



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

October 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)

- 49. Saratoga Springs Utah Saratoga Hills - October 8th
- 50. Craig Colorado - October 15th, 2017
- 51. Slidell Louisiana - October 15th, 2017
- 52. Etinan Nigeria North - October 15th, 2017
- 53. Midway Utah West - October 15th, 2017
- 54. Ruashi DR Congo - October 22nd, 2017
- 55. Daloa Cote d'Ivoire - October 22nd, 2017
- 56. Abomosu Ghana - October 22nd, 2017
- 57. Blackstone Valley Massachusetts - October 22nd
- 58. Lomé Togo Tokoin - October 22nd, 2017

- Nacala-Porto, Mozambique (6th, 238,100)
- Eziala, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Ulegu, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Germfask, Michigan (N/A, ~500)

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

- Magdeburg, Germany (33rd, 231,525)

New Districts

- 20. Matías Romero México - October 8th, 2017
- 21. Nampula Mozambique - October 22nd, 2017

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

- 4. Garden Grove California Stake
- 5. Ciudad Obregón México Yaqui Stake

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Edmundston, New Brunswick, Canada (5th, 14,110)
- Bagaces, Costa Rica (58th, 6,275)
- Juntas, Costa Rica (87th, 3,927)
- Upala, Costa Rica (59th, 6,070)
- Ngong, Kenya (11th, 104,073)
- Chongon, Ecuador (N/A, N/A)
- Esiama, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Medie, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Ntiamoah, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Kainaba, Kiribati (N/A, N/A)
- Nabeina, Kiribati (39th, 442)
- Maratane, Mozambique (N/A, ~16,000)

Second Stake in Togo Organized



The Church organized its second stake in the West African country of Togo on October 22nd. The Church in Togo has experienced some of the most rapid LDS growth in the world during the past decade. For example, the Church in Togo reported 733 members, two branches, and zero stakes, wards, and

districts in 2007, whereas the Church in Togo reported more than 4,000 members, 14 wards, three branches, and two stakes in late 2017. The first district was organized in December 2009, followed by the organization of the first stake in December 2013. Full-time missionaries have also recently reported that member groups have opened in two additional cities outside of Lomé for the first time (Kpalimé and Tsévié). Togo pertains to the Benin Cotonou Mission.

New Stake in Cote d'Ivoire

Two Sundays ago, the Church in Cote d'Ivoire organized the Daloa Cote d'Ivoire Stake. Some of the most rapid LDS growth ever reported by the Church since its founding has occurred in Daloa. Nearly all members in the new stake appear to have joined the Church within the past four years. The Church organized its first six branches in Daloa in one Sunday in February 2014. It is likely that most, if not all, of these branches previously operated as member groups. The Daloa Cote d'Ivoire District was organized in April 2015. Never has the Church appeared to have organized a stake in an area so quickly with the exception of Mormon colonies in North America during the 1800s. Information on which of the eight branches in Daloa became wards in the new stake remains unavailable.



First Rural Stake in Ghana Organized

The Church in Ghana organized its first stake in Abomosu on October 22nd. The Abomosu Ghana Stake is the Church's first stake in Ghana that is entirely located in rural communities. A full-time missionary reported that there were approximately 1,400 people in attendance at the special conference to organize the new stake – a number approximately twice the size of stake conference attendance for many stakes in the Church outside the United States.



New District in Mozambique

The Church in Mozambique has organized a district outside of the two most populous cities of Maputo and Beira for the first time. The Nampula Mozambique District was created in conjunction with the organization of two new branches in Nampula. There are now three branches in Nampula. Two new member groups in northern Mozambique were also recently organized according to full-time missionary reports. There are now three stakes and one district in Mozambique.



Stake Reinstated in Louisiana

The Church reinstated the Slidell Louisiana Stake during October. The original Slidell Louisiana Stake was organized in 1985 and was discontinued in 2007 due to many active members moving away from the area after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. The reestablishment of the stake likely indicates increases in active members in the area in order for the stake to be reinstated.

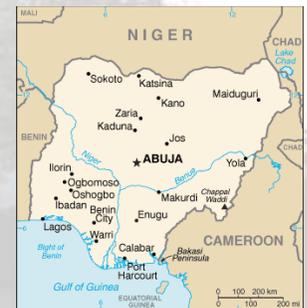
Delays in Mali

Delays continue for the Church in Mali in regards to the assignment of full-time missionaries. Although local members were optimistic that the first full-time missionaries would be assigned in the coming weeks, recent threats from radical Islamist groups that target Christians have posed safety concerns. These recent threats have also discouraged many investigators from attending church services. The Church in Mali currently operates one branch and one member group.



Rapid Congregational Growth Continues in Nigeria

There has thus far been a net increase of 90 new wards and branches in Nigeria in 2017. Given congregational growth trends during the year, it is likely that the Church in Nigeria will exceed 100 new wards and branches organized during 2017 for the year. No wards or branches have been discontinued in Nigeria during 2017. Most of the recent congregational growth in Nigeria has been focused in Benin City and Port Harcourt.



Progress in Laos

Missionaries serving in Laos report good church attendance and approximately 20 investigators attending sacrament meeting. One of the two branches in Vientiane reportedly has as many as 150 who attend weekly. Baptisms appear to occur almost on a weekly basis.

Congregation Consolidations in Mexico



Approximately 30 wards have been discontinued in Mexico during the past four months. Cities where most of these wards have been discontinued include Culiacán (7), Mazatlán (5), Tijuana

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(5), and Puebla (4). Local members reported that the area presidency has recently focused on better utilization of LDS meetinghouses in cities where multiple meetinghouses operate. As a result, many wards have been closed and consolidated with neighboring congregations in cities where meetinghouse are not being adequately utilized by membership. It is anticipated that many LDS meetinghouse will be decommissioned and sold in order for the Church to conserve meetinghouse costs and to organized wards with larger numbers of active members.

NEW RESOURCES

LDS National Outreach Expansion in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is a West African country inhabited by 6.2 million people. Muslims constitute 60% of the population. Followers of indigenous beliefs comprise 30% of the population, whereas Christians comprise the remaining 10% of the population. An English-based Creole language called Krio is spoken by 95% of the population as a language for interethnic communication. The LDS Church has maintained an official presence in Sierra Leone since 1988 when the first branch was organized in Goderich, Freetown. Although slow national outreach expansion occurred for the Church during the 1990s and 2000s, the Church has experienced significant progress in regards to the opening of additional areas to the Church since 2013. This case study reviews the history of the Church's national outreach expansion efforts in Sierra Leone. Information about the most recent expansion of the Church into previously unreached cities during 2017 is provided. Successes, opportunities, and challenges for continued growth and the opening of previously unreached areas of Sierra Leone to LDS proselytism are examined. The expansion of the Church in other West African nations is reviewed, and the growth and status of other nontraditional Christian denominations in Sierra Leone is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

