



# THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

March 2017

## 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)

- 9. Manga Mozambique – March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017
- 10. Quetzaltenango Guatemala Santa Fé – March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017

- Assen, Netherlands (52<sup>nd</sup>, 67,177)
- Hilversum, Netherlands (35<sup>th</sup>, 84,984)
- Peñasco, New Mexico (204<sup>th</sup>, 589)
- Gabbs, Nevada (93<sup>rd</sup>, 269)
- Feldioara, Romania (N/A, 6,154)

### New Districts

- 2. Kigali Rwanda – March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### Discontinued Stakes and Districts

- 2. Phnom Penh Cambodia Central (Vietnamese) District
- 3. Juli Perú District

### Locations Recently Reached by the Church

(city population rank, most recent population estimate)  
precise population data from [www.citypopulation.de](http://www.citypopulation.de)

- Massapê, Ceara, Brazil (46<sup>th</sup>, 17,125)
- Santa Bárbara de Heredia, Costa Rica (N/A, N/A)
- Ajaccio, France (90<sup>th</sup>, 65,153)
- Sansare, Guatemala (N/A, N/A)
- Santa Rosa, Jalisco, Mexico (350<sup>th</sup>, 1,289)
- Villa de Reyes, San Luis Potosi, Mexico (18<sup>th</sup>, 10,383)
- Aidsesa, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Alimatoc, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Candoni, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Candumarao, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Mielec, Poland (72<sup>nd</sup>, 60,752)

### 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](http://www.citypopulation.de)

- Dillingham, Alaska (40<sup>th</sup>, 2,329)
- Yucumo, Bolivia (N/A, 4,693)
- Santa Isabel Cholula, Puebla, Mexico (393<sup>rd</sup>, 1,899)

### First District Organized in Rwanda

The Uganda Kampala Mission organized the Kigali Rwanda District on March 26<sup>th</sup> - the first LDS district ever to operate in Rwanda. Mission leadership reported that there were 408 in attendance during the general meeting to create the new district – an impressive number considering there are 450 members in Kigali. Furthermore, there were approximately 120 men who attended the priesthood session for the newly organized district indicating significant potential for leadership development.



Prospects appear highly favorable for the organization of several new branches in the foreseeable future. There are currently three branches in the Kigali Rwanda District. LDS Congregations in Rwanda only operate in Kigali. The first LDS branch in Rwanda was organized in 2008.

### Extremely Low Member Activity Rates in Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay

Convert attrition and member inactivity problems continue to stifle LDS growth in southern South America. Recent member activity rates for Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay have appeared to slightly decline within the past five years to approximately 10-15%. This estimate is based upon hundreds of surveys recently completed by returned missionaries and local members. Lack of member involvement in proselytism efforts, quick-baptism

tactics employed by full-time missionaries for several consecutive decades, and casual cultural attitudes regarding church attendance appear primarily to blame for these activity challenges.

### Four Thousand Brazilian Missionaries Serving in Brazil

The Church recently reported that there are 4,000 Brazilian members currently serving full-time missions in Brazil according to [a recent article in the Deseret News](#). This appears to be an all-time high or close to an all-time high for the number of Brazilians serving full-time missions. This figure indicates that there is an average of 118 Brazilian missionaries serving per Brazilian mission. There is a significant need to expand LDS missionary efforts in this most populous nation in Latin America. There remain approximately 400 cities with 20,000 or more inhabitants without an LDS presence. Although the Church in Brazil ties with Mexico as the country with the second most missions (34), the average Brazilian mission services approximately six million people – twice the population of most Spanish-speaking Latin American missions.



### Third Stake Organized in Mozambique

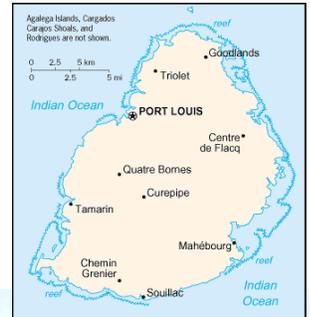


The Church organized its third stake in Mozambique in mid-March in the city of Beira. There are now two stakes in Beira and one stake in Maputo. The Church organized its first stakes in Mozambique in 2015. The organization of stakes in Mozambique within the past couple years signifies a significant improvement in leadership development, convert retention, and member activity. Focus from the Mozambique Maputo Mission on the conversion of families rather than individuals has appeared to help

accelerate growth in Mozambique within the past few years.

### First New Branch Organized in Mauritius since 2004

The Church in Mauritius organized a new branch for the first time since 2004. The Flacq Branch was created and services eastern areas of the island. There are now three branches in this small Indian Ocean island nation. The Church reported 471 members in Mauritius in 2015. Challenges obtaining foreign missionary visas and the prominence of Indian culture have posed difficulties for proselytism and growth.



### Congregational Growth in Nigeria



Rapid congregational growth has continued in Nigeria during the first quarter of 2017. There have been approximately 20 new wards and branches organized, most of which have been branches created in the past month in cities that have previously been minimally reached by LDS outreach. Examples include Abakaliki, several cities in Delta State (e.g. Adonte, Nsukwa, Ogwashi-Uku), Okposi, and Ondo. Rapid congregational growth has also occurred in Ikot Ekpene where the number of congregations has nearly doubled within the past year. There are now 523 official congregations (wards and branches) in Nigeria – the eighth most congregations of any country.

# UPDATED RESOURCES

We have finished adding sacrament meeting attendance figures for many wards and branches throughout the world as displayed on the LDS International Atlas on [cumorah.com](http://cumorah.com). These data were obtained from surveys completed by returned missionaries and local members. The date of these reports are also provided.

