



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

May 2015

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)

- 13. Draper Utah Meadows - May 3rd, 2015
- 14. Talagante Chile - May 10th, 2015
- 15. Auckland New Zealand Penrose - May 17th, 2015
- 16. Calabar Nigeria South - May 17th, 2015
- 17. Gosford Australia - May 17th, 2015

New Districts

- 10. Beirut Lebanon - late April, 2015
- 11. Macau China - May 17th, 2015
- 12. Tamale Ghana – May 31st, 2015

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

- 4. Erfurt Germany District
- 5. Teófilo Otoni Brazil District
- 6. Calabozo Venezuela District

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Santo Estevão, Bahia, Brazil (44th, 27,690)
- Santa Inês, Maranhão, Brazil (9th, 73,197)
- Akoupé, Cote d'Ivoire (41st, 35,970)
- Juapong, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- La Libertad, Veracruz, Mexico (627th, 1,301)
- Afaha Nsit, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Igwuruta, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Daanbantayan, Philippines (200th, 33,053)

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

- Golden, British Columbia, Canada (54th, 3,811)

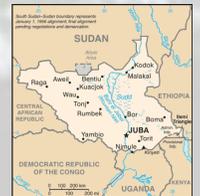
- Matancitas, Dominican Republic (N/A, N/A)
- Matei, Fiji (N/A, N/A)
- Naduna, Fiji (N/A, N/A)
- Tacilevu, Fiji (N/A, N/A)
- Gera, Germany (81st, 99,262)
- Gotha, Germany (N/A, 44,325)
- Meerane, Germany (N/A, 15,003)
- Nordhausen, Germany (NA, 41,839)
- Weimar, Germany (130th, 65,479)
- Juba, South Sudan (1st, 300,000)
- Horlivka, Ukraine (22nd, 263,647)
- El Danto, Venezuela (N/A, N/A)

Missionaries to Return to Liberia and Sierra Leone during the summer of 2015

The Church announced in May that full-time missionaries will return to Liberia and Sierra Leone this summer. Missionaries were removed in August 2014 as a result of the Ebola outbreak in the region. The Church has continued to grow in these two nations during this period despite the Ebola epidemic and the removal of full-time missionaries. The Church in Sierra Leone has experienced the greatest growth as many new branches have been organized within the past nine months.

Sole LDS Branch in South Sudan Closes

We received information suggesting that the Church discontinued the Juba Branch in South Sudan sometime within the past few months. The Juba Branch was organized in November 2009 and was the only LDS congregation in South Sudan. A



member group may continue to operate. The Church called its first two members to serve full-time missions from the branch in early 2013. The South Sudanese Civil War and a very small LDS presence in the country appear responsible for the closure of the branch.

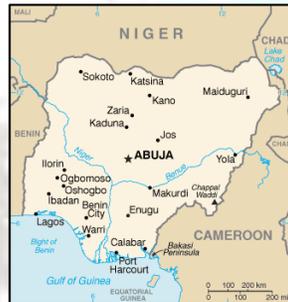
First LDS District Created in Macau

The Church organized its first district in the special administrative region of Macau on May 17th. The new district was organized from the three mission branches located in the Macau that previously pertained to the China Hong Kong Mission. There are currently three branches and approximately 1,400 members in Macau. The Church in Macau has historically experienced low member activity and poor convert retention rates. The decision to organize the new district, and a third branch in 2014, suggests improvements with augmenting the number of active members and strengthening priesthood leadership.



Progress in Ibadan, Nigeria

The Church has recently organized two new wards in Ibadan, Nigeria. The Church had experienced stagnant congregational growth in Ibadan for over a decade during the 2000s and early 2010s. The organization of Ibadan Nigeria Stake in 2014 and the creation of two new wards from the division of congregations in 2015 suggests significant improvements in this major metropolitan area within the heartland of the Yoruba people. The city currently pertains to the Nigeria Lagos Mission. The Church previously based a mission in Ibadan during most of the 2000s.



LDS Growth Developments in Cameroon

The Church recently created two new branches in Yaoundé, Cameroon – one of which is English-speaking. Steady congregational growth has occurred in Yaoundé during the past five years as the number of branches increased from one in 2005 to seven at present. Missionaries report plans to advance the Yaoundé Cameroon District into a stake within the foreseeable future, and to organize two new branches and a district in Douala. Cameroon is assigned to the recently-organized Republic of Congo Brazzaville Mission. The Church reported 1,498 members and seven branches at year-end 2014.



LDS Growth Developments in Swaziland

The Church recently organized two new branches in Swaziland, increasing the number of branches in the Mbabane Swaziland District from four to six. The two new branches were organized in Manzini and Mbabane. Swaziland was recently reassigned from the South Africa Durban Mission to the Mozambique Maputo Mission. The mission reports efforts to advance the district into a stake within the near future. The Church reported 1,768 members and four branches at year-end 2014.



First LDS Stake in Vanuatu to be created in June 2015

Missionaries serving in the Vanuatu Port Vila Mission report that the mission will organize its first stake in Vanuatu in late June 2015. The mission initially planned to organize the new stake from the Port Vila Vanuatu District in April 2015, but delayed the stake creation due to the impact of Cyclone Pam on the island nation. Missionaries serving in Vanuatu have indicated impressive LDS growth has occurred since the destruction left by the cyclone. The Port Vila Vanuatu District Conference in May 2015 had over 2,100 in attendance. Missionaries have recently reported high numbers of members and investigators attending church meetings in many areas of the country.



The Worldwide Number of Mandarin-Speaking LDS Congregations continues to Increase

The Church has continued to regularly organize new Mandarin Chinese-speaking branches in many areas of the world. The Church has organized new Mandarin-speaking branches in the following locations since 2012: Melbourne, Australia (2012); Union City, California (2013); Pasadena, California (2014); Brisbane, Australia (2015); and Logan, Utah (2015). There were 12 officially designated Mandarin-speaking wards or branches and 18 Chinese (not specified Mandarin or Cantonese)-speaking units outside of China as of May 2015.

NEW RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

Analysis of LDS Growth in Nairobi, Kenya

Nairobi is the most populous metropolitan area in Kenya and the second most populous metropolitan area in East Africa. Slow growth occurred during the remainder of the twentieth century and during the 2000s as evidenced by small increases in the number of congregations and modest membership growth. However, rapid congregational growth has occurred in the 2010s. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Nairobi. Recent church growth and missionary successes are analyzed. Opportunities and challenges for future growth are discussed. The growth of the Church in other major East African cities is compared to LDS growth trends in Nairobi. 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 the Ijaw of Nigeria

The Ijaw, also known as the Ijo or Izon, are a collection of black African peoples native to the coastline areas of the Nigerian states of Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers. The LDS Church maintains an official presence in three cities on the outskirts of the Ijaw homeland (Port Harcourt, Bonny, and Yenagoa) and has experienced rapid growth in two of these locations (Port Harcourt and Yenagoa). No specialized LDS outreach has appeared to have been extended among the Ijaw as of early 2015. This case study reviews the history of the Church's administration of the Ijaw homelands. Opportunities and challenges for future growth are analyzed. The growth of the Church among other major peoples in Nigeria is reviewed and the size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups with a presence among the Ijaw is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

Prospective LDS Outreach Expansion in Uttar Pradesh, India

Supporting a population of approximately 200 million, Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India and the most populous country subdivision in the world. The LDS Church maintains no presence in Uttar Pradesh with the exception of one small branch in the extreme west located on outskirts of the New Delhi metropolitan area. This case study reviews the history of the Church's administration of Uttar Pradesh. Opportunities and challenges for future growth are analyzed. The growth of the Church in other Indian administrative divisions is reviewed and the size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups with a presence in Uttar Pradesh is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

Recent Church Growth and Missionary Successes in Mozambique

Mozambique has a population of 24.7 million people and is located in southern Africa. The Mozambique Maputo Mission has achieved significant progress accelerating growth during the early 2010s as evidenced by a net increase in the number of congregations operating in 2014, increasing numbers of active members, larger numbers of local members serving full-time missions, and the organization of the Church's first two stakes in the country in early 2015. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Mozambique. Recent church growth and missionary successes are identified. Opportunities and challenges for future growth are predicted. The growth of the Church in other southern Sub-Saharan African nations is reviewed. The size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups that operate in Mozambique are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

Recent Church Growth and Missionary Successes in Namibia

Namibia has a population of 2.2 million people and is located in southern Africa. The LDS Church has maintained a presence in Namibia since the late 1970s/early 1980s and has experienced slow growth throughout most of its history in the country. The Church in Namibia has achieved significant progress accelerating growth during the early 2010s as evidenced by the organization of new branches, the formation of the first district, and the creation of the first branch outside the capital city, Windhoek. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Namibia. Recent church growth and missionary successes are identified. Opportunities and challenges for future growth are predicted. The growth of the Church in other southern Sub-Saharan African nations is reviewed. The size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups that operate in Namibia are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

Stagnant LDS Growth in Guyana

Guyana is the most populous of the three countries that comprise the Guianas of northeastern South America. There are approximately 736,000 inhabitants in Guyana. The LDS Church has maintained a presence in Guyana since the late 1980s and experienced rapid growth until the late 2000s. The Church has experienced stagnant growth in the 2010s as evidenced by congregational decline and extremely slow membership growth. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Guyana. Past church growth successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for future growth are examined. The size and growth of the LDS Church in other nearby nations is reviewed. The size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups in Guyana is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.