



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

October 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)

- 50. Goiânia Brazil South - Sept. 21st, 2014
- 51. Woodlands Texas - October 12th, 2014
- 52. Bentonville Arkansas - October 26th, 2014
- 53. Monett Missouri - October 26th, 2014

New Districts

- 16. Abakaliki Nigeria - September 14th, 2014
- 17. La Fria Venezuela - September 28th, 2014
- 18. San Martin Argentina District - Sept. 28th, 2014
- 19. Kilungu Hills Kenya District - October 12th, 2014

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

- 9. Khon Kaen Thailand District

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Puerto Esperanza, Argentina (N/A, 15,204)
- São Francisco do Conde, Bahia, Brazil (85th, 17,368)
- Mariana, Minas Gerais, Brazil (78th, 37,706)
- Araruama, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (34th, 76,073)
- Barra do Pirai, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (38th, 69,364)
- Gaspar, Santa Catarina, Brazil (24th, 47,126)
- Neak Loeng, Cambodia (23rd, 18,531)
- Pursat, Cambodia (18th, 25,650)
- Estes Park, Colorado (96th, 5,858)
- Puerto Viejo, Costa Rica (N/A, N/A)
- Kalongo, Kenya (N/A, N/A)
- Morbegno, Italy (N/A, N/A)
- Cayalti, Peru (N/A, N/A)
- Pavia, Philippines (173rd, 39,275)
- Salinas, Puerto Rico (61st, 4,771)
- Kranj, Slovenia (4th, 36,874)
- Inepkasu, Vanuatu (N/A, N/A)

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

- St. Lazare, Quebec, Canada (N/A, N/A)

New Branch Created in Slovenia

Missionaries serving in Slovenia report that the Church split the original Ljubljana Branch to create the Kranj Branch. The new branch is the Church's first new branch created in Slovenia in over a decade. Kranj was previously the city in Slovenia with the largest population without an LDS congregation. There are now four branches in Slovenia located in Ljubljana, Celje, and Maribor. There were 425 members in Slovenia as of year-end 2013.



New District in Rural Kenya

After many years of preparation, the Church organized its first district in the Kilungu Hills of Kenya. 600 of the 1,000 members in the new district attended this historic conference. The Church has operated branches in this remote, rural area of Kenya for over two decades and has achieved steady growth. Currently there are five branches in the district.

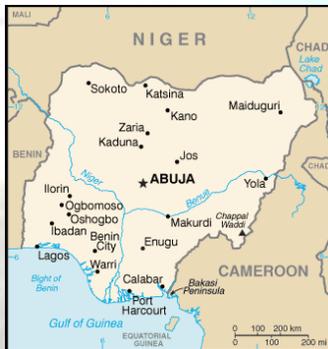


New Progress in Nigeria

The Church in Nigeria continues to experience many indicators of rapid growth as indicated by congregational growth and the creation of a new district in Ebonyi State. Rapid congregational has recently occurred in Calabar, Nigeria the first time since the establishment of the Church in the city. So far in 2014, the number of congregations in Calabar has increased from nine to 15. Organized in 2002, the Calabar Nigeria Stake appears close to splitting in the near future.

The number of branches in the Nigerian city of Ondo recently increased from one to three. Ondo numbered among the handful of cities in Sub-Saharan Africa where the Church actually experienced a decline in the number of congregations since 2001 as two branches once operated in the city. The recent organization of new branches suggests progress in augmenting active membership growth and saturation the city with greater mission resources.

The Church recently created its first district in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The new district is headquartered in Abakaliki. Ebonyi State has a population of 2.5 million people and is within the boundaries of the Nigeria Enugu Mission.



New Branch in Puerto Rico

The Church recently created a new branch in Puerto Rico. This marks the first time the Church in Puerto Rico has created a new branch in seven years. The new branch is located in the small city of Salinas within the Caguas Puerto Rico Stake. There are now 42 congregations (29 wards, 13 branches) in Puerto Rico.



Prolific Congregational Growth in the Abobo Cote d'Ivoire Stake

The Abobo Cote d'Ivoire Stake has mushroomed from eight wards at the beginning of 2014 to 15 wards and one branch at present. Never has the Church appeared to experience as rapid congregational growth within a single stake within such a short period of time. The Church in Cote d'Ivoire has experienced unprecedented rapid congregational and membership growth within the past couple years. Only African members serve missions in the two Abidjan-based Ivorian missions.



Continued Progress in Liberia and Sierra Leone Despite Ebola Epidemic

The Church continues to progress in Liberia and Sierra Leone despite the Ebola epidemic and the removal of full-time missionaries in August. In October, the Church organized its 21st branch in Monrovia and appears to regularly hold convert baptisms through the efforts of branch missionaries. The Church in Sierra Leone has also continued to organize new branches despite the epidemic. There are now 38 congregations in Sierra Leone (8 wards, 30 branches) and 24 branches in Liberia.

NEW RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

Missed Opportunities for LDS Outreach in Tajikistan

Inhabited by 8.1 million people, Tajikistan is located in Central Asia and has a population that is homogenously Muslim (97%) with a tiny Christian minority (2%). Although the LDS Church once operated a congregation in the Tajikistani capital and had expectations and initial plans to establish an official church presence in neighboring Kyrgyzstan during the early 2000s, the Church missed its window of opportunity to obtain government recognition when these qualifications were attainable. This case study provides a brief introduction of proselytizing Christian groups in Tajikistan and changes in government policies and legislation regulating the operation of foreign religious groups. Current barriers to establishing an LDS presence in Tajikistan are identified. Limitations to this case study are discussed and prospects for a future LDS establishment are predicted.

Missed Opportunities for LDS Outreach in Uzbekistan

Inhabited by 28.9 million people, Uzbekistan is located in Central Asia and has a population that is predominantly Muslim (88%) with a small Christian minority (9%). Aside from meetings that have occurred in private for foreign military personnel within recent years, the Church has never established a presence in Uzbekistan 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 Uzbekistan and changes in government policies and legislation regulating the operation of foreign religious groups. Current barriers to establishing an LDS presence in Uzbekistan are identified. Limitations to this case study are discussed and prospects for a future LDS establishment are predicted.

Opportunities for LDS Outreach Expansion in Benin

This case study reviews the history of the Church's national outreach expansion efforts in Benin and identifies recent outreach expansion successes. An overview of the "Sunyani Model" for opening previously unreached cities in West Africa to missionary work is provided. Opportunities and challenges for opening additional areas of the country to missionaries are analyzed. Trends in outreach expansion and church growth in Benin are compared to other West African countries with an LDS presence. A synopsis of the growth and size of other proselytizing Christian groups that operate in Benin is provided. Limitations to data utilized in this case study are identified and the outlook for church growth and national outreach expansion is predicted.

Prospective LDS Outreach among the Yi (Lolo) People in China

The Yi or Lolo constitute a loose collection of culturally, linguistically, and religiously diverse peoples who traditionally reside in Yunnan Province. This case study provides a brief introduction to Yi peoples. Opportunities and challenges for establishing an LDS presence and proselytizing the Yi are examined. The growth of the Church among other ethnic minority groups in mainland China is reviewed and the size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups who have a presence among the Yi is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

Prospective LDS Outreach in Niger

Inhabited by 17.5 million people, Niger is a landlocked West African country. As of mid-2014, the LDS Church reported no presence in Niger notwithstanding the government consistently upholding religious freedom for non-Muslim groups, no recent reports of societal abuses of religious freedom that targeted Christians, several nontraditional Christian groups freely operating in the country, and the presence on a handful of isolated Latter-day Saints. This case study reviews the history of the Church administering Niger and identifies translations of basic proselytism materials available in indigenous languages spoken in the country. Opportunities for establishing an official LDS presence and achieving growth are explored. Recommendations for how to most effectively establish an initial LDS presence are provided. Challenges for establishing a church presence and achieving growth are discussed. The growth of other proselytizing Christian groups that operate in Niger is summarized. Limitations to this case study are described and prospects for an LDS establishment in Niger is predicted.

Recent Church Growth and Missionary Developments in Laos

Inhabited by 6.8 million, Laos has a diverse population that is Lao (55%), Khmou (11%), Hmong (8%), and other ethnicities (26%). This case study reviews the history of the Church in Laos. Recent church growth and missionary successes are identified, and opportunities and challenges for future growth are explored. Recent LDS developments in other Southeast Asian countries are reviewed, and the size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups in Laos are summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

NEW RESOURCES (continued)

MISSIONOLOGY ENCYCLOPEDIA

- [Church Planting](#)
- [Comparative Growth Research](#)
- [Congregational Growth](#)
- [Convert Retention](#)
- [Geography](#)
- [Member Activity Rates](#)
- [Member Missionary Work](#)
- [Membership Growth](#)
- [Mission](#)
- [Missionary \(full-time\)](#)
- [Missionary Training Center](#)
- [National Outreach and the Percentage Reached by LDS Congregations](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Social Media and the Internet](#)