



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

January 2018

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)

1. Ekpoma Nigeria - January 14th, 2018
2. Queen Creek Arizona Ocotillo - January 14th, 2018
3. Accra Ghana Madina - January 21st, 2018
4. Huancayo Perú El Valle – January 28th, 2018

- Gouyave, Grenada (2nd, 3,378)
- Wahoo, Nebraska (35th, 4,508)
- Praia da Vitoria, Portugal (N/A, N/A)
- Gatchina, Russia (N/A, 95,186)
- Oban, Scotland, United Kingdom (N/A, 8,490)

New Districts

1. Nassau Caribbean - January 21st, 2018

New Missions and Mission Closures

We have received reports that mission realignments may affect as many as 46 missions this July due to a significant redistribution of missionary resources around the world. The following missions will be discontinued and consolidated with neighboring missions as of July 2018:

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

None reported in 2018

- Australia Sydney (one of two missions)
- Bulgaria Sofia
- Mexico Monterrey East
- Mississippi Jackson
- New York New York (one of two missions)
- Ohio Cleveland
- Russia Samara
- Ukraine L'viv
- Washington Federal Way

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Palmerston, Australia (49th, 23,614)
- Santo Amaro da Imperatriz, Santa Catarina, Brazil (73rd, 14,970)
- Samana, Dominican Republic (48th, 11,432)
- Grenville, Grenada (3rd, 2,476)
- San Francisco, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala (N/A, N/A)
- Be'er Sheva, Israel (7th, 194,300)
- Washington Island, Kiribati (19th, 1,155)
- Ozoro, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Santa Rosa del Aguaray, Paraguay (N/A, N/A)
- Ratchaburi, Thailand (70th, 36,339)

We have also received reports that the following missions will be created in July 2018:

- Philippines Cabanatuan
- Utah Layton
- Zimbabwe Harare

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

- Porto Feliz, Sao Paulo, Brazil (151st, 41,096)
- Campbellford, Ontario, Canada (137th, 3,173)

The Church has not yet published an official announcement regarding which missions will be closed or created. This announcement should be made within the coming weeks.

New Congregations in Thailand

Two new congregations were recently organized in Thailand. After many years of operation as a member group, the Phuket Group was created into an official branch in January under the direct supervision of the Thailand Bangkok Mission. Moreover, members in the branch report that full-time missionaries have been assigned to the branch. This appears to be the first time that the Church has ever assigned full-time missionaries to a city in southern Thailand. No other cities in southern Thailand have an LDS presence. Additionally, members in Bangkok report that a member group was recently organized in the city and province Ratchaburi. The Church has organized its first branches in two additional cities in Thailand in recent years, including Kamphaeng Phet (2016) and Chonburi (2017).



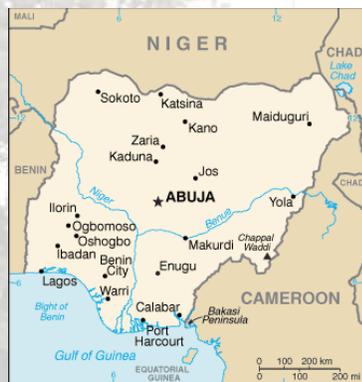
2014 LDS Membership for Gabon Published

We have recently obtained [new information](#) about membership data for the Church in Gabon. The Church reported 105 members as of year-end 2014 – a significant increase from the mere 19 members reported at year-end 2013. Currently there are two branches in Gabon. The Church has not published any more current membership figures for Gabon. Moreover, any publication of more current membership data will likely be inaccurate as one of the Libreville branches is misclassified under the Republic of the Congo instead of Gabon. Therefore, this membership data would be reported under the Republic of the Congo instead of Gabon unless the assignment of one of the Libreville branches is changed in the official church directory. At most recent report, there were four full-time missionaries assigned to Gabon under the Republic of the Congo Brazzaville Mission.



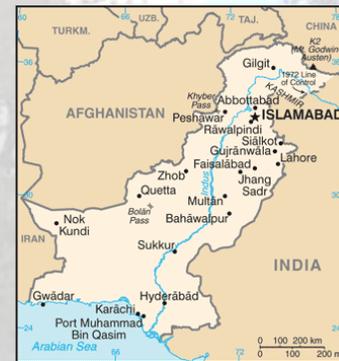
First Rural Stake Created in Edo State, Nigeria

The Church organized the Ekpoma Nigeria Stake on January 14th. Local members report that the new stake has eight wards and one branch. The Ekpoma Nigeria Stake is the first stake outside of southeastern Nigeria to be primarily comprised of LDS congregations in rural communities. Rapid growth has occurred in the villages of Ozalla and Irukep as the first branches were organized in these villages in 2004 and 2005, respectively. It is likely that there are no other stakes in Nigeria that have as small of a population within their geographical boundaries as the Ekpoma Nigeria Stake. The Church in the Ekpoma area provides a good illustration of the impressive growth that can rapidly occur in rural communities which are almost entirely unreached by the Church throughout the world. It is likely that Ozalla and Irukep may report the highest percentages of Latter-day Saints of any villages in Nigeria given three wards operate in each village despite the small size of these villages.



New Branch Created in Pakistan

We have received a report that the Church recently organized its third branch in Islamabad, Pakistan. There are currently 14 branches in Pakistan, whereas there were only six branches in 2001. Branches currently operate in Karachi (4), Islamabad (3), Lahore (2), Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi, Sialkot, and Taxila. LDS membership has quadrupled in Pakistan during the past 15 years. Missionary work occurs only among Christians. Only Pakistani natives serve full-time missions in Pakistan.



First Branch Created in Buchanan, Liberia

The Church organized its first branch in Buchanan, Liberia in January. The Church created its first member group in Buchanan and assigned the first full-time missionaries to the city in November 2017. There are now four cities in Liberia with an official ward or branch: Monrovia, Kakata, Harbel, and Buchanan.



First LDS Branch Created on Washington Island, Kiribati

The Church recently organized its first branch on Washington Island (Teraina Island) in Kiribati. With approximately 1,200 inhabitants, Washington Island was previously the most populous island in Kiribati without an official ward or branch. The Church has experienced significant growth in the Line Islands of Kiribati since the first branch was created in the region in 1996 on Kiritimati Island. Additional branches have since been created in Fanning Island (Tabuaeran Island) (2006), Banana Island (2010), London (2014), and Tabwakea 2nd (2014). The Kiritimati Island Kiribati District was organized in 2014.



Rural Outreach Progresses in Cote d'Ivoire

The Church in Cote d'Ivoire recently organized its first branch in a village inhabited by less than 1,000 people. The new branch is located in the village of Niani near the city of Sassandra. With rapid growth occurring in nearly 50 cities, towns, and villages during the past five years, prospects appear favorable for additional expansion into additional rural communities given high receptivity, good local self-sufficiency in leadership, and consistent vision maintained by mission leaders to expand outreach.



Convert Baptisms Occur for New Members Who Live in Uttarakhand, India



Missionaries serving in the India New Delhi Mission report interest in the Church and several baptisms among multiple families who live in Uttarakhand State, India. These new members have recently been taught and baptized in New Delhi after learning about the Church from friends and family. Additionally,

it is anticipated that a member group may be organized in Dehradun or Rishikesh in the near future. No LDS presence operates in Uttarakhand, which is inhabited by approximately 10 million people. No new member groups have appeared to have been organized in the India New Delhi Mission within the past decade since member groups were created in the New Delhi metropolitan area. The maturation of the New Delhi India District into a stake in November 2017 may signal efforts to expand into previously unreached cities and states.

NEW/UPDATED RESOURCES

Sacrament Meeting Attendance Figures – LDS International Atlas

We are continuing to update our LDS International Atlas with additional sacrament meeting attendance figures obtained from thousands of returned missionary surveys and local member surveys. As a result, we have obtained estimated church attendance figures for a sizable minority or even a majority of congregations in many countries such as most of Europe and most Latin American countries. Access the atlas [here](#).