



# THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

September 2016

## 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)

- 72. Passo Fundo Brazil South - September 4th, 2016
- 73. Burleson Texas - September 11th, 2016
- 74. Dokui Cote d'Ivoire - September 11th, 2016

### New Districts

None reported in September 2016

### Discontinued Stakes and Districts

- 7. Anyang Korea Stake
- 8. Suwon Korea Stake

### Locations Recently Reached by the Church

(city population rank, most recent population estimate)  
precise population data from [www.citypopulation.de](http://www.citypopulation.de)

- Beebe, Arkansas (49<sup>th</sup>, 7,315)
- Pajuçara, Ceara, Brazil (16<sup>th</sup>, 43,782)
- Awutu Breku, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Las Rosas, Chiapas, Mexico (18<sup>th</sup>, 18,817)
- San Rafael del Sur, Nicaragua (23<sup>rd</sup>, 26,157)
- Bassa, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Obuba, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Otujeremi, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Mabudawan, Papua New Guinea (N/A, ~500)
- Obo, Papua New Guinea (N/A, N/A)
- Parama, Papua New Guinea (N/A, N/A)
- Wali, Papua New Guinea (N/A, N/A)
- Barotec Nuevo, Philippines (N/A, 54,146)
- Owl Creek, Wyoming (N/A, less than 100)
- Teruel, Spain (N/A, 35,590)

### 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](http://www.citypopulation.de)

- Tok, Alaska (58<sup>th</sup>, 1,258)
- Warrnambool, Australia (42<sup>nd</sup>, 28,150)
- Varese, Italy (68<sup>th</sup>, 81,579)
- Cuba, New Mexico (183<sup>rd</sup>, 731)
- Morropón, Peru (N/A, N/A)
- Río Caribe, Venezuela (194<sup>th</sup>, 20,500)
- Chilton, Wisconsin (165<sup>th</sup>, 3,933)

### Two Stakes Discontinued in South Korea

The Anyang Korea Stake and Suwon Korea Stake were discontinued during the month of September. Both stakes were located on the southern area of the greater Seoul metropolitan area. Local members and leaders indicate that the discontinuation of the two stakes and the consolidation of several wards in the affected area were primarily attributed to a desire to increase the number of active members in individual wards, and to establish stakes with more congregations and active members. Both discontinued stakes operated for many years with the minimal number of wards to function as stakes. The Church in South Korea has experienced the sharpest decline in the number of stakes within the past decade of any country in the world. The number of stakes has decreased from 17 in 2011 to 13 at present. Stagnant growth in active membership, active member families frequently moving to other countries, difficulties with comparatively few convert baptisms, and lackluster reactivation efforts appear primarily responsible for this decline.



## Steady Growth in Cape Verde

The Church in Cape Verde (Cabo Verde) continues to steadily grow. Four new branches have been organized thus far in 2016 – all of which were created on the main island of Santiago. The Praia Cape Verde Stake currently administers nine wards and four branches, and appears likely to divide in the near future to create a second stake in the city. Progress has also occurred on other islands. For example, missionaries serving on the most recently opened island of Sao Nicolau reported record highs for sacrament meeting attendance in September 2016. Praia appears a likely candidate for a new temple announcement due to distance from the nearest temples in Portugal and Ghana, rapid growth within the past five years, and the operation of three stakes in the country. There are now 22 wards, 20 branches, several member groups, and approximately 13,000 members in Cape Verde. The Church in Cape Verde also claims the highest percentage of Latter-day Saints in the population of any country in Africa, Asia, or Europe. Nominal church membership constituted 2.3% of the population at year-end 2015.



increase from year-end 2015. Three new stakes have also been organized in 2016. Several additional congregations, stakes, and districts appear likely to be created within the near future. There are now 16 stakes, three districts, 128 wards, and 38 branches in the DR Congo.



## Rapid Growth in Kenema, Sierra Leone



The Church recently organized its eighth branch in Kenema, Sierra Leone. Rapid growth has occurred in Kenema within the past decade as the Church reported only one branch in Kenema in 2010. Although hard hit by the Ebola epidemic last year, the Church in Kenema has

continued to make progress in regards to church growth and leadership development. Missionaries also report efforts to organize an official branch in the neighboring city of Kailahun where a member group operates.

## New German-Speaking Branch Created in Germany

For the first time in many years, the Church in Germany has organized a new German-speaking branch. The new branch is the Eifel Branch in the Düsseldorf Germany Stake. Only non-German-speaking units have been organized in Germany within recent memory, such as a Spanish-speaking branch in Heidelberg and an English-speaking branch in Hannover. The Eifel Branch originated from the Euskirchen Group that was growing steadily over the past three years since its organization. Local members report that the village of Enzen (population of around 400) has three sizable member families living in it and that it might be the most heavily LDS settlement in Europe based upon percentage of members in the population. Attendance appears as high as 70 to 80 in the new branch.



## Stake Growth in Texas

The Church has organized seven new stakes in Texas during 2016 - a more than 10% increase in the number of stakes since the beginning of the year. The organization of such a large number of stakes in Texas in 2016 appears driven by years of steady congregational growth and efforts by the area presidency to organize stakes with fewer congregations to stimulate member and leadership participation. There are now 71 stakes and three districts in Texas – the fifth most stakes of any state in the United States.

## Milestone Reached in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

With the creation of the Dokui Cote d'Ivoire Stake last Sunday, Abidjan is now the metropolitan area on the continental landmass of Africa and Eurasia with the most stakes. There are now 10 stakes headquartered in the Abidjan metropolitan area. Rapid LDS growth continues in Cote d'Ivoire. Thus far in 2016 there have been 43 new wards and branches organized - a 33% increase since the beginning of the year. There are now three stakes in Abidjan with 10 or more wards that appear ready to divide.



## Rapid Congregational Growth in the DR Congo

The Church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has experienced steady congregational growth in 2016, suggesting significant increases in the number of active members and new converts. Thus far in 2016, there has been a net increase of 13 wards and branches - an 8.5%

## The Church in Mali

We have confirmed that a family from Mali recently traveled to Ghana to be baptized. A member group operates in Mali with a small number of members. Missionaries report appropriately 30 prospective members in the country. The member group operates near Bamako, likely in the city of Ouélessébougou.



Concerns with proselytism in a predominantly Muslim country and distance from the nearest city with an LDS presence appear primarily responsible for the lack of an official LDS presence in Mali today.

## Book of Mormon Translation Underway in Chichewa

Recently returned missionaries from the Zambia Lusaka Mission report that the translation of the Book of Mormon into the Chichewa language has recently begun. Chichewa is the most commonly spoken indigenous African language in Malawi and has over 10 million native speakers worldwide.

## New Milestone Reached in West Africa

The Church Nigeria continues to make inroads with establishing congregations closer to members and populations targeted by missionary efforts. Two recently organized branches in Benin City appear to consist of only a handful of city blocks within their geographical boundaries.

## District Reinstated in the Russian Far East



The Church recently reinstated the Vladivostok Russia District. The district currently has seven branches in several cities located in the

Russian Far East. The Church previously operated a district headquartered in Vladivostok from 1996 until the late 1990s/early 2000s. The Russia Vladivostok Mission has experienced some of the greatest growth in Russia within the past five years as evidenced by the organization of new branches and the creation/reinstatement of two new districts.

