



**Called to Serve:
The Prosocial Behavior of Active Latter-day Saints**

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Introduction

2011-12 has been labeled the “Mormon moment,” a time when America showed great interest in learning about and understanding the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In addition to the sometimes distorted focus on the church in popular media, such as in the Broadway play *The Book of Mormon* and the TV series *Big Love*, and the political attention resulting from the political prominence of two members of the church, Jon Huntsman Jr. and Mitt Romney, there is also an interest in scientific and reliable knowledge about the church. Two recent publications shed important light on the church and its members. First, Robert Putnam and David E. Campbell’s (2010) book *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*, compares the political and social behaviors of Latter-day Saints with that of other American religions. Second, the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (Smith, 2011) released a major report titled: *Mormons in America: Certain in Their Beliefs, Uncertain of Their Place in Society*. Our study joins these two important works in an attempt to explain how Mormons live; contributing unique information on giving and volunteering behavior.

Information about Mormons is limited, with most information shared within Mormon academic circles. Scholars estimate the Mormon population at 14 million Mormons worldwide. A little less than half of them reside in the USA, making up about 2% of the U.S. population. On average, American Mormons are socially and politically conservative and tend to support the Republican Party (Fox, 2006; Smith, 2011). They are organized geographically into wards (congregations that are geographically prescribed, i.e. all those within a certain area are expected to attend the local ward) headed by volunteer bishops that are then organized into stakes (a geographical group including about 10 wards) that are headed by volunteer presidents. This large reliance on volunteer clergy is unusual in U.S. religions and is one of the interesting aspects of the LDS Church. One of the Mormons’ basic tenets is the belief that they are called by God to serve others. That means that practicing members of the LDS Church act under the belief that they are called to give time and expertise for the church, society, and humanity.

Our aim was to understand the role of church calls and obligations to the church, a less publicized aspect of the life of Latter-day Saints. As scholars of voluntary action, we

¹ Funding for the project came from the University of Pennsylvania Research Fund.

focused on giving and volunteering among members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As part of this effort, we focused on the religious practice of fulfilling “callings.” Among Latter-day Saints, a “calling” refers to specific responsibilities a member of the church is asked to fulfill. There are a wide variety of callings, ranging from cleaning the church building to leading youth groups to serving as a bishop (clergy) for a ward. Callings are voluntary and usually last a few years. A member is then “released” from this task, but is often given another calling soon thereafter. Most church-going members of a ward are asked to serve through fulfilling a calling (Pitcher, 1992). Until now the specific nature of callings, their variety, and additional forms of giving and volunteering, have not been systematically studied outside of the LDS Church.

Scholars who study volunteerism know that Utah, the only state where a majority of citizens are Latter-day Saints, has the highest rate of volunteering and the most volunteer hours per capita in the nation (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2010). In fact, according to this source an average resident of Utah volunteers 89.2 hours annually followed by an average resident of Alaska who volunteers for 55.1 hours (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2010). As such, volunteering is an important aspect of life in Utah and the Mormon tradition, yielding larger volunteer commitments than the rest of the country.

Despite this statistic, which suggests that Utah Mormons are very prosocial, it is unclear if Mormons in general and especially outside of Utah are as prosocial as their Utah counterparts. A secondary analysis of the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (Peterson, 2012) data reveals that politically Latter-day Saints outside of Utah are quite similar to those in Utah. However, it is not clear if giving and volunteering among Latter-day Saints varies throughout the country.

Scholars also don't know how much of the giving and volunteering by Mormons is directed within the church and how much is focused on the community at large regardless of faith. Other gaps in the scholarly literature include estimates of the amount of volunteering provided in addition to fulfilling callings and the amount of charitable donations provided by Mormons in addition to tithing. Thus, we carried out a study that aimed to find the scope and nature of giving and volunteering by active members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Our study is different from previous studies in a variety of ways. First, it is the largest of its kind (N=2664). Second, we were permitted to collect data during Sunday services in selected wards and, as such, we know that all of our respondents are active and affiliated members of the church, as lapsing Latter-day Saints usually don't attend the Sunday service. Finally, our data regarding the volunteering and giving activities of Mormons is more detailed than other studies. By focusing on the relatively narrow topic of giving and volunteering, we were able to collect very detailed information on the prosocial behaviors of Latter-day Saints.

Giving and Volunteering

What is known about giving in volunteering in the United States? About 70% of American households give to charity and, depending on the study, between 26.2%-55% of Americans volunteer. On average, **an active volunteer** will give about 4 hours a month (Cnaan, Jones, Dicken, & Salomon, 2011). Among all Americans the average time volunteered is about two hours per month. However, we know that not all groups volunteer equally. We know, for example, that the better educated, those who are working, those who own their homes, and individuals that have children at home volunteer more than their counterparts. We also know that those attending places of worship regularly tend to give and volunteer more than other Americans. For example, Putnam and Campbell (2010, 446-447) report that 45% of regular church attendees volunteer for non-religious causes compared to 26% of those who do not attend church regularly.

Within the upper quintile of religious people, 60% volunteer for religious causes, 61% volunteer for secular causes, and 94% donated money to either religious or secular causes. Highly religious people give roughly 7% of their income to charitable causes, including both religious and non-religious giving (Putnam & Campbell, 2010, 448-449).

Religious people, especially the Judeo-Christian traditions, are expected to tithe. Following biblical dictum, in its basic form, every household is expected to provide the faith community with 10% of their annual income. The Barna Group (2011) reported that tithing in America is rarely practiced. Historically between 5% and 7% of Americans fully tithe by giving 10% of household income. Furthermore, for many Americans tithing depends on available income and as the economy declined during and after the 2008 recession fewer Americans tithed. The current percentage of Americans who fully tithe is about 4%. The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (Smith, 2011) found that 79% of Latter-day Saints fully tithe and 1% partially tithe. However, this study was carried out with self-identified Mormons over the phone as opposed to individuals attending LDS wards, and as such can serve as a low estimate as it may include non-practicing Mormons.

These statistics set the baseline to which we will compare the members of the LDS Church through our research. Our aim is to assess giving and volunteering among members of the LDS Church as compared to Americans in general and to those highly active in their congregations in particular.

Methods

We used a mixed-methods design to carry out the study. The first phase consisted of 30 qualitative interviews with members of the LDS church. In the second phase a questionnaire was constructed and then administered to 2,664 respondents.

Access and Relationship to the LDS church

While the LDS church gave permission to conduct the study, no funding for the study was provided by any church-related source. While two members of the research team are members of the church, we were given complete freedom to construct the study and interpret the results. The LDS church did not seek to influence our findings in any way.

Phase 1

The first author in collaboration with a local stake president conducted 30 qualitative interviews with Latter-day Saints at various levels of church organization. The sample ranged from new converts to lifelong members, including those with few church responsibilities to regional leaders. Each interview was carried out in a location arranged with the respondent. Interviews consisted of open ended questions about Latter-day Saint beliefs, education, and practices as well as what kind of volunteer activities they engaged in and what motivated them to volunteer. Interviews lasted from one to three hours based on the themes that were raised. Each interview added new knowledge about what Latter-day Saints may do as volunteers. This information was used to compile a comprehensive list of volunteer activities. We ceased this phase of the research when very few new activities and insights were being mentioned in the interviews, a standard practice in qualitative research designed to assist in developing quantitative questionnaires.

Research instrument

The qualitative interviews led to the creation of a comprehensive, 14-page instrument asking about several different kinds of volunteer activities and charitable giving. In order to help respondents recall all volunteer activities in the past 12 months, we listed over 200 different possible volunteer activities. Some are restricted activities for men, some are restricted to women, and some are open for all. We also asked questions about donations, about what activities one expects the professional to be willing to perform pro bono if asked by a church leader, and sources of motivation to volunteer.

The instrument was reviewed by other researchers with experience working with Latter-day Saints. Based on their comments the questionnaire was revised. It was then pilot tested on a convenience sample of Latter-day Saints (n=11) who did not participate in the

qualitative phase. These respondents clocked the time it took to respond and provided us with criticism regarding wording, location of questions, and missing items. Their feedback was also incorporated into the questionnaire.

Phase 2

We obtained an IRB approval from the University of Pennsylvania. Permission from the LDS Church hierarchy was obtained to administer the instrument in various Latter-day Saint congregations in the USA. By administering the questionnaire during Sunday services, we based our sample on active LDS members. We visited each ward during the third hour of their Sunday service while adult men and women were assembled. After a short introduction in which we explained that participation is voluntary and any question can be skipped if so desired, the attendees completed the questionnaire. It took most respondents between 40 and 50 minutes to complete the instrument. From our observations, the only people who refused to participate in the study were non-members who came to the congregation as they considered whether or not to convert to the church. In interpreting our findings, it is important to remember that **our sample is primarily comprised of church-going Latter-day Saints.**

To obtain a sample as representative as possible of Latter-day Saints in the United States, we selected stakes in four time zones. There was no feasible way to conduct a random sample, so we applied a cluster sampling of congregations in the four time zones. We focused on stakes and their congregations which allowed us to include new converts, minorities, new immigrants, and families. Our final sample is comprised of Latter-day Saints from Southeastern Pennsylvania & New Jersey (19.6%), Michigan (13.7%), California (35.6%), and Utah (31.1%) (N = 2,664).

Sample description

The sample consisted primarily of highly educated, white, married couples with a long history of involvement with the LDS church.

Gender: The sample was balanced by gender, with about half males (47.6%) and slightly over half female (52.4%).

Age: The sample only included people aged 18 and older. The average age of respondents is 50 years.

Race and Ethnicity: The majority of the respondents are American born (91.3%) and the rest were immigrants.

The majority of respondents were white (87.4%). The next largest group was Latinos (5.8%).

Education: The sample consisted of a highly educated population. One fifth (20.4%) reported having a graduate academic degree and 29.3% reported a bachelor degree. A quarter reported some college (24.6%) and an additional 12.3% reported an associate degree. Only 11.4% reported only obtaining a high school education and 2% had a less than a high school education. In contrast, the U.S. Census (Ryan and Siebens 2012, 6), reports that only 10.3% of the U.S population has a graduate degree, 17.6% has a bachelor degree, 18.9% some college, 7.5% an associate degree, 28.5% high school diploma or GED, and 14.7% less than a high school education.

Income: Almost a quarter of the sample reported a household income of over \$100,000 (22.4%); 20.9% reported an income at or below \$20,000; the rest (56.7%) reported income between \$20,000 and \$100,000.

LDS Membership: The majority of the sample consisted of people who had been born into the Mormon faith (74.5%). About a quarter of the respondents (25.5%) are first generation Mormons. However, 30.6% reported that they had converted to the LDS church. The discrepancy is caused by cases where parents left the church and their children, the current members in the sample, returned to the church. Those who had LDS lineage and reported that they had converted also reported the date when they were baptized and officially became Latter-day Saints. The mean years since conversion was 27 with a range of a few weeks to 82 years.

Marriage and Household Size: Three quarters of the sample are married (76%); with small numbers who are single (13.8%); divorced (5.3%); widowed (4.2%); and separated (.6%). The majority of respondents had children (83.9%). For those in our sample with children, the median number of children is three.

Key findings

We divided the findings into two categories: the volunteer activities of Latter-day Saints and the donations of Latter-day Saints. The volunteer activities are grouped into four categories: 1) volunteering for religious purposes within the church and its auspices, 2) church-affiliated volunteering to meet the social needs of members; 3) church-affiliated volunteering to meet the social needs of people in the community regardless of the LDS membership; and 4) volunteering outside the church to assist people in the community. Donations are grouped into two key categories: 1) secular giving (direct donation to worthy non-religious causes) and 2) church-affiliated welfare giving, which is also a donation for worthy non-religious cause but through the church. We also asked about donations through the church for religious causes, including tithing.

Volunteering

As we explained above, callings are specific responsibilities a member of the church is asked to fulfill. They are assigned by a bishop or president and cover all religious, social, and organizational life of a group (ward or stake) as well as some communal responsibilities. We asked our respondents if, at the time of interview, they had a calling. The overwhelming majority (86.3%) reported that they are currently serving a calling.

The culture of service begins as soon as an individual joins the LDS Church. In 1998, LDS Church President Gordon B. Hinckley instructed members of the church that “Every convert into this Church should have an immediate responsibility.” Furthermore, the church’s administrative manual (LDS Church, 2010, p 156) given to local church clergy instructs:

New converts should be given an appropriate calling or another responsibility to serve as soon as possible. Some new members may be ready for callings as soon as they are baptized and confirmed. Others may need to receive simple assignments that would help them prepare to receive callings.

Latter-day Saints believe callings come from God through the bishop or other church leaders and very few hesitate to accept a call. We asked if, in the past five years, the respondents had refused a calling. Only 4.4% of the sample reported that they did so. Taking this percentage differently, less than one percent of Latter-day Saints refuse a calling in a given year. Indeed, in our in-depth interviews with clergy, most reported not to encounter refusal of callings or for refusal to happen very rarely. In every ward there are numerous assignments of callings every month.

Most respondents view callings as a positive experience in their lives. When we asked if, over their entire lifetime, the respondents had a bad experience with a calling, only a fifth (19.6%) answered affirmatively. On the other hand, when we asked respondents if they were sad to leave their previous calling, three fifths of the respondents (60.7%) answered affirmatively.

Table 1: Summary of annual volunteering by Latter-day Saints (Based on all 2664 cases).

Type of volunteering	Percent of respondents involved	Annual Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Non-Church Affiliated	61.9%	34 hrs	104.8 hrs	0.05-2050hrs
Church affiliated, social needs in community	64.5%	55.7 hrs	193.5 hrs	.5-2890 hrs
Church affiliated, social needs in congregation	93.7%	96.2 hrs	142.6 hrs	.5-2036 hrs
Religious volunteering	94.4%	242 hrs	505.6 hrs	.5-3120 hrs

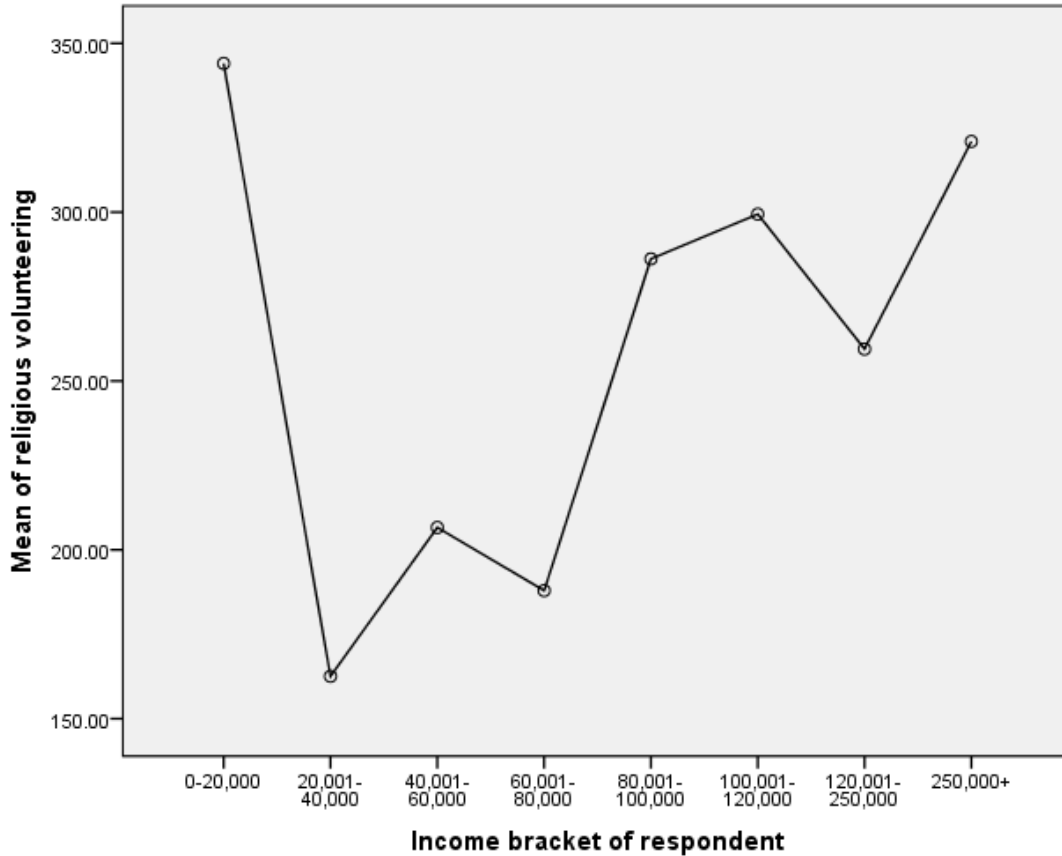
Table 1 reports on the average volunteer involvement of Latter-day Saints. As expected, the most common volunteer activity of Latter-day Saints is within the ward and for religious purposes, amounting to 57% of their volunteer time. This activity was reported to be performed by 94.4% of the respondents. On average, an active Latter-day Saint provides 242 hours of religious volunteering annually. In comparison, 51% of regular church attendees across all religions volunteer for religious purposes, providing 10.5 hours a month or 126 hours annually (Putnam and Campbell, 2010, 446-447).

Geography made no difference in this regard. All regions of the country reported equal levels of religious volunteering. Gender, however, was significant. Men (304 annual hours) reported many more hours of religious volunteering than women (193 annual hours).

As Figure 1 documents, income was significantly and negatively associated with religious volunteering. The lower the income the more people volunteered for religious causes. For example, those with income below \$20,000 volunteered on average 344 hours as compared with 321 hours by those earning \$250,000 and more. Those with middle

income volunteered the least. The high level of volunteering among those with low income may be, in part, explained by the young missionaries who donate all of their time to the church and earn no income.

Figure 1: Level of religious volunteering by income (N = 2,664)



Level of education was significantly associated with religious volunteering. Latter-day Saints with less than high school education reported lower levels of volunteering and those with some college education reported higher levels of religious volunteering. Given that many church callings involve teaching and public speaking, clergy may ask people with low education levels to perform these callings less frequently compared with individuals with more education.

Religious volunteering is followed by fulfilling social responsibilities within the ward, which amounts to 22.3% of Latter-day Saints volunteer time. Typical activities included in this sort of volunteering include leading a church-affiliated Boy Scout troop, making meals for another member of the ward, or helping a member move into a new home.

This type of activity was reported to be performed by 93.7% of the respondents. On average, an active Latter-day Saint provides 96.2 hours of social care within the ward annually.

LDS members outside of Utah spent more time providing social care within their wards than those living in Utah. We found that Latter-day Saints in the Pennsylvania and New Jersey area volunteered more hours than Latter-day Saints in Utah (109 vs. 84 respectively). Michigan and California were in between these two areas. Consequently, although not statistically significant, Latter-day Saints in Utah reported the lowest levels of social volunteering within the ward. This can be explained by the fact that in Utah there are many more qualified members to assign callings to and consequently the number of responsibilities per member is lower. Gender was not significantly associated with this type of volunteering. Middle income people volunteered significantly more hours than the very rich or the poor. Education did not significantly explain variation in this type of volunteering.

The third most frequent set of volunteer activities are those provided through the ward to benefit the local community regardless of religious preference. This type of volunteering amounted to 12.9% of Latter-day Saints volunteer time and was reported to be performed by 64.5% of the respondents. On average, an active Latter-day Saint provides 55.7 hours a year of social care in the community through their congregation.

Regarding geography, we found that Latter-day Saints in California volunteered significantly more hours to help the community through the church than Latter-day Saints in the Pennsylvania and New Jersey area and in Michigan (74 hours vs. 34 in both Michigan and PA & NJ). Men (65 annual hours) reported more hours of volunteering within the church to help the community than did women (47 annual hours). Income was not significantly associated with this type of volunteering. Education did not significantly explain variation in this type of volunteering.

Finally, the least frequent volunteer activity is devoted to social volunteering outside the church. This form of volunteering amounts to 7.8% of Latter-day Saints volunteer time. This activity was reported to be performed by 61.9% of the respondents. On average, an active Latter-day Saint provides 34 hours of social care outside the ward that is geared towards the community annually. If this were the only volunteer activity of Latter-day Saints, it would equal the national average of volunteering of all Americans (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2010).

The study found few differences across gender, education, income, and location. Geographically, although Utah reported the lowest rates of secular volunteering (average of 25 hours) as compared with all other regions, the differences were not statistically significant. Gender was not significantly associated with this type of volunteering. Again,

income was not significantly associated with this type of volunteering. Education did not significantly explain variation in this type of volunteering.

Combining all four categories of volunteering shows that the average respondent gave 427.9 hours of volunteer labor annually. This average includes those who reported zero volunteering, lowering our estimate more so than would be the case in other studies, which usually only count people who volunteer. This large average is equivalent to 35.6 hours monthly or 8.2 hours weekly. Note that, as we reported above, an average American volunteer (excluding nonvolunteers) provides about four hours of volunteering per month. The Independent Sector (2011) assessed the value of an hour of volunteer labor to be \$21.36. Based on this hourly rate, an active Latter-day Saint provides through volunteering an annual social contribution valuing \$9,140.

Geography made no difference in the overall hours of volunteering. All four regions of the country reported similar levels of overall volunteering. This suggests that the expectations for the amount of time spent volunteering is the same for all LDS members, but the distribution of those hours depends on the needs in the local area. Men (495 hours) reported a significantly higher number of overall volunteering than women (374 hours). Those with income of \$20,000 to \$80,000 reported lower hours of volunteering compared to all other income groups. Education also explained the overall number of hours of volunteering. Those with graduate degrees volunteer significantly longer hours than those with less than a high school education.

Of the 2,664 respondents, 65 reported to be “young full-time missionaries.” We defined a young full-time missionary as someone under 30 who answered “yes” to having served at least part of the last 12 months on a full-time mission. These young people provide The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints with 18-24 months of full time service. In our analysis we allowed a maximum of 60 hours a week of either religious and/or social service. Yet these young full-time missionaries, if serving the full year prior to taking the questionnaire, could add 3,120 hours of volunteering per missionary. This fact may inflate the total hours of volunteering provided by Latter-day Saints. Consequently, we ran the same sets of statistics omitting the young full-time missionaries.

Excluding full-time missionaries lowered the number of hours of religious volunteering and volunteering through the ward to benefit the local community, but increased the average annual number of hours for social care within the ward and secular volunteering. This reflects the major goals of the missionaries to provide religious service and serve the non-Mormon community in order to recruit new members to the church. The religious volunteering average annual hours dropped from 242 hours to 194.7 hours. This is a decrease of about 20%. Volunteer activities provided through the ward to benefit the local community dropped from an annual average of 55.7 hours to 38.4 hours. This is a decrease of about 31%. In contrast, the reported average annual hours for fulfilling social responsibilities within the ward increased from 96.2 hours to 97.4 hours, an increase of

about one percent. Finally, the reported average for secular volunteer activities slightly increased from 34 hours to 34.5 hours.

Taken as a whole, the overall hours of volunteering performed by an average Latter-day Saint dropped from 431.9 hours to 332.5 hours after the full time missionaries were excluded. This is a decrease of about 23%. Even with this lower estimate, an average Latter-day Saint provides 27.7 hours monthly or 6.4 hours weekly. Given that an average American volunteer provides about four hours of volunteering per month, an average adult LDS member with household and work responsibilities contributes seven times that amount of their time to volunteering. Using the Independent Sector (2011) assessment of the value of volunteer hour, an active Latter-day Saint, excluding young full-time missionaries, provides through volunteering a social contribution valuing \$7,102.29 per year.

Even excluding young full-time missionaries, Latter-day Saints are the most committed volunteers in the USA. Regardless, we assert that missionary work is a legitimate form of volunteering. As such, we focus on the set of results that uses our entire sample.

Donations

Latter-day Saints are expected to tithe. There is probably no other religious group in which tithing is taken so seriously as in the LDS Church. The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (2011) reported that “Nearly four-in-five Mormons say they pay tithing (79%).” Given that our study was conducted among active Latter-day Saints that attended a ward, we found a slightly higher rate of full-tithers. We found that 88.8% of respondents indicated that they are full tithe payers, meaning they give 10% of their annual income to the LDS Church. An additional 5.9% indicate that they tithe, but do not give the full 10% of their income.

This high level of tithing stands in sharp contrast to what other religious groups are experiencing. The Barna Group (2011) reported that “Currently, the national tithing rate is down to 4% of the adult population. This is slightly below the levels of the last 10 years and significantly lower than last year’s rate (7%).” Regardless if it is 4% or 7%, these estimates are dwarfed in comparison to 88.8% of Latter-day Saints. Our findings indicate a higher percentage of full-tithers than was reported by Smith (2011). This is likely the result of our limiting our sample to church-going Latter-day Saints.

The average percentage of income going to tithing, including part-tithers and non-tithers, in our study is 9.3%. In terms of the percent of income given away, this statistic surpasses the level of charitable giving to all causes combined by all Americans and even by the most-religious Americans. It is thus not surprising that Hoffmann, Lott, and Jeppsen, (2010) found that, compared to other religious groups, “...Mormons not only tend to give

a higher percentage of their income to the organization...but also are less variable in the proportion given” (p. 344).

Tithing consists of donations that are going directly to the church and are income based. But these are not the only donations provided by Latter-day Saints. In addition to tithing, Latter-day Saints are allowed to make other religious and social donations. We were interested in donations through the church and outside the church that are geared to improve the life of individuals or are geared to support social, educational, environmental, and health-related conditions in the wider society.

The first category we focused on was secular giving, that is, donating money not through the church to support a worthy cause. We found that 48.3% of the respondents reported to donate money in this way. On average, a Latter-day Saint (including those not donating) donates \$1,171 annually to social causes outside the church. As expected, those with higher income donated higher sums.

Secular donations were the same across regions, with no significant differences between the four studied regions. Men (\$1,869) reported significantly higher rates of secular donations compared to women (\$543). Given that many of the respondents were couples from the same household this may be surprising. However, we asked the respondents not to double count donations and either to split it between the couple or that only one of them report donations. It is likely that in many couples the man reported the donations for the entire household. As expected, the higher the income, the higher the secular donations. Level of education was not significantly associated with secular giving.

The second category was welfare giving through the LDS Church. The most common such reported activity was giving “fast offerings.” On the first Sunday of each month, healthy members of the church are encouraged to fast for two consecutive meals and donate the money they would have spent on food to the church as a “fast offering.” Local clergy use the fast offerings to help those in need, both members and non-members, within their ward geographical boundaries. Clergy often use the help of other members of the ward to identify who is needy and to distribute the fast offering resources. In addition, Latter-day Saints can also donate money to the church’s worldwide humanitarian aid efforts or to a no-interest student loan program run by the church. Latter-day Saints can also participate in food-drives or other ward-initiated fund-raising. We found that 69.9% of the respondents donated money in this way. An average Latter-day Saint (including those not donating) donated \$650 annually to social causes through the church.

As with religious giving, there were no significant differences between the four studied regions. Men (\$919) reported significantly higher rates of social donations through the church as compared with women (\$408). However, it is likely that in many couples the man reported the donations for the entire household. As expected, those with higher

income donated higher sums. Level of education was not significantly associated with social giving through the church.

We also asked for additional voluntary donations that are church-related. Members can decide to donate money to the church in addition to their tithing. While we did not focus on such donations, we assembled information on this type of giving. We found that only 23.8% of the respondents reported to donate money in this way. On average, a Latter-day Saint (including those not donating), donate annually \$203 to the church for religious causes in addition to tithing.

We found one key difference across regions. Latter-day Saints in Utah donate significantly higher sums (\$337 annually) as compared to all other regions (ranging from \$133 to \$155). Gender was not significantly associated with donating for a religious cause. Income was also associated with this type of donation. Those with lower income donated less money to religious causes in addition to their tithing. Level of education was not significantly associated with donating to the church.

Combining all forms of donations beyond tithing; an average Latter-day Saint donates \$2,024 in addition to being a full-tither. This means that active Latter-day Saints donate more than 10% of their annual income annually.

Table 2: Summary of annual donations by Latter-day Saints (excluding tithing; N = 2664)

Type of giving	Percent of respondents who participated	Annual Mean	Range
Secular giving	48.3%	\$1171	\$1-\$1,250,000
Welfare giving through the LDS Church	69.9%	\$650	\$3-\$325,000

As noted above, of the 2,664 respondents, 65 were “young full-time missionaries.” We also assessed if excluding them impacted on the level of donations. Excluding the full time missionaries increased secular giving from \$1171 to \$1201. This is an increase of about 2.5%. Average welfare giving through the LDS church increased from \$650 to \$664. This is an increase of about 2%. Additional voluntary donations that are church-related increased, on average, from \$203 to \$206. This is an increase of about 1.5%.

In sum, excluding the young full-time missionaries did not decrease the level of donations and in fact resulted in slight increase. This is expected as full-time missionaries are not being paid and as such do not have free income to donate. As in the volunteer section, we assert that full-time missionaries are members of the church and their volunteer hours (above average) and donations (below average) should be included in the sum of Latter-day Saints' giving and volunteering.

Conclusions and Summary

This is the first study that focuses on giving and volunteering practices of members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that has been carried out within LDS wards by a non-church-affiliated university. This unique combination allowed a researcher from the University of Pennsylvania, who is not Mormon, to reach 2,664 church-going Latter-day Saints. The LDS Church permitted the study to be carried out, but all funding came from the University of Pennsylvania.

Active members of the LDS Church volunteer and donate significantly more than the average American and are even more generous in time and money than the upper quintile of religious people in America. An average Latter-day Saint provides 427.9 hours of volunteer labor annually (35.6 hours monthly or 8.2 hours weekly). In comparison, an average American volunteer (excluding nonvolunteers) provides about four hours of volunteering per month. We assessed that an active Latter-day Saint provides through volunteering a social contribution valuing \$9,140 annually.

The area in which most Latter-day Saints volunteer and to which most volunteer hours are dedicated is religious volunteering (94.4% of the respondents; 242 hours annually). Social volunteering of all sorts was also carried out by most of the respondents (95.5% of the respondents; 185.9 hours annually). One type of social volunteering was secular volunteering to meet social needs outside the church, with an average, church-going Latter-day Saint providing 34 hours per year. Latter-day Saints provide the fewest volunteer hours to causes independent of the church. Yet, even if this were the only volunteer activity of Latter-day Saints, it would equal the national average of volunteering of all Americans.

Significantly more Latter-day Saints are full-tithers (88.8%) than any other group. Nationally, in 2011, only 4% of the population reported fully tithing their income. In addition to the 88.8% of Latter-day Saints fully tithing, 5.9% reported that they partially tithe. Latter-day Saints also donate to causes other than tithing. Through the church, on average, a Latter-day Saint donates \$650 a year to social causes and an average active Latter-day Saint also donates \$1,171 a year outside the church. Taken together, an average Latter-day Saint pays full tithing and donates \$1,821 to social and community causes.

We analyzed levels of giving and volunteering by statistically controlling for four variables: region of the country, level of education, income, and gender. We know that, politically, Latter-day Saints in Utah and outside Utah are quite similar and now we know that this is also the case with giving and volunteering. In two aspects of social volunteering Utah reported lower rates of volunteering. This can be explained by clergy being able to spread volunteer responsibilities among more individuals as there are more members who can be asked to perform these volunteer roles in Utah than elsewhere.

However, regarding overall hours of volunteering the four regions were similar. Levels of donations also did not vary by region.

Level of education did not explain variation in most aspects of volunteering or donations. It only significantly explained religious volunteering. The more educated volunteered significantly more hours for religious purposes in our study. Given that many church callings involve teaching and public speaking, clergy may ask people with more education to carry out these roles.

As expected, respondents' income explained their level of donations, with the rich donating more money. Higher levels of religious volunteering by poor people may be an artifact of having young full-time missionaries in our sample who earn no income. However, middle income people reported the highest levels of social volunteering within the church.

Giving and volunteering varied significantly by gender. Men both volunteer more hours and donated more money. Given that many demanding callings in the church are reserved for men only, this finding is not surprising. As for donations, this finding may be a result of men reporting donations for their entire household.

Overall we found that members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are the most prosocial members of American society. Regardless of where they live, they are very generous with their time and money. Through a theology of obedience and sacrifice and a strong commitment to tithing and service, Latter-day Saints are model citizens.

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