



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

November 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)

- 54. Bartlesville Oklahoma - November 2nd, 2014
- 55. Abobo Cote d'Ivoire East - November 9th, 2014
- 56. Ashiaman Ghana - November 9th, 2014
- 57. Lake Mary Florida - November 9th, 2014
- 58. Manama Bahrain - November 14th, 2014
- 59. Abeokuta Nigeria - November 16th, 2014
- 60. Kaysville Utah Deseret Mill - November 16th, 2014
- 61. São José do Rio Preto Brazil South - Nov. 16, 2014
- 62. Ciudad Juárez México Las Torres - Nov. 23, 2014

New Districts

No new districts were organized in November 2014

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

- 10. Quarai Brazil District

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Chos Malal, Argentina (N/A, 13,092)
- Laguna Naick, Argentina (N/A, 2,479)
- Rincón de los Sauces, Argentina (N/A, 18,691)
- Armação dos Búzios, RJ, Brazil (57th, 27,560)
- Limoeiro do Norte, Ceara, Brazil (26th, 31,972)
- Pirenópolis, Brazil (57th, 15,358)
- Saint-Jérôme, Quebec, Canada (9th, 57,920)
- Telchaquillo, Yucatan, Mexico (174th, 1,385)
- Koné, New Caledonia (5th, 7,340)
- Ihembosi, Nigeria (N/A, 50,000?)
- Argao, Philippines (N/A, 69,503)
- Socorro, Philippines (N/A, 38,348)
- Tabi, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Manresa, Spain (93rd, 76,209)

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

- Olive, Florida (N/A, N/A)
- Habikino, Japan (226th, 117,681)
- Ina, Japan (N/A, 69,372)
- Pueblo Yaqui, Sonora, Mexico (16th, 14,234)
- Warren, Pennsylvania (107th, 9,710)
- Pennsboro, West Virginia (139th, 1,171)

Second Stake Created in the Middle East

The Church recently organized its second stake in the Middle East. The Manama Bahrain Stake was organized from the Manama Bahrain District and the Abu Dhabi Stake. The new stake includes the Kuwait Ward and the Bahrain Branch. Most of the congregations in the new stake appear to operate within Saudi Arabia. The Church organized its first stake in the Middle East in 1983. In 2012, the Church divided the stake to create the Manama Bahrain District. LDS membership within the new stake is primarily comprised of North Americans, Filipinos, and South Asians.



Two Provinces in Cambodia Open to Missionary Activity

Missionaries serving in the Cambodia Phnom Penh Mission report that the mission recently opened the provinces of Prey Veng and Pursat to missionaries for the first time. It is unclear whether missionaries currently reside in these provinces as government approval for missionaries to serve in these locations appears to be pending. The recent organization of the Church's first two stakes in Cambodia has appeared to free mission resources for national outreach expansion.



City Opens to Missionary Work in New Caledonia

Missionaries serving in the Vanuatu Port Vila Mission report that the mission recently opened the small city of Koné, New Caledonia to missionary work. This marks the first time the Church in New Caledonia has opened a city to missionaries and organized a group in many years. Koné was previously the third most populous city in New Caledonia without an LDS presence.



Second Branch Created in Chişinău, Moldova

The Church recently organized its second branch in Chişinău, Moldova to service Russian speakers. The Church has maintained a presence in Moldova since the late 1990s and currently has four branches in the entire country. The decision to organize a separate branch in Chisinau for Russian speakers may be effective to augment the number of active members by providing separate branches for Romanian and Russian speakers. The Church operates Russian branches in a couple other Eastern European countries such as Latvia and Lithuania. Russian-speaking missionaries have only recently been assigned to the Romania Moldova Mission and were initially assigned to service the northern Moldovan city of Bălţi.



Number of Official LDS Congregations in Ghana Reaches 200

The Church in Ghana has reached 200 congregations (wards and branches) for the first time in its history. Rapid congregational growth has occurred within the past five years as a result of rapid national outreach expansion. Scores of previously unreached cities, towns, and villages have had congregations organized and missionaries assigned for the first time. The Church has also simultaneously organized multiple branches in cities where there was no previous LDS presence such as Sunyani, Tamale, and Techiman. The Church in Ghana reached the milestone of 100 congregations in 2009.



Initial LDS Outreach in Equatorial Guinea

Missionaries serving in recently organized Republic of Congo Brazzaville Mission report that the mission has received many referrals from individuals residing in Equatorial Guinea. Equatorial Guinea currently has no LDS presence. The mission was recently assigned a Spanish-speaking missionary and this missionary has been assigned to contact referrals originating from Equatorial Guinea. Prospects appear favorable for the opening of Equatorial Guinea to missionary work within the foreseeable future. We recently completed a case study examining opportunities for LDS outreach in Equatorial Guinea [here](#).



NEW RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

LDS Outreach among the Mazahua of Mexico

Numbering 283,000 in 2005, the Mazahua are an Amerindian people in Mexico who traditionally reside in northwestern Mexico State and adjacent areas in Michoacán and Queretaro States. Notwithstanding the LDS Church maintaining a presence in areas with sizable numbers of Mazahua for over four decades, no specialized outreach has occurred among the Mazahua although LDS congregations have operated in many locations with sizable Mazahua populations. This case study reviews LDS growth developments within areas traditionally inhabited by Mazahua people and known instances of Mazahua converts joining the Church. Church growth and missionary successes among the Mazahua 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 Mazahua is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

LDS Outreach among the Mixtec of Mexico

Numbering slightly more than half a million, the Mixtec are an Amerindian people in Mexico native to western Oaxaca, extreme eastern Guerrero, and extreme southern Puebla. Although the LDS Church has maintained a presence in some areas traditionally inhabited by the Mixtec for several decades, no specialized missionary activity has occurred among this Amerindian people. This case study reviews LDS growth developments within areas traditionally inhabited by Mixtec people and examines known instances of Mixtec converts joining the Church. Church growth and missionary successes among the Mixtec 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 Mixtec are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

LDS Outreach among the Otomi of Mexico

Numbering approximately 527,000 in 2005, the Otomi are an Amerindian people native to the central Mexico. Most Otomi reside in Hidalgo State and Mexico State, although sizable numbers also reside in Queretaro State and in areas of Puebla and Veracruz States bordering Hidalgo State. This case study reviews LDS growth developments within areas traditionally inhabited by Otomi people and known instances of Otomi converts joining the Church. Church growth and missionary successes among the Otomi 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 Otomi are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

LDS Outreach among the Totonac of Mexico

Numbering approximately 460,000, the Totonac are an Amerindian people native to an area of central Veracruz State and extreme northern Puebla State in Mexico called *Totonacapan*. Notwithstanding the LDS Church maintaining a presence in areas with sizable numbers of Totonac for over four decades, no specialized outreach has occurred among the Totonac although LDS congregations have operated in many locations with sizable Totonac populations. This case study reviews LDS growth developments within areas traditionally inhabited by Totonac people and known instances of Totonac converts joining the Church. Church growth and missionary successes in providing outreach among the Totonac 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 Totonac is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

LDS Outreach among the Tzeltal of Mexico

Closely related to the Tzotzil Amerindians, the Tzeltal inhabit central highland areas of the Mexican state of Chiapas and number somewhere between 372,000 and 466,000. Although the LDS Church has maintained a presence among the neighboring Tzotzil Amerindians for over two decades, the first concentrated efforts to reach the Tzeltal did not begin until the early 2010s. This case study reviews LDS growth developments in areas with sizable numbers of Tzeltal people and identifies instances of LDS outreach efforts among the Tzeltal. Missionary successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for growth are predicted. The growth of the Church among other Amerindian peoples indigenous to Mexico and Guatemala is reviewed, and the size and growth trends of other missionary-focused Christian groups with a presence among the Tzeltal are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

LDS Outreach among the Zapotec of Mexico

Numbering among the most populous Amerindian peoples in Mexico, the Zapotec traditionally reside in Oaxaca State, Mexico and speak a total of 57 languages that pertain to the Zapotecan language family. The most recent estimates place the total number of speakers of Zapotec languages at around 440,000, although the number of ethnic Zapotec may be as high as 647,000. Notwithstanding the LDS Church maintaining a presence in Oaxaca State since as early as 1960, no specialized outreach has occurred among the Zapotec notwithstanding LDS congregations operating in many locations where Zapotec reside in large numbers and sizable numbers of Zapotec joining the Church in the Juchitán area. This case study reviews LDS growth developments within Oaxaca State and known instances of Zapotec converts joining

the Church. Church growth and missionary successes in providing outreach among the Zapotec 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 Zapotec are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

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

Inhabited by 5.2 million people, Turkmenistan is located in Central Asia and has a population that is predominantly Muslim (89%) with a small Christian minority (9%). Major ethnolinguistic groups include the Turkmen (85%) Uzbek (5%), and Russian (4%). Aside from meetings that have occurred in private for foreign members within recent years, the Church has never established a presence in Turkmenistan largely due to missing its window to enter the country during the 1990s when religious freedom conditions were more accommodating to foreign, proselytism-focused Christian groups. Today current government legislation presents insurmountable barriers to an LDS establishment. This case study provides a brief introduction of proselytizing Christian groups in Turkmenistan and changes in government policies and legislation regulating the operation of foreign religious groups. Current barriers to establishing an LDS presence in Turkmenistan are identified. Limitations to this case study are discussed and prospects for a future LDS establishment are predicted.

[Opportunities for Establishing the LDS Church in Additional Cities in Spain](#)

Supporting a population of 47.7 million, Spain is the seventh most populous country in Europe. This case study reviews the growth of the Church in Spain and trends in national outreach expansion since 2000. Opportunities and challenges for expanding national outreach are explored. National outreach expansion efforts in other countries in southwestern Europe are reviewed, and the size and growth of other missionary-focused, nontraditional Christian denominations is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[Recent National Outreach Expansion in Brazil](#)

The fifth most populous country in the world, Brazil has a homogeneously Portuguese-speaking population of nearly 203 million people. Nearly 85% of the national population resides in urban areas. According to 2010 census data, there were 1,043 cities in Brazil with 20,000 or more inhabitants. As of late 2014, the LDS Church reported a congregation (ward, branch, or member group) in 582 of these cities (55.8%) as well as scores of additional cities with smaller populations. Approximately two-thirds of the Brazilian population resides in a city or town with an LDS congregation. In 2013 and 2014, the Church made significant strides in expanding LDS outreach into additional cities where it previously reported no presence. This case study identifies cities and towns where the Church in Brazil organized its first official ward, branch, or member group during the two-year period encompassing the years 2013 and 2014. Factors that have influenced accelerated national outreach expansion are identified. Opportunities and challenges for the Church to perpetuate recent outreach expansion trends are explored. Trends in LDS national outreach expansion in other Latin American countries are reviewed. The size, growth, and national outreach capabilities of other missionary-focused Christian groups are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[NEW RESOURCES \(continued\)](#)

STATISTICAL PROFILES

- [Burundi](#)
- [USA - Minnesota](#)
- [USA - Mississippi](#)
- [USA - Missouri](#)
- [USA - Montana](#)
- [USA - Nebraska](#)
- [USA - Nevada](#)
- [USA - New Hampshire](#)
- [USA - New Jersey](#)
- [USA - New York](#)
- [USA - North Carolina](#)
- [USA - Ohio](#)
- [USA - Oklahoma](#)
- [USA - Oregon](#)
- [USA - South Carolina](#)
- [USA - Utah](#)
- [USA - Virginia](#)
- [USA - Washington](#)
- [US Virgin Islands](#)