



# THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

September 2015

## 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)

34. Mabalacat Philippines - August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015
35. Usulután El Salvador - August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015
36. Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire Yopougon Attie – Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015
37. Okpuala Ngwa Nigeria - September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015
38. Benin City Nigeria Oregbeni - Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015
39. Liberty Park New Jersey - September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015
40. Miami Florida - September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015
41. Sete Lagoas Brazil East - September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

### New Districts

22. Punilla Argentina - September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015
23. Barreiras Brazil – September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

### Discontinued Stakes and Districts

4. Salt Lake Wells
10. Ayaviri Peru
11. Paterson New Jersey
12. Johor Bahru Malaysia
13. La Unión Chile

### Locations Recently Reached by the Church

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

- Conde, Paraíba, Brazil (30<sup>th</sup>, 12,611)
- Roseira, Parana, Brazil (N/A, N/A)
- Irani, Santa Catarina, Brazil (127<sup>th</sup>, 6,520)
- São Cristóvão, Sergipe, Brazil (4<sup>th</sup>, 66,665)
- Patim, Cape Verde (N/A, N/A)
- Ponta Verde, Cape Verde (N/A, N/A)
- Miramar, Florida (14<sup>th</sup>, 122,041)
- Chalmette, Louisiana (27<sup>th</sup>, 16,751)
- Huichapan, Hidalgo, Mexico (28<sup>th</sup>, 9,051)
- Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Igbuzor, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)

- Ijebu-Ife, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Rumuji, Nigeria (N/A, N/A)
- Bontoc, Philippines (N/A, ~28,000)
- Cordova, Philippines (N/A, ~50,000)
- Julita, Philippines (N/A, ~13,000)
- Libagon, Philippines (N/A, ~14,000)
- Lopez Jaena, Philippines (N/A, ~24,000)
- Lumbayao, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Mahinog, Philippines (N/A, ~14,000)
- Medallo, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Miaray, Philippines (N/A, N/A)
- Sapang Dalaga, Philippines (N/A, ~19,000)
- Villanueva, Philippines (N/A, ~32,000)
- Guishan, Taiwan (23<sup>rd</sup>, 137,996)
- Luzhu, Taiwan (21<sup>st</sup>, 142,120)
- Sinton, Texas (348<sup>th</sup>, 5,665)
- Dili, Timor-Leste (1<sup>st</sup>, 192,652)

### 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)

- Dalby, Australia (N/A, 10,860)
- Haida Gwaii, British Columbia, Canada (N/A, ~1,000)
- Sisseton, South Dakota (33<sup>rd</sup>, 2,470)

### Timor-Leste Dedicated for Missionary work



Elder Jeffrey R. Holland dedicated the country of Timor-Leste for missionary work in August. Timor-Leste is currently designated as a mission area within the Indonesia Jakarta Mission and a humanitarian senior couple was recently assigned to Timor-Leste's capital, Dili.

Senior Missionaries have reported that sacrament meetings have been held in the couple's apartment since the dedication of the country. Timor-Leste has a population of 1.3 million. Most of the island's inhabitants speak Portuguese and adhere to Roman Catholicism.

### Congregational Growth Continues in Taiwan



The Church continues to be successful in reversing stagnant congregational growth in Taiwan. Two new wards were recently organized within the Tao Yuan Taiwan Stake. The Church has organized several additional congregations in Taiwan within the past two years as the number of congregations has increased

from 101 at year-end 2013 to 111 at present. Congregational growth appears to stem primarily from reactivation efforts rather than increasing numbers of convert baptisms.

### New Congregations Created in Nicaragua

For the first time in three years, the Church created two new branches in Nicaragua this month. The new congregations are located in Ocotal and Momotombo. Despite consistently large numbers of converts joining the Church in Nicaragua for many years, congregational growth has been very limited within the past decade. Low member activity and convert retention rates, as well as a conservative interpretation of the centers of strength paradigm, seem to be responsible for the reluctance of mission leaders to extend outreach into less-reached areas.



### New Stake in the Philippines

There are now 95 stakes in the Philippines as a result of the creation of the new Mabalacat Philippines Stake in late August. The new stake includes five wards and one branch in the Pampanga region. It appears likely that the Church in the Philippines may reach the 100 stake milestone later this year or in 2016. The Church in the Philippines has made significant progress with reaction efforts, expanding national outreach, improving self-sufficiency, and strengthening congregations since the early 2010s.



### New Ward Created in Indonesia

The Church recently split an existing ward to create a new ward for the first time in its history in Indonesia. The Bogor 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward is the second ward



to operate in the city of Bogor. With nine wards and one branch operating in the Jakarta Stake, the Church in Indonesia may be approaching the creation of a third stake in western Java within the next few years. Leadership development appears to be better than in other areas of Asia. The Church in Indonesia currently maintains two stakes and one district and reports approximately 7,000 members nationwide.

### Haitian Outreach begins in Chile

Missionaries serving in Chile Santiago West Mission report that Haitian-specific outreach has recently begun in the city. According to these reports, the organization of a Haitian branch in Santiago appears forthcoming in the near future. Missionaries also report that large numbers of Haitians have recently joined the Church in the Santiago area.



### New Stake in El Salvador

One of the last remaining member districts in El Salvador advanced to stake status during late August. The Usulután El Salvador Stake was created from the Usulután El Salvador District and a portion of the San Miguel El Salvador Stake. There are now 19 stakes and one district in El Salvador.



### New stakes in Nigeria

The Church created two new stakes in Nigeria in Benin City and Okpuala Ngwa. The new stake in Benin City is the sixth stake to operate within the metropolitan area. No other city in Sub-Saharan Africa has as many stakes and as small of a metropolitan population as Benin City. The creation of the Okpuala Ngwa Nigeria Stake in Abia State is especially encouraging as the district previously pertained to a former stake that was discontinued in 2005 (Umuahia – which returned to stake status in 2014). There are now 30 stakes and 19 districts in Nigeria.



# NEW RESOURCES

## CASE STUDIES

### Recent Church Growth and Missionary Successes in Cameroon

Cameroon is located in Central Africa and supports a population of 23.1 million. The LDS Church has experienced unprecedented growth in the two most populous cities within the past decade as evidenced by the organization of many new congregations in Douala and Yaoundé, accelerated membership growth, the establishment of the first member district, and the allocation of additional mission resources. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Cameroon. Recent church growth and missionary successes are identified. Opportunities and challenges for future growth are analyzed. LDS growth trends in neighboring Central African nations are reviewed. The growth of other proselytizing Christian groups that operate in Cameroon is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and the outlook for future growth is predicted.

### Stagnant LDS Growth in the Baltic States

Located in northeastern Europe, the Baltic States consist of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and have a combined population of 6.9 million people. Although the LDS Church experienced steady growth during the 1990s and 2000s within these nations, stagnant growth has occurred within the past five years as evidenced by slowing rates of annual membership growth and a net decline in the number of branches within the three countries. This case study reviews the history of the Church in the Baltic States. Past church growth successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for future growth are examined. The size and growth of the LDS Church in other nearby European nations is review. The size and growth of other missionary-focused Christian groups in the Baltic States is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

# UPDATED RESOURCES

## CASE STUDIES

### Rethinking Centers of Strength: The Case of Cote d'Ivoire

The West African country of Cote d'Ivoire has experienced some of the most impressive LDS growth trends within the past decade in the worldwide Church. This case study reviews the traditional interpretation of the centers of strength policy and its implementation in Cote d'Ivoire since the establishment of an LDS presence. Opportunities for continued national outreach expansion and church growth in Cote d'Ivoire are evaluated. Challenges to future LDS outreach expansion and the centers of strength policy are examined. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.