



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

August 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)

- 63. Comayagüela Honduras Bulevar - July 24th, 2016
- 64. Olanchito Honduras - August 7th, 2016
- 65. Meridian Idaho Linder - August 21st, 2016
- 66. Phoenix Arizona South Mountain - Aug. 21st, 2016
- 67 São Luís Brazil East - August 21st, 2016
- 68. San Tan Valley Arizona North - August 21st, 2016
- 69. Stafford Virginia - August 21st, 2016
- 70. Provo Utah YSA 20th - August 28th, 2016
- 71. Provo Utah YSA 21st - August 28th, 2016

New Districts

- 19. Guaranda Ecuador - August 7th, 2016
- 20. Vladivostok Russia - August 28th, 2016

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

- 7. Talanga Honduras District

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Amélia Rodrigues, Bahia, Brazil (92nd, 16,261)
- Santa María Ixhvatán, Guatemala (N/A, N/A)
- Satuimatufilufi, Samoa (N/A, N/A)
- Kailahun, Sierra Leone (15th, 13,108)
- Verona, Wisconsin (81st, 10,619)

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

- Mantova, Italy (N/A, 48,671)
- Nieuw Nickerie, Suriname (5th, 13,842)

- Nuevo Chao, Peru (N/A, N/A)

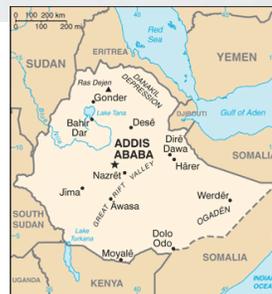
Steady Congregational Growth Continues in Taiwan

The Church in Taiwan continues to organize new wards on a regular basis, suggesting sustained improvements in leadership development and member activity. For example, the Tantzú 2nd Ward was recently organized in the Taichung Taiwan West Stake. Thus far in 2016, four new wards have been organized in Taiwan from ward divisions. There are now 117 official congregations in Taiwan.



Lack of LDS Growth in Ethiopia

Stagnant growth and leadership development problems continue for the Church in Ethiopia. The Wendo Genet Branch was recently discontinued - the second branch to be discontinued in Ethiopia within the past two years. There are now only four official branches in the entire country of approximately 100 million people. Ethiopia currently pertains to the Uganda Kampala Mission. Long-term challenges for LDS growth in Ethiopia have included the lack of an LDS mission headquartered in the country, problems with full-time missionaries learning the Amharic language, and the lack of local members serving full-time missions.



Expansion of the Church in West Central Ghana

The Church recently organized two new branches in the Bibiani area of western Ghana. Prior to the organization of the new branches, only one branch previously operated in this area of Ghana. One of the new branches, the Bekwai Branch, operates in a city where no official LDS congregation previously operated. Prospects appear favorable for the organization of a member district to service the area within the foreseeable future.



Branch Discontinued in Suriname

The Church in Suriname recently discontinued its only branch outside of the Paramaribo metropolitan area. The former branch used to operate in the city of Nieuw Nickerie. This development indicates ongoing problems for the Church in the Guianas to achieve sustainable expansion of the Church into additional regions. For example, the Church in neighboring French Guiana closed its only branch outside of the Cayenne metropolitan area in 2011. Currently there are five official branches in Suriname.



Progress in Honduras

Although there has been no net change in the total number of LDS congregations (wards and branches) in Honduras thus far in 2016, the number of wards has increased by 11 since the beginning of the year due to many branches advancing into wards. Additionally, the Church has organized four new stakes in Honduras thus far in 2016. These findings suggest good improvements in leadership development and augmenting the number of active members in many branches. There are now 27 stakes in Honduras.



Lack of Progress in Mexico

Over 100 surveys completed by Latter-day Saints in Mexico during the month of August indicate significant problems with convert retention in many wards and branches. Many wards and branches report convert retention rates of 20% or less for new converts one year after baptism. Additionally, most wards appear to have between 80 and 100 people attending church on average, whereas the average ward or branch has nearly 700 members on church records. Although receptivity to the LDS gospel message remains good in many areas of the country, rushed prebaptismal tactics, problems with member-missionary participation, and local leadership development problems have stifled growth in recent years. Thus far in 2016, there has been a net increase of only five congregations for the entire country – a 0.25% increase.



Rapid Growth Continues in Cote d'Ivoire

The Church in Cote d'Ivoire continues to report rapid growth. The number of wards in the Yamoussoukro Cote d'Ivoire Stake has increased to 10 – a significant accomplishment considering the stake was organized in April 2015 within seven wards. Several new stakes appear likely to be organized in Abidjan within the near future due to steady increases in the number of wards. There are now 167 official congregations in Cote d'Ivoire – 37 more than at the beginning of 2016. The Church in Cote d'Ivoire has organized new wards and branches at a rate of one per week for the year thus far.



NEW RESOURCES

LDS INTERNATIONAL ATLAS

Thanks to the completion of thousands of surveys from members and returned missionaries over the past couple years, we are in the process of including approximate sacrament meeting attendance figures for many wards and branches around the world. Most of these figures added to the LDS International Atlas have thus far been for congregations in Sub-Saharan Africa. We anticipate many more updates in the coming months ahead. The atlas can be accessed [here](#). Search the database by clicking on countries displayed on the map.

