



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on Church Growth and Missionary Work for
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

November 2022

WELCOME!

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide monthly updates on the growth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 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)

- 27. Naga Philippines North - Nov. 6th, 2022
- 28. St Georgia Utah Boulder Ridge East - Nov. 20th

New Districts

- 4. Dar es Salaam Tanzania Chang'ombe - Nov. 13th
- 5. Arusha Tanzania - November 20th, 2022
- 6. Techiman Ghana - Nov. 27th, 2022

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

None reported in November 2022

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Madrid, Colombia (45th, 120,800)
- Kisenda, DR Congo (N/A, N/A)
- Mindouli, Republic of the Congo (14th, Mindouli)
- Wagner, South Dakota (49th, 1,490)

NOTE: Wagner used to have a branch until 2019 when it was closed; the branch was recently reinstated.

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

- Lovutialao, Vanuatu (N/A, N/A)
- Navuti, Vanuatu (N/A, N/A)

The End of Growth? Fading Prospects for Latter-day Saint Expansion

David G. Stewart, Jr, recently published an article in the Journal of the Mormon Social Science Association entitled, *The End of Growth? Fading Prospects for Latter-day Saint Expansion*. The article may be accessed [here](#). This article provides a thorough examination of the factors that have led to decelerated Latter-day Saint growth around the world during the past several decades. The concerns and challenges noted in this article have been widely researched and reported on in various resources available on cumorah.com for more than 20 years.

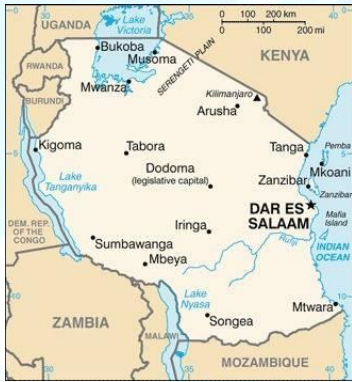
Six New Missions to Open in 2023—No Missions to Close in 2023

The Church announced plans to organize six new missions in July 2023—five of which are in Africa. The decision to create these new missions in Africa appears centered on increasing the number of mission resources available in some of the most receptive areas of the world to the Latter-day Saint gospel message and increases in the number of members from Africa serving full-time missions. The new missions include:

- Cote d'Ivoire Abidjan North
- Democratic Republic of the Congo Kananga
- Nigeria Abuja
- Nigeria Abuja
- South Africa Pretoria
- Romania Bucharest (technically a reinstatement of the Romania Bucharest Mission which operated from 1993 until 2018).

With these changes, there will be 416 missions in the worldwide Church. The Church reached an all-time high of 422 missions in 2016. Also, the number of missions in Nigeria will increase from seven to nine, the number of missions in the DR Congo will increase from four to five, the number of missions in Cote d'Ivoire will increase from three to four, and the number of missions in South Africa will create from three to four. A blog post that provides analysis of these new mission announces can be found [here](#).

Two New Districts Created in Tanzania



The Church organized two new districts in Tanzania during the month of November, bringing the total number of districts in the country to three by the end of the month. The Church organized its first district outside of Dar es Salaam in Arusha with three branches included in the new district.

Moreover, the Church divided the burgeoning Dar es Salaam Tanzania District to create the new Dar es Salaam Tanzania Chang'ombe District with four branches. Returned missionaries report that the mission has favored organizing smaller branches that met in locations closer to targeted populations and Latter-day Saints spread throughout the large city of Dar es Salaam which has 6.75 million people. Tanzania ranked among the top countries in the world with the highest membership growth rates between 2019 and 2021, whereas the Church has historically reported slow or stagnant membership growth in Tanzania for most of its 30-year history in the country. The adoption of Swahili as the official language of church services and proselytism and the creation of a separate mission headquartered in Tanzania in 2020 have been important catalysts for recent growth. However, the Church in Tanzania continues to have an extremely limited presence, with official branches operating in only four cities in this nation of nearly 64 million people.

First Branch Organized in Mindouli, Republic of the Congo

The Church in the Republic of the Congo organized its first branch in the city of Mindouli located on the border of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Mindouli is the fifth city in the Republic of the Congo to have a branch organized after Brazzaville (1991), Pointe-Noir (1997), Dolisie (2019), and Ouesso (2021). As of year-end 2021, there were 9,892 members, 28 congregations, and four stakes in the Republic of the Congo. The Church announced a temple for Brazzaville in April 2022.

Recent Progress in Chile

Local members in Chile have noted progress with the creation of new wards and the advancement of branches into wards within the past couple months. For example, two branches were organized in two wards in the Puerto Montt Chile Stake, two new wards were recently organized in Santiago and Antofagasta, and a new branch was organized in the city of Dalcahue in the Chiloe Chile District. Local members indicate that it is anticipated that the Puerto Montt Chile Stake will divide to reinstate the previous Puerto Varas Chile Stake which operated between 1997 and 2002. Although these developments are encouraging, the Church in Chile has long maintained a trend of stagnant growth or decline during the past two decades. For example, between year-end 2011 and year-end 2021, the number of official congregations (i.e., wards and branches) in Chile declined from 620 to 568 even though the number of members reported by the Church in Chile increased from 570,833 to 602,696. Moreover, the Church has only four temples in Chile (two in operation, one under construction, one announced), whereas Argentina has six temples even though there are more than 100,000 fewer Latter-day Saints in Argentina compared to Chile.



Third Persian-Speaking Branch in the United States Organized

Local members in Virginia reported that a new Persian (Farsi)-speaking branch was organized in the Washington DC metropolitan area. This marks the third time the Church has organized a Persian-speaking branch in the United States (the first branch being organized in [Del Mar, California in 2017](#), and the second branch being organized in Newport Beach, California in 2019). There are thousands of Iranian converts around the world—many of whom live in the United States, Canada, Europe, South America, Australia, and Turkey. There is only one other country in the world where there is a Persian-speaking branch: the Isparta Branch in Turkey (organized in 2019). All four Persian-speaking branches of the Church appear to be led by native Iranian branch presidents given church leader last names available on the Church's meetinghouse locator. Iranians have been uniquely receptive to the Latter-day Saint gospel message among the peoples of the Middle East and West Asia. The church briefly operated a mission headquartered in Iran, the Iran Tehran Mission, from 1975 until 1979, although only [approximately 15 Iranians joined the Church when the mission operated \(although Church membership had swelled to more than 400 in 1977\)](#).