mission calls to serve in the Q'eqchi' language. Q'eqchi' will also begin to be taught to missionaries in a nine-week course at the Guatemala Missionary Training Center beginning in July 2015. Additionally, missionaries also report that the city of Chisec recently opened to missionary work for the first time and a member group was established. Additional cities may open to missionaries within the near future.



Branches in Donetsk, Ukraine Discontinued

The Church recently discontinued all four of its branches in Donetsk, Ukraine. The Donetsk Ukraine District continues to operate and includes four branches. The city now falls under the jurisdiction of the Donetsk Ukraine District Branch. This suggests that the Church may operate member groups in various areas of Donetsk to meet the needs of any remaining members. Returned missionaries note that many members have fled the region due to recent war and political instability. The Church consolidated its Ukraine Donetsk Mission with the Ukraine Dnepropetrovsk Mission and the Ukraine Kyiv Mission earlier this year.



Military District Discontinued in Afghanistan

The Church recently discontinued its military district in Afghanistan. The decision to close the district has been strongly influenced by the ongoing drawdown in the number of American military personnel stationed in the country. The district at one time had five branches and 28 member groups to service American military personnel. Currently only one branch remains in Kabul that is directly supervised by the Middle East/Africa North Area Presidency.



Church Reopens Sri Lanka to Proselytism

Members in Sri Lanka report that young, full-time missionaries returned to reestablish a formal proselytism presence in November 2014. Four Sri Lankan missionaries were reassigned from Philippine missions to serve in the India Bangalore Mission to reopen Sri Lanka to missionary work. The last young, full-time missionaries to serve in Sri Lanka were removed from the country in 2008 due to visa renewal problems. There are currently three branches and 1,300 members in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka supports a population of 21.9 million.



Accelerating LDS Membership Growth in the Adriatic South Mission

Missionaries serving in the Adriatic South Mission (Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia) report that the mission is close to reaching 300 convert baptisms for 2014 - possibly the largest number of convert baptisms for the mission since its organization in 1996. Formerly known as the Albania Tirana Mission, the Adriatic South Mission has made significant progress within the past couple years as evidenced by the organization of the Tirana Albania Stake, the opening of several cities in Kosovo to missionary work, and the assignment of additional missionary companionships to Skopje, Macedonia.

LDS Presence Established in Hunucmá, Mexico

In December, the Church organized its first ward in Hunucmá, Yucatan State, Mexico. Hunucmá was previously the most populous city in Yucatan State without an LDS congregation. The Church in Yucatan State has made progress opening new units in additional cities that were previously unreached such as the creation of new branch in Telchaquillo in November.

New Wards Organized in Hong Kong

Missionaries serving in the China Hong Kong Mission report ongoing progress reversing stagnant growth trends that persisted for over a decade. Within the past two years, the Church in Hong Kong has organized five new wards. Mission leaders indicate that there are plans to organize additional wards within the near future. Success augmenting the number of active members has largely occurred due to a proactive program to reactive less-active members. Most of the wards that were closed in the 2000s have since been reinstated marking one of the most successful examples of the Church rectifying inactivity and leadership development problems within recent memory.



LDS Presence in Vietnam No Longer Sensitive

The Church has reclassified its presence in Vietnam from sensitive to non-sensitive. This change appears attributed to the government recently granting official recognition to the Church earlier this year. Currently the Church reports one district called the Hanoi Vietnam District (organized in December 2010) and four branches (Hanoi, Hanoi District Branch, Tan Son Nhat, and Thao Dien). Earlier this year the Church reported 1,600 members in Vietnam.

NEW RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

LDS Outreach among the Chol of Mexico

Numbering 242,278 in 2005, the Chol or *Ch'ol* are an Amerindian people in Mexico who traditionally reside in eastern Chiapas State. No specialized LDS outreach has occurred among the Chol although LDS congregations have operated for several decades within or nearby the Chol homelands. This case study reviews LDS growth developments within areas traditionally inhabited by Chol people and known instances of Chol converts joining the Church. Church growth and missionary successes among the Chol are discussed, and opportunities and challenges for LDS growth are explored. The growth of the Church among other Amerindian peoples indigenous to Mexico is reviewed, and the size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups with a presence among the Chol are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

LDS Outreach among the Mazatec of Mexico

Numbering 294,000 in 2005, the Mazatec are an Amerindian people in Mexico who traditionally reside in extreme northern Oaxaca State. The LDS Church reports no Mazatec-specific outreach in the handful of locations where congregations operate within the Mazatec homelands notwithstanding the Mazatec ranking as the ninth most populous Amerindian people in Mexico. This case study reviews LDS growth developments within areas traditionally inhabited by Mazatec people and known instances of Mazatec converts joining the Church. Church growth and missionary successes in providing outreach among the Mazatec are discussed, and opportunities and challenges for LDS growth are explored. The growth of the Church among other Amerindian peoples indigenous to Mexico is reviewed, and the size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups with a presence among the Mazatec is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

LDS Outreach among the Purépecha of Mexico

Numbering 162,863 in 2005, the Purépecha or *Tarascan* are an Amerindian people in Mexico who traditionally reside in northwestern Michoacán State. No specialized LDS outreach has occurred among the Purépecha although LDS congregations have operated for several decades within or nearby the Purépecha homelands. This case study reviews LDS growth developments within areas traditionally inhabited by Purépecha people and known instances of Purépecha converts joining the Church. Church growth and missionary successes among the Purépecha are discussed, and opportunities and challenges for LDS growth are explored. The growth of the Church among other Amerindian peoples indigenous to Mexico is reviewed, and the size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups with a presence among the Purépecha are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

Prospective LDS Outreach in Timor-Leste (East Timor)

Timor-Leste, or East Timor, is a small island nation of 1.2 million people located on the eastern half of the island of Timor. The LDS Church has no known presence in Timor-Leste notwithstanding a homogeneous Christian population, no government restrictions on religious freedom, and the operation of several nontraditional, missionary-focused denominations within the country for many years. This case study reviews the history of the Church administering Timor-Leste. Opportunities for establishing an official LDS presence and achieving growth are explored. Recommendations for how to most effectively establish an initial LDS presence are provided. Challenges for establishing a church presence and achieving growth are discussed. The growth of other proselytizing Christian groups that operate in Timor-Leste is summarized. Limitations to this case study are described and prospects for an LDS establishment are predicted.

Slow LDS Growth in Nepal

Nepal is inhabited by 31 million people and located in South Asia. The LDS Church has experienced slow growth in Nepal since it established its first branch in 2001. Today the Church in Nepal reports only one congregation and appears to have less than 200 members. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Nepal. Past church growth and missionary successes are identified. Opportunities and challenges for future church growth and the establishment of formal missionary activity are analyzed. The growth of the Church in other South Asian countries is summarized and the size and growth of other missionary-focused groups that operate in Nepal is reviewed. Limitations to this case study are identified and the outlook for future growth is predicted.

Top 10 Encouraging and Discouraging LDS Growth Developments in 2014

This case study reviews the 10 most encouraging LDS growth and missionary developments and the 10 most discouraging LDS growth and missionary developments for the year 2014. Limitations to these developments are identified.

NEW RESOURCES (continued)

STAKE AND DISTRICT DATABASE

After four months of development, we have completed a comprehensive database listing all of the Church's stakes and districts known to have ever operated. We hope that this database will be utilized by researchers and the public to promote greater interest and scholarship in the study of the growth of the LDS Church. Click [here](#) to access the database.

STATISTICAL PROFILES

- [Burkina Faso](#)
- [Chad](#)
- [Equatorial Guinea](#)
- [Guinea](#)
- [Guinea-Bissau](#)
- [Mali](#)
- [Mauritania](#)
- [Niger](#)
- [Seychelles](#)
- [The Gambia](#)
- [Turks and Caicos Islands](#)
- [World](#)