



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

APRIL 2013

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 Temple Announcements

On April 6th, the Church announced two new temples in Cedar City, Utah and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Cedar City Utah Temple becomes the Church's seventeenth temple in Utah and the Rio de Janeiro Brazil Temple becomes the Church's eighth temple in Brazil. There are now 170 temples announced, under construction, or operating worldwide.

New Stakes

(provided with chronological ranking and date of creation)

9. Cheyenne Wyoming East - 4/21/2013
10. Córdoba México - 4/21/2013
11. Gilbert Arizona Williams Field - 4/28/2013
12. México City Alamedas - 4/28/2013

New Districts

No new districts reported in April 2013

Discontinued Districts

Since January 2013 - No exact date available

1. Caaguazú Paraguay
2. Rostov Russia
3. Volgograd Russia
4. Toliatti Russia
5. Samara Russia

Cities Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Urucurituba, Amazonas, Brazil (36th, 9,523)
- Viadutos, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (264th, 2,643)
- Haida Gwaii, British Columbia, Canada (N/A, N/A)
- Kitimat, British Columbia, Canada (35th, 7,600)
- Bekwai, Ghana (N/A, N/A)
- Westerley, Rhode Island (11th, 17,936)

Cities Recently Closed by the Church¹

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

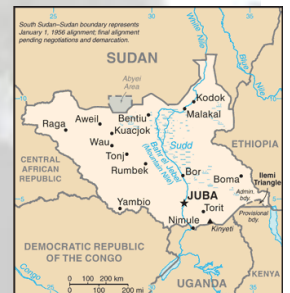
- Nova Prata, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (88th, 18,659)
- Carrizal, Venezuela (84th, 53,600)
- Coche, Venezuela (N/A, N/A)

Malay Translation of the Book of Mormon Completed

Missionaries serving in Malaysia report that the first Malay translation of the Book of Mormon has recently been completed and printed, making 109 translations of the Book of Mormon. The new translation is not yet available for order on the Church's online store at store.lds.org but is expected to be available in the coming months.

First Full-time Missionaries Called to Serve from South Sudan

The Church recently issued its first mission calls to two members living in Juba, South Sudan. The Church's first branch in South Sudan was organized in 2009 and although South Sudanese have served missions from other countries no local members residing in South Sudan have previously served missions. Mission presidents and missionaries have reported thousands of prospective members in outlying areas of South Sudan waiting for baptism but political instability and few



¹ *Cities where the only ward or branch was closed; some of these cities may continue to have a dependent unit and/or missionaries assigned

mission resources in the region have delayed outreach. Official church article on the first missionaries from South Sudan can be found [here](#).

Church Discontinues Four Member Districts in Russia

The Church in Russia has discontinued four of its seven districts (as of year-end 2012) within the past couple months. Discontinued districts were headquartered in Rostov, Samara, Toliatti, and Volgograd and all retained branches now report directly to either the Russia Rostov-na-Donu or Russia Samara Missions. It is not entirely clear as to why mission and area leaders have decided to consolidate these four districts, especially considering the Rostov Russia District appeared somewhat close to reaching stake status in the coming years. Few convert baptisms, low member activity rates, tiny numbers of active members distributed over large geographical areas, and local leadership development problems appear the primary reasons for the closure of these four districts. There are now two stakes and three districts in Russia whereas in 2008 there were no stakes and 15 districts.



Third LDS Branch Created in Lesotho

Recently organized under the Bloemfontein South Africa District from a member group, the Leribe Branch has become the Church's third branch in the small, landlocked mountainous African country of Lesotho. The two other branches operate in Maseru and appear likely to be realigned to create another branch in the near future; increasing the number of branches in Maseru to three and nationwide to four. The Church has had a presence in Lesotho for 25 years and has experienced slow growth for most of this period. The South Africa Durban Mission currently administers Lesotho's nearly two million inhabitants; 90% of whom reside in areas without an LDS presence.



Year-end 2012 Country-by-Country Membership and Congregational Statistics Available

Internet users can access year-end 2012 membership and congregational figures for most countries with an LDS presence [here](#). Below is a list of the 10 countries that experienced the highest percentage growth rates for membership:

- Benin - 59.9% - 1,081
- Rwanda - 34.4% - 121
- Solomon Islands - 31.5% - 509
- Botswana - 27.1% - 2,152
- Malawi - 22.9% - 1,421
- Angola - 20.9% - 1,257
- Togo - 19.7% - 1,861
- Jersey - 16.7% - 349
- Cape Verde - 16.2% - 9,326
- Ethiopia - 15.7% - 1,678

Below is a list of the 11 countries that reported the highest numerical increase in wards and branches for 2012:

- United States +114
- Nigeria +35
- Ghana +19
- Philippines +16
- Ivory Coast +11
- Zimbabwe +10
- DR. of Congo +9
- Australia +5
- Cape Verde +5
- Haiti +5
- Togo +5

2012 Annual Statistical Report

Below is a list of statistics reported for the Church as of year-end 2012.

- Membership: 14,782,473 (increase of 341,127 from 2011; a 2.36% annual increase)
- Congregations: 29,014 (increase of 230 from 2011; a 0.43% annual increase)
- Stakes: 3,005 (increase of 59 from 2011; a 2.00% annual increase)
- Districts: 591 (a decrease of 17 from 2011; a 2.80% annual decrease)
- Convert Baptisms: 272,330 (decrease of 8,982 from 2011; a 3.19% annual decrease)
- Increase of Children on Record: 122,273 (increase of 2,356 from 2011; a 1.96% annual increase)
- Full-time missionaries: 58,990 (increase of 3,580 from 2011; a 6.46% annual increase)
- Church service missionaries: 22,961 (increase of 662 from 2011; a 2.97% annual increase)²

² "2012 Statistical Report for 2013 April General Conference," mormonnewsroom.org, 6 April 2013.

First LDS Branch Created in Waterloo, Sierra Leone

In April, the Church created its first official branch in the city of Waterloo in Sierra Leone. Currently only four cities have an official ward or branch organized in the country (Freetown, Bo, Kenema, and Waterloo). The organization of a branch in an additional city has not occurred in approximately a decade since the Church created the Kenema Branch in the early 2000s. With the organization of a separate mission for Liberia, the Church appears highly likely to expand outreach into additional cities in Sierra Leone within the near future.

First Burmese-Designated Missionaries Begin Serving in North Carolina

To meet the teaching needs of Karen and other refugee peoples from Burma (Myanmar) resettled in Carolina, the Church has recently designated a missionary companionship exclusively for Burmese-specific outreach in the city of Lumberton. Missionaries report that there are approximately 50 active members in the branch, half of whom are refugees from Burma. Only a small handful of LDS materials are available in Burmese and no Burmese translation of the Book of Mormon is available. No LDS materials are available in other languages commonly spoken in Burma such as Karen.

Seminary Enrollment Reaches All-time High

The Church recently released its 2013 annual report for seminary and institute. The Church reported that it reached an all-time high for seminary enrollment for the 2011-2012 school year of 391,680. The Church's previous high was set back in the 1999-2000 school year of 381,758. Between the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, seminary enrollment increased 2.5% in the United States whereas it increased 6.4% outside of the United States, suggesting a significant improvement in seminary enrollment for the international church. The report can be accessed [here](http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/2012-statistical-report-2013-april-general-conference).

NEW RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

[Analysis of LDS Growth in Denver, Colorado](#)

This case study reviews the growth of the Church in the Denver area and examines successes, opportunities, and challenges for growth. A comparative growth section compares LDS growth in Denver to other major cities in the United States and provides a brief synopsis of the growth of other outreach-oriented faiths. A limitations section identifies weaknesses to data and methodology utilized in this case study. Lastly, a future prospects section predicts the outlook for future church growth within the foreseeable future.

[Analysis of New Missions to be Organized in July 2013](#)

This case study analyzes the geographic distribution of newly announced missions for 2013. Trends in mission growth are reviewed. The ramifications of the organization of new missions on church growth trends are examined followed by a discussion on whether future mission consolidations are inevitable. Likely locations for future missions to be organized within the mid-2010s are identified and discussed. Limitations to these findings and future prospects for church growth relating to new missions are explored.

[LDS Outreach among the Mapuche of Chile and Argentina](#)

This case study reviews the history and culture of the Mapuche people and past and current LDS proselytism activity among the Mapuche. Successes, opportunities, and challenges for missionary work and church growth are analyzed and discussed. A comparative growth section summarizes LDS missionary efforts among other prominent Amerindian peoples in Chile and Argentina and contrasts the growth of the Church among the Mapuche to other proselytizing Christian groups. Limitations to this case study are identified. Future prospects for growth are discussed and conclude this case study.

[Recent Church Growth Developments in Rwanda](#)

The Church in Rwanda experienced significant church growth developments in 2012 and 2013. The first proselytizing missionaries were assigned in September 2012 and mission leaders opened two additional branches in Kigali. This case study reviews recent church growth progress and analyzes successes, opportunities, and challenges for future growth.

[Prospective LDS Outreach in Sao Tome and Principe](#)

Supporting a population of approximately 180,000, Sao Tome and Principe numbers among the five island nations in Africa without an LDS presence. Conditions for establishing an LDS presence have appeared favorable for years due to LDS materials available in Portuguese, no restrictions on religious freedom, and a homogenous Christian population tolerant of proselytizing faiths. This case study explores the opportunities, challenges, and future prospects of establishing an LDS presence in Sao Tome and Principe. A comparative growth section identifies other island nations in Africa without an LDS presence and highlights the status of other missionary-focused religious groups that operate in Sao Tome and Principe. Limitations to this case study are examined and the outlook for beginning LDS outreach is discussed.

[Reversing Stagnant Growth: A Story of Success from Cape Verde](#)

The recent acceleration of growth in Cape Verde numbers among one of the greatest successes in the worldwide Church reversing slow or stagnant growth. This case study provides an overview of LDS growth in Cape Verde followed by factors that have contributed to accelerated growth in the early 2010s. Opportunities and challenges for LDS growth are discussed followed by a section comparing LDS growth in Cape Verde to other countries and proselytizing groups. Limitations and future prospects for LDS growth are discussed.

[The Island Effect: Do Island Nations Experience Greater LDS Growth than Mainland Nations?](#)

The relationship between island versus continental location in regards to church growth is examined as measured by the percentage of the population claimed by the LDS Church and the percentage of countries with a church presence. An analysis of contributors to church growth in island countries is provided followed by an analysis of deterrents to church growth in island countries. The growth of Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists in island versus continental countries is discussed.