



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

March 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)

7. Bellville South Africa - March 2nd, 2014
8. Tirana Albania - March 9th, 2014
9. Eagle Mountain Utah Cedar Pass - March 16th, 2014
10. Joinville Brazil South - March 16th, 2014
11. Pohnpei Caroline Islands - March 16th, 2014
12. San Tan Valley Arizona - March 16th, 2014
13. Saratoga Springs Utah Israel Canyon - March 23rd, 2014

New Districts

2. Espargos Cape Verde - March 9th, 2014
3. Kossoh Town Sierra Leone - March 16th, 2014
4. San Pedro Cote d'Ivoire - March 16th, 2014

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

None reported in March 2014

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Attalla, Alabama (100th, 6,048)
- Brewton, Alabama (105th, 5,408)
- Teotônio Vilela, Alagoas, Brazil (11th, 34,785)
- Alta Floresta, Mato Grosso, Brazil (13th, 42,718)
- Barra Alegre, Minas Gerais, Brazil (30th, 88,281)
- Tobias Barreto, Sergipe, Brazil (7th, 31,118)
- Soubre, Cote d'Ivoire (22nd, 58,500)
- Maase, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Tafo, Ghana (29th, 60,900)
- Klaten, Indonesia (124th, 124,487)
- Dupax del Sur, Philippines (N/A, 18,146)
- Enrile, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Siquijor, Philippines (N/A, 25,231)
- Vila Franca de Xira, Portugal (54th, 18,400)

Locations Recently Closed by the Church¹

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

- Oxford, Alabama (27th, 21,348)
- Lago Puelo, Argentina (N/A, 3,129)
- Lules, Argentina (168th, 21,088)
- Soissons, France (135th, 42,652)

First Stake Created in Albania

On March 9th, the Church organized its first stake in Albania. The Tirana Albania Stake was created from the Tirana Albania District and includes the following six wards and four branches: The Durrës, Tirana 1st, Tirana 2nd, Tirana 3rd, Tirana 4th, and Vlorë Wards and the Elbasan, Fier, Lushnjë, and Shkoder Branches. Prior to the creation of the stake, Albania ranked as the country with the fifteenth most members without a stake. Church leaders have set a goal to organize a second stake in Albania within the next three years. Albania becomes the fourth country in Eastern Europe to have had a stake organized after Ukraine (2004), Hungary (2006), and Russia (2011).

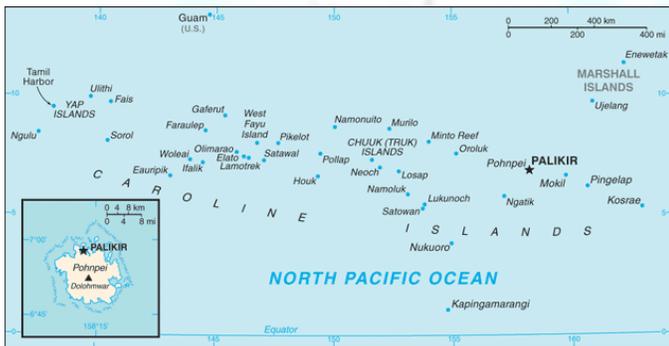


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¹ *Cities where the only ward or branch was closed; some of these cities may continue to have a dependent unit and/or missionaries assigned

First Stake Created in the Federated States of Micronesia

On March 16th, the Church organized its first stake in the Federated States of Micronesia on Pohnpei. The Panasang Pohnpei Stake was organized from the Pohnpei Caroline Islands District and includes the entire state of Pohnpei. No details are currently available regarding which of the eight branches became wards within the new stake. Prior to the creation of the new stake, Micronesia ranked as the country with the tenth most members without a stake. The Federated States of Micronesia becomes the fourth country or territory in the Micronesia subregion of the Pacific to have had a stake organized after Kiribati (1996), the Marshall Islands (2009), and Guam (2010).



New Mission to be Organized in the Republic of the Congo

Missionaries serving in the Democratic Republic of the Congo Kinshasa Mission report that they received word in March that the mission will divide this summer to create the new Republic of the Congo Brazzaville Mission. The new mission will likely include the Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea. The Republic of the Congo has held the position of the Sub-Saharan African country with the most LDS members without its own mission for many years. The organization of the new mission will likely be instrumental in the opening of additional cities in the Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, and Gabon to missionary work as official LDS congregations only operate in five cities within these three countries. No LDS presence has been established in Equatorial Guinea.



Updated Statistic on Sacrament Meeting Attendance in the Africa West Area

In early 2014, church leaders in the Africa West Area reported that 41% of church membership regularly attends sacrament meeting; one of the highest percentages in the worldwide Church. This statistic has fallen from previous years, likely due to rushed prebaptismal preparation with the assignment of larger numbers of non-African missionaries and compounding inactivity and convert retention problems. In 2000, the Church in West Africa reported that sacrament meeting attendance exceeded 50% of church membership.²

Church Begins Translating the Book of Mormon into Burmese

Missionaries in the Thailand Bangkok Mission report that the Church recently began its first efforts to translate the Book of Mormon into Burmese. The recent assignment of young elder missionaries to Yangon, Burma and missionary successes among Burmese populations in Southeast Asia and elsewhere have appeared to prompt the translation of the first LDS scriptures into the Burmese language. Burmese currently numbers among the languages with the most native speakers without translations of any LDS scriptures available.

Second Island Opened to Missionary Work in the Galapagos Islands

Missionaries report that a second island (San Cristobal) has recently opened to missionary work in the Galapagos Islands and has had a member group established. The Galapagos Islands support a population of 25,000 and have one LDS branch that meets in Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz Island.

First LDS Congregation Organized on Philippine Island

In early March, missionaries reported that the first member group was organized on the island of Siquijor in the Philippines. Full-time missionaries recently opened the island to missionary work under the direction of the Philippines Cebu Mission. The new member group pertains to the nearby Dumaguete Philippines District. Siquijor has a population of 91,000 according to 2010 population figures and is the most populous island in the Philippines to have opened for missionary work in many years.



² Pace, Glenn L. "A Temple for West Africa," General Conference, April 2000. <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2000/04/a-temple-for-west-africa>

NEW RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

[Accelerated Stake Growth in Oceania](#)

Oceania stands as a bulwark for the international church due to the relatively high percentage of Latter-day Saints in the population, regional self-sufficiency in staffing the full-time missionary force, and a long-term LDS presence in many countries and dependencies. During the early 2010s, accelerated stake growth occurred throughout the region for the first time in over a decade. This case study reviews the history of LDS stake growth in each country in Oceania with a stake operating as of early 2014. Stakes organized since 2010 are identified by country. Successes that correlate with accelerated stake growth are identified and opportunities and challenges for perpetuating recent accelerated stake growth trends are analyzed. Stake growth trends in other world regions are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for continued stake growth in Oceania are predicted.

[Analysis of LDS Growth in Santiago, Chile](#)

The fourth most populous metropolitan area in Spanish-speaking South America, Santiago is the capital and most populous city in Chile and had a metropolitan population of 6.8 million in late 2013. The LDS Church has experienced some of its most penetration and rapid growth in South America within the Santiago Metropolitan area during the last 25 years of the twentieth century but has reported decline or stagnant growth during the early twenty-first century. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Santiago. Past church growth and missionary successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for future growth are examined. The growth of the Church in other major metropolitan areas in South America is reviewed and the size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[LDS Outreach among Black Townships in South Africa](#)

Constituting 79% of the population, Black Africans (African natives) constitute a large majority in South Africa whereas other ethnicities such as Whites (descendants of European settlers), Coloreds (mixed European and black African ancestry), Indians, and East Asians constitute small minorities. This case study reviews the history of the LDS Church operating in traditionally Black African and Colored township areas. Past growth and missionary successes are described and opportunities and challenges for future growth in these locations are examined. The growth of the Church in other types of urban areas is reviewed and the growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups in Black African townships is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth is predicted.

[Missed Opportunities for LDS Outreach in Kyrgyzstan](#)

Inhabited by 5.55 million people, Kyrgyzstan is located in Central Asia and has a population that is predominantly Muslim (75%) and Christian (20%). Major ethnolinguistic groups include Kyrgyz (65%), Uzbek (14%), and Russian (13%). Although the LDS Church had expectations and initial plans to establish an official church presence in the early 2000s, the Church missed its window of opportunity to obtain government recognition when these qualifications were attainable due to delays by mission and area leaders pursuing registration. Today government policies and legislation render any prospective LDS establishment unobtainable within the foreseeable future. This case study provides a brief introduction of proselytizing Christian groups in Kyrgyzstan and changes in government policies and legislation regulating the operation of foreign religious groups. Current barriers to establishing an LDS presence in Kyrgyzstan are identified. Limitations to this case study are discussed and prospects for a future LDS establishment are predicted.

[Prospective LDS Outreach in Cuba](#)

Cuba is one of the most populous countries in the Caribbean, supporting a population of over 11 million. Roman Catholics comprise a strong majority although many do not actively follow their faith. In early 2014, Cuba was the only country or dependency in the Americas with over half a million people without a formal LDS missionary presence. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Cuba. Past successes for area and mission leaders in establishing the Church in Cuba are identified and opportunities and challenges for beginning formal proselytism efforts and achieving growth are discussed. The status of the Church in other countries and dependencies in the Americas where no formal LDS proselytism occurs is reviewed and the growth of the Church in nearby Caribbean nations is summarized. The size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups in Cuba is analyzed. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[Rapid LDS Growth in Abuja, Nigeria](#)

Abuja is the sixth most populous metropolitan area in Nigeria with 1.62 million inhabitants as of October 2013. The LDS Church has experienced significant growth in the Abuja metropolitan area within the past decade as evidenced by accelerated congregational growth and the organization of the first stake in the city in 2012. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Abuja. Past growth successes are summarized and opportunities and challenges for future growth are identified and discussed. The growth of the Church in other major cities in Nigeria is compared to the growth of the Church in Abuja and the growth of other missionary-focused groups within the Abuja area. Limitations to this case study are discussed and prospects for future growth are predicted.

NEW RESOURCES (continued)

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MISSIONARY WORK AND CHURCH GROWTH (MISSIOLOGY)

- [Centers of Strength Policy](#)
- [Corruption](#)
- [Cottage Meeting](#)
- [Dedicating a Country for Missionary Work](#)
- [Every Nation, Kindred, Tongue, and People](#)
- [Finding](#)
- [Religious Freedom Restrictions](#)
- [Ward](#)

UPDATED RESOURCES

LDS INTERNATIONAL ATLAS

- [Most Populous Unreached Cities in Burma](#)
- [Most Populous Unreached Cities in India](#)
- [Most Populous Unreached Cities in Indonesia](#)
- [Most Populous Unreached Cities in Lesotho](#)
- [Most Populous Unreached Cities in Mozambique](#)