

**CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION  
University of Utah**

**WELFARE REFORM INITIATIVE**

***THE IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM  
ON THE CHARITABLE EFFORTS OF  
THE SALT LAKE VALLEY FAITH COMMUNITY  
October 2000***

**Garth Mangum, Max McGraw Professor of Economics and Management Emeritus,  
University of Utah**

**and**

**John Salevurakis, Ph.D. Candidate in Economics, University of Utah**

**Center for Public Policy and Administration  
University of Utah  
1901 E. South Campus Drive, Room 2120  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112-9363**

**(801) 581-6491**

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**Authors:**

Garth Mangum, Max McGraw Professor of Economics and Management Emeritus, University of Utah

John Salevurakis, Ph.D. Candidate in Economics, University of Utah

**Project Staff:**

Center for Public Policy and Administration

James J. Gosling, Director

Laurie N. DiPadova, Policy Fellow and Principal Investigator

Sara McCormick, Project Specialist

Thrasher Research Fund

Victor Brown, President and CEO

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Shirley Weathers, Walsh & Weathers Research & Policy Studies

Cathy Zick, Family & Consumer Studies, University of Utah



October 2000

The University of Utah's Center for Public Policy of Administration is very pleased to present this report *The Impact of Welfare Reform on the Charitable Efforts of the Salt Lake Valley Faith Community* by Professor Garth Mangum and John Salevurakis, Ph.D. candidate, both of the University of Utah.

One of the fundamental premises underlying the congressional and national policy debates related to the passage of the 1996 federal welfare reform legislation, PRWORA, asserted that the charitable sector should shoulder more of the welfare burden in the United States. Churches and other religious institutions are expected to play a dominant role.

This premise is troubling in part because religious organizations have been caring for those in need for centuries—with or without government welfare efforts. Additionally, PRWORA presumes that churches—many of which are already stretched financially—are equipped to assume a more intense role due to the imposition of life-time limits on government assistance. Further, churches and other nonprofits have every right **not** to serve some people, while at the same time, some individuals are not comfortable approaching religious leaders for assistance.

The important qualitative research reported here details the experiences of key churches in the Salt Lake Valley. As such, this research provides insights into the multiple ways in which churches are addressing the welfare needs of the community. It also serves as a companion to CPPA's current report, *Utah's Charitable Organizations Face Welfare Reform: Concerns of Charitable Leaders*, and to the forthcoming quantitative report, *The Impact of Welfare Reform on Charitable Organizations in Utah*.

We are grateful to the Utah Department of Workforce Services for providing the funding for this report.

Laurie N. DiPadova, Ph.D.  
Policy Fellow

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George Politis, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral  
John Heckstrom, Mountain View Christian Assembly  
Stephen Meltzer, Salt Lake Alliance Church  
Carol Manning, Hope Chapel  
Stephen Sandlin, Central Christian Church  
Martin Shelton-Jenck Community of Grace Church  
Peter Williamson, South Valley Unitarian Universalist Church  
Stephen Goldsmith, First Unitarian Church  
Tina Ranney, Kol Ami Synagogue

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
BMS	Basic Maintenance Standard
DHHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
JOBS	Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS)
PRWORA	Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act
SSI	Social Security Income
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
WWD	Workforce Development Department
DHHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
JOBS	Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS)
LDS Church	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
PRWORA	Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
UMAP	Utah Medical Assistance Program
WWD	Workforce Development Department
WIC	Women, Infants and Children

## Introduction

An apparent expectation of legislators at national and state levels in their 1996 design of welfare reform was that a safety net of private and charitable organizations existed with sufficient strength to assume a substantial part of the load that government had traditionally carried. Four years later, it is timely to measure the extent to which this burden has been passed on and assumed. Utah churches of all denominations engage in a variety of activities designed to relieve social and economic pressures on needy individuals and families. Those activities become conditioned upon the expected responses of other organizations, governmental and private, also engaged in relief to the poor. When a major actor on the anti-poverty stage makes a substantial change in its role and contribution, the pressures on other actors on the scene are inevitably impacted. Hence, the 1996 decisions of the Utah State Legislature and the United States Congress to end the long-standing entitlement program, Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC), and to limit the number of months that any specific family can receive public assistance benefits to 36 months over a lifetime, inevitably has consequences for church-related welfare burdens.

To assess the impact of federal and state welfare reform, we have reviewed the activities and interviewed responsible officials of a sample of Utah churches. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) was included in that sample because of its overwhelming presence as the religious faith of over 70 percent of Utah citizens. Catholic Community Services was included because, though of far smaller magnitude, it is second in size among Utah's church-connected anti-poverty efforts. Beyond those two arbitrarily-selected participants, every fifth organization listed under *Churches* in the Yellow Pages of the Metropolitan Salt Lake City telephone directory was selected for interview. Where there was no answer to the telephone call, the next church on the list was called as a substitute. When a specific denomination or area of the valley appeared under-represented, they were substituted into a purposeful rather than random sample. In this manner, representatives of 28 local churches were interviewed by telephone. To maintain anonymity among these religious congregations, names are not attached to specific comments, though gratitude is expressed to all respondents listed in the acknowledgements of this report.

Garth Mangum's coauthorship of The Mormons' War on Poverty (University of Utah Press, 1993) and his current involvement in the LDS Salt Lake Inner City Project and the LDS Family Support Service were relied upon as the primary source for assessment of the LDS Church antipoverty role in the Salt Lake Area. Beyond that source, interviews with officials of the LDS Welfare Services Department substituted for interviews of the bishops of individual congregations to assess the impact of state and federal welfare reform upon LDS welfare activities. The questions asked in the telephone interviews of representatives of other churches are documented at the beginning of that section. A final section summarizes the findings of the entire study.

The initial assessment of the faith community role and the impact upon it of welfare reform was undertaken in the autumn of 1999, prior to the December 31, 1999 date when Utah's 36 month lifetime limit on public assistance receipt first began to take effect. All of the 1999 contacts were repeated in May 2000 to assess whether the impact of the closing of some 200 cases by that time had changed appreciably the conditions reported the previous fall. The results of those two sets of interviews are reported in the pages which follow.

### Impact Upon the Welfare Activities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake Valley

Based on its sheer-size as the religious home of over 70 percent of Utah residents, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is inevitably the private nonprofit charitable organization most impacted by welfare reform in Utah. But as relevant as its omnipresence throughout Utah is its historical commitment to the economic as well as the spiritual well-being (well-fare) of its members. Joseph F. Smith, sixth president of Church, nephew of founder Joseph Smith and father of tenth president Joseph Fielding Smith, said what all of his successors have endorsed and all of his predecessors would have applauded: "It has always been a cardinal teaching with the Latter-day Saints that a religion that has not the power to save people temporally and make them prosperous and happy here cannot be depended upon to save them

spiritually and exalt them in the life to come.”<sup>1</sup> The LDS Church has responded to that commitment throughout its history in at least three ways:

1. By constant admonition to its members to become educated and trained, to work diligently, to avoid debt, to decry substance abuse, to maintain family unity, and, earlier, by concerted Church efforts, to develop economic opportunity wherever the Church and its people were the clearly predominate decision-makers,

2. By concerted programs fitted to the times and circumstances of its historical environment in Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, traversing the Great Plains, settling and developing a “Great Basin Kingdom” in the Mountain West from Canada to Mexico and responding to the Great Depression of the 1930s on its Utah turf; and also

3. By applying the same principles that guided its historical welfare efforts to radically changed circumstances in Utah, the United States and throughout the world as it has become an international church with most of its membership outside the United States.

As the church with far the largest membership in Utah and one which has had the longest time to tone its welfare-related activities, the LDS Church is also the religious denomination with by far the greatest resources available to pursue anti-poverty strategies among its members and within the community. Since it is a church of centralized policy characterized by decentralized administration, it is useful to describe briefly its present-day Utah welfare activities before exploring the impact of governmental welfare reform on that system.

### The Utah LDS Welfare System, circa 2000

The key actor in the LDS welfare system is the bishop of the local ward, assisted by the Relief Society President. Though policy-making is the prerogative of the three-person First Presidency and the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, its promulgation the assignment of members of the Quorums of Seventy acting

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<sup>1</sup> Albert E. Bowen, *The Church Welfare Plan*. (Independence, MO: Zion’s Printing and Publishing Co., 1946), 36.

as Area Presidencies throughout the world, and counsel to the bishops is offered by presidents of stakes, the “rubber meets the road” in the interaction between the bishop and the ward member. Within broad limits, the decisions of whether, how much and how to provide help to needy families are his and his alone. However, to do his job, he has a substantial body of resources provided by church policy and practice that needs description for the analysis that follows. It is important to note that the bishops’ responsibilities extend to all who live within the ward boundaries, regardless of religious affiliation.

### The Fast Offering

On the first Sunday of each month, LDS Church members throughout the world are urged to forego two meals, using the occasion for the prayerful development of spiritual commitment and to contribute the savings thereby to the Church for aid to the poor. Historically, members were urged to contribute the costs of the food saved by fasting. However, the ante was raised in the 1970s with the urging by then President Spencer W. Kimball that the members contribute some multiple of the costs of the food saved, specified as up to ten times for those who could afford it.<sup>2</sup> Within the first year after that 1974 conference address, the per capita fast offering contribution had jumped by one-half and when last officially reported in 1983 was \$12.61 a year per capita. Since that was a world-wide figure, one would expect the per capita contributions in Utah to have been larger. It is pure speculation, of course, but if that figure was accepted as the average Utah contribution of 1983 and was then raised to \$20 per capita currently, based either on the consumer price index or on the higher per capita and per household incomes of Utahns, the fast offering contributions of the 1.5 million LDS members in Utah would currently amount to \$30 million per year. Some confirmation of that figure was provided by a 1991 legal dispute in which LDS Church counsel revealed that total Church expenditures for welfare services of all kinds in Salt Lake City the year before had been \$4.6 million.<sup>3</sup> Extending that rate of expenditure statewide on a per capita basis would have amounted to approximately \$50 million. Of course, statewide per capita expenditures would not have

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<sup>2</sup>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Conference Report*, 6 April 1974, 184.

<sup>3</sup>*Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 June 1991, B1.

equaled those of Salt Lake City, but nine years have now passed with a growing population and rising incomes, making that estimate not unlikely.

The size of the current figure is less important for present purposes than the fact that the average LDS bishop has a pool of that magnitude from which to draw financial support for welfare purposes. That is so because the bishop is not limited to the fast offerings of his own congregation. It is assumed that congregations in prosperous areas will generate surpluses while those in low-income areas will experience deficits. Bishops are encouraged to meet the needs of their populations and then send any surplus remains to the stake and from there on to general church coffers. It is a stake president's prerogative to counsel a bishop but not to direct him in matters of welfare expenditures. The doctrine is that the bishop is the "Judge in Israel," subject to inspiration and revelation on behalf of the well-being of his individual ward members and no one is to say unto him, "Nay." Other resources are available, as enumerated below, but fast offerings are the primary source of that welfare assistance, best tendered in cash. Hence, if a ward member is unable to pay rent or mortgage payments, utilities, auto payments and repairs, health care needs and so forth, the bishop is authorized, based on his own judgment, to meet those needs with cash payments to the provider of the services. If the total magnitude of such expenditures exceeds the fast offering contributions of ward members, so be it. The deficit will be met by the stake or the general church. Always since the depths of the Great Depression, the surpluses from the well-off wards have exceeded the deficits of the needy wards.

### Commodity Resources

The Great Depression of the 1930s impacted drastically on a substantially agrarian Utah. A quarter of the total U.S. population was still on farms and that was true of an even higher proportion of Utahns. They were poor but still able to eat. The primary welfare concern of the LDS Church at the time was Utah's unemployed urban dwellers, most of them recent emigres from the farms. In 1930, only 33.5 percent of the Utah population was gainfully employed, the smallest proportion for any state except for Mississippi at 33 percent. At first, farmers surrounding Utah cities who could not afford to hire harvest labor, given low

produce prices, were encouraged to use urban dwellers and compensate them with agricultural products. These products could then be processed and stored in empty inner city warehouses and distributed to the needy, all of who, if physically able would have participated to some degree on a volunteer basis. The LDS Church subsequently acquired its own farms and processing facilities throughout the western United States and Canada, but with the greatest concentration in Utah. Throughout the system by 1990, 51,000 acres were planted to crops, 71,000 acres were used for grazing, and some 50,000 acres not currently needed were leased out but reclaimable if the need were to arise.<sup>4</sup> As of 1985, there were also 51 canneries, 27 large and 36 small grain-storage facilities, 12 central storehouses, 69 regional storehouses and 32 branch storehouses scattered about the United States with a few in Canada. The fact that the production facilities are not all in Utah is irrelevant to Utah bishops since the LDS Church owns its own fleet of trucks to move the commodities from where they are produced and processed to where they are stored for distribution.

Any bishop, at his own discretion, can give to a needy family a food order, enabling them to load a specified quantity of food and household commodities onto shopping carts in the supermarket-like regional and branch storehouses which are designated as “Bishops’ Storehouses” for that purpose. There were 22 such storehouses in Utah in 1999. If the household is unable to travel to the storehouse for the commodities, the goods will be delivered. As a matter of policy, the bishop is expected to require those capable of doing so to voluntarily work at the storehouse, nearby church farms and production facilities, or other church facilities, not to pay for the food but to demonstrate their commitment to self-reliance. However, the carrying out of that policy, deciding who is capable of work and how many hours are appropriate, is left to the bishop’s judgment. There are also along Utah’s Wasatch Front a meat-packing plant, a milk-processing facility, a bakery, a soap factory and a pasta factory, along with farms, canneries and grain storage facilities, which offer volunteer work opportunities as well as products for distribution through the bishops’ storehouses. The output of the system is such that, after meeting all of the claims upon its storehouses from bishops’ orders, the LDS Church donates substantial amounts of food and other

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<sup>4</sup>Garth L. Mangum and Bruce D. Blumell, *The Mormons’ War on Poverty* (University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City:1993), 179.



products to the state's food banks and soup kitchens for distribution to the poor by other charitable organizations.

Beginning in 1938, the LDS Church added to its welfare facilities second-hand stores called Deseret Industries which collect and refurbish donated clothing and other household products, dispensable either for cash or in response to written bishops' orders. Twenty-two of these stores are located in Utah.

In more recent years, a Deseret Industries Manufacturing facility has been added to produce new mattresses, beds and other furniture for distribution through the Deseret Industries stores. These materials also are available on bishops' order as well as for cash sale. In addition, a Humanitarian Services Center packages and ships donated clothing, bedding, educational materials, computers and medical supplies for distribution to the needy all over the world.

#### Other Resources

These Deseret Industries facilities serve not only as production and distribution facilities but as sheltered workshops: sources of paid employment for those not currently able to compete successfully in competitive labor markets. They receive work experience, on-the-job training and remedial education as well as income with the hope that they will then be able to move into competitive employment.

At 19 sites in Utah and approaching 200 throughout the world, the LDS Church operates Employment Resource Centers managed by a limited number of paid employees and staffed primarily by volunteers. These Centers collect and dispense job orders from employers, obtain access by internet facilities from public and private employment agencies, temporary help agencies and other sources, and offer job search and other relevant training.

In addition to the ward bishops serving in their residential localities and available to dispense cash and commodities to the needy, member or nonmember, who live within their geographical boundaries, the Church maintains an office at Welfare Square in Salt Lake City staffed by two ordained bishops assigned to serve transients—those without an address within a resident ward. Any where from 50 to 100 people a day come through that office seeking help. These bishops can write orders for food from the bishops'

storehouse and clothing from Deseret Industries, can pay for temporary housing in nearby motels and can provide fares for local and interstate transit, the original assumption being that most would be stranded persons just passing through. However, with the city's homeless facilities nearby, the majority have turned out to be those without housing but expecting to stay in Salt Lake City. In partial response, the LDS Family Support Service described below has been added to the LDS-provided facilities for the poor.

Not widely publicized is the fact that the LDS Church also makes substantial contributions of commodities for distribution by community agencies such as the Food Bank and the connected Food Pantries, as noted. Clothing is also made available to community agencies through Deseret Industries. At 13 locations in Utah and many more throughout the United States and a few other locations, LDS Family Services, at the request of bishops, provides professional counseling in personal and family crises as well as adoption and other related services.

Highly significant also is the potential mentoring capacity provided by the visits to each home each month by two men representing the lay priesthood (home teachers) and two women representing the women's Relief Society (visiting teachers). Both groups are sent to teach as well as to report back to their supervisors the conditions of the families within the homes.

With all of those resources in place, the response of the LDS Church to changing conditions affecting those LDS members receiving public assistance should be much more concerted and substantial of those of any other Utah denomination.

### The LDS Inner City Project

Critical to any examination of the role of the LDS Church on the Utah public welfare scene is the advent in 1997 of the Salt Lake LDS Inner City Project. This project, designated as pilot and experimental and not to be perceived as yet as a permanent part of the LDS anti-poverty weaponry, involves some 200 couples resident who reside in relatively affluent suburban wards serving as "church service missionaries" in 62 inner city wards. The "church service" term indicates that they are not expected to serve full-time but devote in the wards to which they are assigned the part-time hours they would have contemplated

committing if called to positions in their home wards. Though denominated as missionaries, they are instructed that their assignments do not involve proselyting. Rather, they are to concentrate on guiding needy families to self-reliance.

These church service missionaries function under the direction of the bishop of the inner city ward in which they serve who assigns them to work with anywhere from three or four to a dozen needy families. Functioning as the equivalent of a joint home and visiting teacher, they are to win the confidence of those to whom they are assigned and engage them in a self-reliance planning process. The point is made that self-reliance is not necessarily self-sufficiency. All that is expected of the needy individuals and families is that they do for themselves all that is reasonably possible commensurate with their individual circumstances. Service missionaries are instructed not to attempt to impose their judgments and values on the family but to help them to take control of their own lives. The missionaries are to proceed by asking such questions as “What changes would you like to make in your life?” “What actions on your part and what resources would be required to bring that about?” “From where are those resources most likely to be available to you?” In search for the needed resources, the families are encouraged to look first to themselves, then to their extended families, next to the church and finally to community resources.

Church resources available to the needy within the Inner City Project include the fast offering funds available through the ward bishops, as already noted, but go far beyond that source. Ward leaders and service missionaries are taught to hold frequent—usually weekly—ward welfare meetings in which they discuss together in a networking pattern the needs of the families each is working with. If, for instance, a family needs an automobile repaired in order to get to work but has no money, the question might be, “Who knows of an automobile repair shop that might be willing to volunteer the necessary skilled labor if the ward bishop would pay for the parts?” More often than not, the needed resources or services are identified in those meetings. If not, the bishops and service missionaries are instructed to turn to what is called the Storehouse of Specialists. Professionals in employment, education, skill training, medical, dental and legal services, mental health, housing, home repair, transportation, family and personal counseling, financial counseling, drug and alcohol counseling, single parent services and youth services have agreed to be the contact points to obtain volunteer services from their colleagues in those fields as needed. In addition, the

service missionaries have been made aware of and urged to use the Human Services Directory of the Salt Lake Community Council and its accompanying telephone-accessed Information and Referral Center in order to identify relevant community resources available through both public agencies and private charitable organizations. All of these are perceived as available in carrying out the self-reliance plans generated with their assigned families.

The number of service missionaries called expanded rapidly beginning in September 1997 and by June 2000, a total of over 600 had served and there was 400 in service and assigned to 62 wards in 15 LDS stakes. The concept of the inner city had grown as stakes requested access to the service missionaries until it included essentially all wards with boundaries west of 11<sup>th</sup> East, north of 39<sup>th</sup> South, south of South Temple to Main Street and hence north to 12<sup>th</sup> North and west to the outskirts of housing. Most of the service missionaries had been called for 12 or 18 months and many had passed that time period. Over 70 percent agreed to remain in service for an additional six to 12 months but the point had been reached where the new recruits were only adequate to replace those being released or relieved of this responsibility.

As of June 1999, it was estimated that between 3,000 and 4,000 people were being aided in various ways by church service missionaries who had donated close to 500,000 hours of their total time. The services provided ranged from informal mentoring through guidance in a semi-formal, self-reliance planning process to help in finding housing, obtaining home and auto repairs, finding jobs, and obtaining access to a range of needed services. With the needy families guided by the service missionaries and pursuing self-reliance, bishops expressed themselves as more willing to provide food and clothing orders to the Bishops' Storehouses and Deseret Industries. Fifty old but functional automobiles had been donated to Deseret Industries and made available to needy families in response to bishops' orders (by June 2000 this number had passed 100 including two 12 passenger vans passed on to non-LDS agencies assisting refugees). Through the interventions of the members of the Storehouse of Specialists, approximately 300 experts had provided over 5000 hours of service worth an average of at least \$100 an hour to some 1000 families. Also several hundred couples have served as volunteer tutors in fifteen inner city elementary and middle schools of the Salt Lake City School District.

Success was anecdotal with no ready means of quantitative measurement but about one-third of the families served appeared to have made substantial progress toward self-reliance and perhaps one-half made significant progress. The remainder, heavily burdened by dysfunctional situations seemed to appreciate the attention without making significant changes in their lifestyles. At this writing, the LDS Salt Lake Inner City Project continues as a pilot project on an experimental basis. Whether it will continue as a permanent program and be replicated in other localities within and outside of Utah remains to be seen. The current unofficial vibrations seem to promise retention and extension. Meanwhile, the emergence of the new, though pilot, program masks what the impact of governmental welfare reform upon LDS Church welfare efforts would have been had not the Inner City Project been simultaneously available.

#### LDS Family Support Service

Parallel with but newer and smaller than the Inner City Project is the LDS Family Support Service introduced on the LDS Welfare Square in Salt Lake City at the end of 1998. Its purpose is two-fold: (1) to aid the Welfare Square Agent Bishops' office in incorporating into the community those who are apparently transient but who indicate attachment to the community or intention to remain and (2) to provide mentoring services to selected community agencies to assist members of the same population who apply at those agencies. The approximately 20 couples currently serving are called "mentors" to make it clear that they do not have proselyting intentions. As in the Inner City Project, those referred to the Family Support Service by the Agent Bishops, community agencies or finding their way to the Family Support Office by themselves are provided immediate help such as food, clothing or temporary lodging. They are then guided through the same self-reliance planning process as used by the Inner City service missionaries to set their own goals and begin pursuing them, aided by access to the community and church resources necessary to give reality to the possibilities of attaining those goals. Access to permanent housing is usually high among the priorities established within those plans. As that is attained, a transition is worked out informally with the bishops of the wards into which the clients are moving. If within the inner city, that transition includes passing of responsibility for guidance from the mentors to the service missionaries. In the first year of the Family Support Services's activities, approximately 300 families and individuals were

helped, about 40 percent of them making substantial progress toward self-reliance. Starting after rather than preceding public welfare reform, the Family Support Service can be perceived as a response to rather than a victim of welfare reform. However, operating without a budget, its only resources are the energies and sympathies of its mentors and its ability to steer its clients to the services of community agencies, whether church-connected, government-connected or private.

### Impact of Welfare Reform on LDS Welfare Efforts

What the impact of welfare reform may have been on the Salt Lake Inner City Project was impossible to tell, since the advents of the two phenomena had been simultaneous with no before and after measurement possible. Even the impact of welfare reform on the volume of welfare services and expenditures in the Salt Lake inner city area could not be measured because of the over-riding effects of the pilot project.

In accordance with LDS Church policy, information on the current volume or value of cash and commodities dispensed and the number of individuals and households served is not available, nor is it possible to interview a sample of LDS bishops. However, interviews with LDS Welfare Services Department officials drew the response that, though there were always fluctuations in the volume of requests from bishops, there had been no clearly noticeable swelling of demand for services or commodities or expenditure of funds identifiable as an impact of the change in public assistance practices or the decline in the numbers of households receiving public assistance. However, it must be noted that the decline in public assistance households has been a gradual six year process and that the numbers of households reaching public assistance termination since the end of 1999 have been minor when contrasted to the magnitude and volume of the LDS welfare effort. What that impact may be over time remains to be seen.

## Catholic Community Services

In the last 55 years, what is today known as Catholic Community Services has undergone an evolution from a relatively simple and loosely organized entity seeking to provide a few basic services to one which is often administering services beyond Salt Lake City in partnership with national charitable organizations, local businesses and parishioners. Simultaneously, the assistance offered by Catholic Community Services has evolved as the needs and complexion of Salt Lake City have changed. An organization that began by offering basic financial assistance and family services today offers assistance to those with HIV/AIDS, administers a homeless shelter for women and children, provides several hundred meals per day, and treats drug and alcohol addiction.

Catholic Charities was founded in 1945 by Reverend Duane G. Hunt. It was structurally modeled on its parent organization, U.S. Catholic Charities, but with the realization that the needs of the Utah poor would undoubtedly be unique and require a dynamic organizational structure and a variety of services. Administratively, the fledgling organization was guided by Monsignor Joseph P. Morton and provided adoption services, foster care, family counseling, and financial assistance to the impoverished. Catholic Charities would gain the additional support of the United Way in 1951 and by 1955 expand its services to aid 1300 transients. Providing meals to this population rose from the activities of the Daughters of Charity and their administration of the Catholic Charities thrift shop in 1967. Volunteers at the thrift shop began noticing that many of the customers were in need of adequate sustenance and began providing sandwiches at the facility. With the aid of local grocery stores, businesses, Catholic parishioners, and members of other religious denominations, the soup kitchen began to widen the scope of its services from sandwiches to complete meals. Even at this relatively early stage in its development, Catholic Community Services was evolving in response to community needs. Both the soup kitchen and thrift store were destroyed by fire in 1986, but, with the aid of dedicated members of the community, both were able to reopen the next day. Today, the soup kitchen has an annual budget of \$302,000 which represents an increase of nearly \$50,000 since 1996. With this increase in budgeted funds, the Catholic Community Services soup kitchen currently feeds between four hundred and fifty to six hundred people per day. While the overall population has

remained relatively consistent in number since 1996, it is routinely the case that more people seek the services of the soup kitchen in the winter.

Catholic Charities expanded the scope of its social services in the 1970s by creating a foster care system for refugees in 1979, a refugee resettlement program, an elderly outreach program, and heightened aid to the disabled. In 1981 the Board of Trustees changed the name from Catholic Charities to Catholic Community Services. Two years later, Catholic Community Services opened the Marillac House to shelter 30 homeless women and children. Similarly, the Villa Maria was used to house pregnant homeless women.

Entering the 1990s, it was deemed of particular importance that new programs target older adults. This objective would be partially fulfilled in 1994 with the opening of the St. Mary's Home for Men. This mansion had once been owned by Albert Fisher of the Fisher Brewery and had for the past 25 years housed alcohol and drug dependant men. Today, under the control of Catholic Community Services, it exists as a facility providing drug treatment programs for a maximum of thirty-eight individuals referred by the Veterans Administration, the Indian Walk in Center, and the Salt Lake County Substance Abuse Program. The funding necessary for the support of St. Mary's Home has increased over 17% since 1996. A major problem faced by Catholic Community Services, like all nonprofits in the community, is their limited ability to hire qualified individuals and pay competitive wages in the increasingly tight Utah labor market.

In the winter of 1994-95 Catholic Community Services utilized a warehouse donated the year before by Mr. Robert Weyher as an overflow homeless shelter for an average of 250 men per night. Thereafter, the full renovation of the property was funded by the Alsam foundation. On December 15, 1995, this warehouse adjacent to the St. Vincent de Paul Center was dedicated to former Bishop William K. Weigand of the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake. The official opening of the facility was on January 23, 1996. The facility no longer serves as an overnight shelter, but it offers services such as showers, laundry, baggage check, mail service, job referrals, case management, and mental health referrals to an average of 150 homeless persons per day. The facility also offers aid to children of homeless parents in the form of Kidstart which, as a CCS program, provides parents and children the social contacts with which they may overcome developmental delays and behavioral problems. This effort, in conjunction with Catholic



Community Services' Children's Program, attempts to teach social skills while exposing children to a diverse set of experiences in the form of field trips. The Weigand Day Center has also experienced a budget cost increase of over 25% since 1996.

Since 1994, Catholic Community Services has also maintained a rental assistance program which is administered by the Northern Utah office in Ogden, as well as a food pantry which provides groceries for over 3000 individuals every month. In order to receive rental assistance from Catholic Community Services, it must be established that the individual has a legitimate and extreme need for the funds. Rental assistance is made most readily available to those who are victims of financial circumstances beyond their control. For instance, an individual who is faced with high medical expenses or is the spouse of a deceased breadwinner will have priority over those who have simply made poor financial choices. Due to contract limitations, Catholic Community Services will not completely cover the monthly rent for someone in need. The current contract limitations require that the needy individual or family pay at least as much as CCS that particular month. It is also important to note that the funding contract requires that rental assistance be provided on a once in a lifetime basis.

Catholic Community Services has also started a program which provides on-site care for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. In the past, Catholic Community Services also provided a job services program for the poor to ensure that those receiving other services from CCS will be able to improve their employment prospects. This program has recently been taken over by another private provider, but CCS still maintains employment services within its refugee resettlement program, which serves 500 individuals per year.

Over the last 55 years, the Salt Lake Valley has evolved from a relatively rural area to an intermediate-sized urban center. With that evolution, the composition and needs of the city's poor have also changed. While it was once undoubtedly the case that the majority of Utah's needy were single men or women in need of food or children in need of parents, the relatively simple solutions to these difficulties will no longer suffice at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today, Catholic Community Services is witnessing a rise in the number of families in need of proper food or housing, children who are developmentally delayed, women who are pregnant and homeless, and individuals with HIV/AIDS. It has therefore become

necessary for Catholic Community Services to undergo a metamorphosis in hopes that it may better fulfill the needs of a less fortunate population in a state of flux.

Nevertheless, Catholic Community Services staff are unable to identify any direct relationship between the imposition of welfare reform and application of its 36 month public assistance limits and the increase in the volume of demands upon their services. The increase in the flow of service seekers began well before the January 1, 2000 initiation of the time limits and is inconsistent with the small number to whom the limits had been applied by the time of the final interview for this report. They express the difficulty of determining whether welfare reform has been discouraging the needy from even applying for public charity or if the perceived increase in Salt Lake City poverty might be a sad stepping stone on the city's path toward metropolitan maturity.

Catholic Community Services representatives note the importance of fostering a sense of self reliance in their applicants. They perceive themselves as responding to deep-seated changes in socioeconomic conditions in Salt Lake City, seeking to make available an evolving and widening set of services while simultaneously increasing the extent to which existing services are funded. Unfortunately, whether in the face of welfare reform or an inevitable economic downturn, they will be expected to continue to do so.

### A Sample of Smaller Churches

In an effort to explore the impact of welfare reform policies upon the demand for private charitable services, twenty eight Salt Lake City congregations were contacted and surveyed with regard to their charitable services, budgets, and needy populations. These parishes, as we shall call them, represent a cross section of religious culture and socio-economic class as particular care was taken to survey a variety of religious denominations and parishes located in a variety of neighborhoods ranging from the upscale to the inner city.

Each parish was asked nine questions, and, while some parishes were unable to answer certain of these questions, the responses reveal a great deal about the nature of faith-based charitable services in the Salt Lake Valley. First, each parish was asked about the charitable services which it provides directly to the needy or those which are provided by any larger denominationally- related organization supported by the contributions of the individual parish. Pastors or parish representatives were then asked to volunteer the amount of their annual charitable budget. While it was more often the case that only estimates were available, these estimates did not appear to deviate appreciably from the hard numbers provided by other parishes. Thirdly, representatives were asked to reveal whether or not their charitable budgets had increased or decreased in recent years. If it was discovered that charitable budgets had increased, it was then asked if this increase was proportional to a general budgetary increase or if it represented an increase as a percent of the total parish budget. Questions then turned toward the population being served by these private sector charities. Pastors or other representatives were asked to estimate the number of individuals served by their activities annually. Then, as a parallel to the budgetary series of questions, it was asked if this number had increased in recent years.

Following the quantitative exploration, more normative issues were explored. For instance, pastors were asked if they had noticed any change in the composition of the population receiving their charitable services. Finally, pastors were asked if they had personally learned any valuable lessons from their provisioning for the welfare of the poor and if they anticipated any increase in the demand for private charitable services as a result of welfare reform policies. If, in fact, the pastor anticipated an impact, he or she was asked to anticipate how the parish might cope with the further privatization of charitable services. The following is a summary of those conversations in the fall of 1999.

A representative of a near-suburban Catholic Church stated that his parish provides clothing, food, and toiletries for the poor. In addition, they provide prescription drug vouchers for the uninsured as well as support for The Crossroads Urban Center and Catholic Community Services. Their budget for these activities has increased greatly in recent years and currently rests at roughly \$10,000 per year. While this representative was unsure with respect to the exact number of people served every year, he was adamant about the fact that they are serving many more people now than in the past. The increase in their budget

for charitable services has been far greater proportionately than the increases in the overall budget. Also notable has been the fact that the additional expenditures have served to improve the living standards of an increasing number of families with children rather than the traditional single male transients. This representative spoke of the gratifying process of providing aid to the underprivileged but warned of the difficulties that will undoubtedly arise if further reform policies are enacted. Further reform, he fears, will force parishes like theirs to limit the services offered to the poor or seek out new funding sources.

A representative of a Presbyterian Church far from the inner city describes her parish as small but active in its sponsorship of The Salvation Army, the local soup kitchen, beds at the local men's shelter, childhood immunizations, blood drives, and gas vouchers. Their charitable budget is in excess of \$15,000 and while recently growing in nominal terms has remained a fixed percentage of their total budget. She has perceived an increase in the number of people being served by her parish but was unable to estimate the number of people actually being served. The composition of the population receiving services from them has also evolved from the traditional single male transient or substance abuser to those families who, on the surface, do not appear to be in dire need. She sees her recipients as working poor or the uninsured who become trapped under the weight of medically-related financial obligations. In her perception, "These people don't look poor". In the face of further reform policies at the state or federal level, it was anticipated that this church would shift its emphasis toward food subsidies and make attempts to increase fund raising. This will be a difficult process; however, without a large membership base.

Another Catholic Church provides charitable services indirectly through Catholic Community Services, Guadalupe Schools, and Volunteers for America while simultaneously providing financial support to smaller Catholic parishes. According to the parish's representative, their current \$50,000 budget represents the culmination of several years of nominal growth. Its charitable budget is maintained as a fixed percentage of the total so the charitable increase has not served to financially squeeze out other programs. As the number of people served by this parish has grown, the representative has also seen a growth in the number of women with children who pass through in need of charitable assistance. Fortunately, this church exists in a relatively affluent area far from the inner city; a reassurance that further welfare reform may have little impact upon this parish.

The budget director of a Baptist Church, located a considerable distance from the inner city, was unsure of an exact figure representing the extent of the parish's charitable aid, but has seen a steady increase in that budget as well as the number of people receiving aid over the last ten years. She estimated that this church currently serves between one thousand and two thousand people annually, though it was not clear whether she was referring to charitable services or including the church's spiritual services to its entire membership. The population benefiting from the church's food pantry has become increasingly characterized by the presence of cohesive family units. In addition, this church offers occasional aid to the transient population.

The minister of one Lutheran church reported that his parish serves between 250 and 300 people per year with their food bank, housing assistance, and periodic aid to transients. He has witnessed a real increase in his budget as well as an increase in the number of people being served by his parish. This has caused this downtown parish to already begin screening their recipients more closely. He anticipates that they will be forced to continue this screening process in an environment created by further welfare reform.

Another Lutheran Church, located further from the inner city, provides care packages for small children as well as hotel rooms for homeless individuals. Further the church maintains a food bank while making aid available to families who find themselves in temporary financial distress. While this parish had no firm budgetary figures or data regarding the number of people served, its minister did note that provisioning for the welfare of the poor was easier today than it was during the 1980's. In the face of further welfare reform, he anticipated that his parish will be forced to concentrate on the distribution of food rather than other types of services. He also made reference to the sad reality that encounters with the financially desperate may sometimes be dangerous. He has had a few threatening encounters with the needy, one of which placed him at the tip of a knife. His lesson learned in providing services to the poor was simply, "stay safe".

The minister of another Lutheran Church spoke of the increased number of families passing through the church's doors in search of aid and the extent to which a food bank may become the only charitable service provided. Any further strain upon the abilities of this church to provide for the welfare of the

underprivileged will force the congregation to concentrate on the necessities. Food, being the most basic of human necessities, will then become the focus to the exclusion of more elaborate programs such as the current natural disaster relief fund.

A suburban Baptist Church offers a variety of services including rent money to the temporarily distressed, travel money to the stranded, medicine, temporary shelter to the homeless, and a pregnancy resource center. These programs are supported by an annual budget of \$5,000 and currently serve between 75 and 100 people each year. This budget has grown in real terms, paralleling the recent increase in the number of people being served. According to the Pastor, a very important lesson is to be found in charitable work. All should know that anyone could be poor. He made it clear that social factors exist that are indiscriminate in their allocation of human misery. The latest victim of this allocation has been the family unit. His new programs have already begun to target this group.

A Baptist Church in one of the poorer suburbs provides monetary aid on a case by case basis in the amount of \$600 per year. This amount reflected a fixed percentage of the parish budget but had seen a slight nominal increase in recent years. Most of the charitable work performed by this parish seemed to be directed internally toward the benefit of parishioners who may be experiencing difficult economic periods. This parish aids roughly twelve families per year and anticipates little impact from further welfare reform.

In contrast, an inner city Baptist Church provides food, clothing, and housing assistance for between 400 and 500 individuals each year. Its pastor has witnessed a growth in this number as well as a real growth in his budget for charitable work. He anticipates a strain upon his abilities to meet the future demand for charitable services if welfare reform policies of the current trends are continued. He anticipates with sorrow that more families will be passing into the ranks of the underclass. Further, he notes that the population of this underclass has become younger in recent years.

Another suburban Baptist Church provides a food pantry and infant supplies to needy families. While its budget has increased in recent years, this parish provides welfare for just four or five families annually. Even with little exposure to poverty, however, its pastor was able to note an increase in the

number of needy families and the fact that these families might upon first inspection appear to be middle class. Reiterating the statement quoted earlier from another pastor, this one notes that his recipients “don’t look poor”.

Again, in stark contrast, the pastor of another suburban Baptist Church reported that his parish supported rent assistance and a crisis supplies programs with an annual budget of \$21,000. While remaining a constant percentage of the parish budget, this amount has increased annually as the number of individuals served has risen steadily to 150. While anticipating welfare reform to have no impact upon his parish, he noted that the number of families requiring assistance had increased as a percentage of the total population.

A smaller Baptist parish with a different philosophy of charity serves only two or three individuals a year with immediate financial need and keeps no specified charitable budget. According to their pastor, charity is not a function of the church, which should be directed toward worship.

A pastor of a non-denominational Christian church takes a very different view. His parish serves between 200 and 500 people per year with varied programs such as a food bank, support to the pregnancy resource center, aid to the transient population and gas vouchers. His budget has increased in real terms to the exclusion of internal budgetary items but to the benefit of an increasing number of those in need. He has noticed an increase in the number of local people demanding aid as well as a shift in the needy population from the single needy individual to the intact family suffering from material want. In provisioning for the welfare of the poor, he has learned to carefully screen those searching for aid and anticipates welfare reform to have a continued impact upon the demand for his services.

The pastor of another Baptist Church reports that his parish aids only two or three people per year with a specified budget of \$50. These resources are spent to feed those who are in need and are largely allocated to those within the parish. He has experienced no increase in the demands placed upon his small parish and anticipates none.

Another non-denominational church is a more upscale parish with a larger budget and offering a variety of services such as crisis intervention, counseling, and food aid. This parish has an annual charitable budget of between \$2,000 and \$3,000, which has been increasing, but as a fixed percentage of their total annual expenditures. This church currently serves ten people per year. Its pastor anticipates little impact from welfare reform upon his parish due to the area in which it exists, but has had to personally battle the cynicism that can result from providing charitable services. This cynicism, he fears, will, unfortunately, become a common theme among many of his members.

A representative of another small non-denominational congregation provides food, rent aid, automobile repair, and children's clothing and toys to the needy. This church's annual budget has increased as a percentage of its total expenditures to a current level of \$3,000. This has occurred in support of the increasing number of people demanding charitable services which currently rests at 300. This pastor has noted an increase in the number of single mothers who approach her for assistance while sadly becoming somewhat jaded in her efforts to aid the poor. She reports that she has learned a lot about how to differentiate those who are truly needy from those simply "running a scam." While this pastor also anticipates little impact from welfare reform upon her parish, she acknowledges that it may force her to screen more closely in an effort to discover who is truly the most needy.

The pastor of another Lutheran Church oversees an annual charitable budget of \$1,000 that provides thirty to forty people per year with food assistance, Christmas toys, and financial assistance. He has seen only a slight nominal increase in his budget, which parallels the only slight increase in the number of people being served. However, while he anticipates little impact from welfare reform, he fears that it may force some churches out of the welfare business or force them to concentrate only on the provisioning of food.

Another Lutheran Church aids between 100 and 125 individuals per year with a budget of \$10,000. These funds provide emergency financial assistance for individuals outside the parish, food assistance, as well as support for Habitat for Humanity. While his charitable budget has remained constant with the number of people being served, this pastor notes that the composition of the population receiving



his charitable services has been evolving. An increasing number of working poor pass through his doors seeking financial assistance. He anticipates much change ahead with the increasing political popularity of welfare reform. He is literally frightened that politicians are serious about such policies in light of the existing population of people who work an eight-hour day and cannot afford to adequately feed their families. This is a population that seems to be growing and represents a very courageous but underprivileged class of Americans. In response, this church will attempt to build a war chest against poverty by increasing the mass of its emergency fund and donating a greater amount of its resources to the Crossroads Urban Center.

The pastor of another Catholic Church oversees the administration of a \$12,000 budget which is occasionally distributed in the form of cash but more often in the form of food certificates or routed to Catholic Community Services. This budget has increased but remained a constant percentage of total expenditures. This is the case, in spite of the fact that the number of individuals served has increased recently to roughly 120. While this pastor anticipates welfare reform to have little impact upon his parish, he has learned a great deal in the execution of his duties. He has come to have a clear picture of the moral judgment that Utah citizens have against the economically disadvantaged. He is disturbed by the fact that, while some moral judgment is almost universal when issues of poverty are discussed, such judgments are particularly strong in the Salt Lake Valley.

The Cathedral of the Madeline represents a significant force in the daily battle against the social costs incurred by low income individuals and families. With a budget of approximately \$45,000, the Cathedral at the time of initial interview was providing 500 people per day with sack lunches, prescription medication vouchers, hotel vouchers, grocery vouchers, bus passes, or gasoline vouchers. The Cathedral also provides baby formula to low income mothers. Services provided in the autumn of 1999 represented a 30% increase over 1998's figures and a further increase was expected for the year ahead. A representative of the Cathedral noted that their budget has increased as a percentage of total expenditures and that they have accommodated this addition with increased fund-raising efforts. He notes that the composition of the population receiving his services is disproportionately homeless and mentally ill possibly due to the location of the parish in close proximity to downtown Salt Lake City. It is this locale that encourages him to predict that further welfare reform will have a large impact upon the Cathedral and those

receiving aid in the downtown area. This representative is amazed by the population of homeless in Salt Lake City relative to the population in larger western cities and is disturbed by the difficulty that these individuals face in trying to assimilate themselves into a self-sufficient sector of society.

The pastor of another Catholic Church largely channels his resources through Catholic Community Services, though he says his parish is trying to start a gas and food voucher program. Their \$3,000 budget serves 120 people per year. While these numbers have remained relatively unchanged in recent years, he has noticed a growing number of these people to be part of stable families rather than dissociated individuals. In his struggle against the external poverty of others, he also finds himself engaged in an internal battle against the calloused attitudes that sometimes characterize those who minister to the needs of the poor. He comes into regular contact with those willing to take advantage of the system and this has discouraged him from setting up parish-based services.

The pastor of another non-denominational also seems to battle this attitude as he reports that roughly 30% of those coming to the parish doors seeking aid are not truly in need. His parish currently offers counseling, food bank services, and undertakes clothing drives. Their \$5,000 budget has remained constant with the sixty to eighty people being served from year to year. He is afraid of the impact that welfare reform will have upon smaller parishes. These entities lack a strong funding base and will quickly become unable to aid even a small fraction of those approaching them for assistance. While he has not personally noticed an increase in the number of people coming to his church seeking financial assistance, he has noticed an increase in the proportion of those who are families.

While a Presbyterian minister believes that ministering to the needs of the poor is not the primary function of the church, his parish maintains an annual budget of between \$15,000 and \$20,000 for such purposes. This church provides transportation funds, gas vouchers, and bus tickets. The pastor has seen little increase in his budget or the number of people seeking assistance and consequently discounts the impact of welfare reform. He strongly asserted that local economic factors will impact the number of people he sees but not federal policies.

The Greek Orthodox Community of Salt Lake maintains two separate churches, one downtown and one in the Holladay area. This community supplies individual aid from an indigent fund on a case by case basis as well as an annual Thanksgiving meal that feeds roughly two thousand people. The Greek Orthodox community also distributes ten percent of its annual festival profits to various local charitable organizations. One of the Greek Orthodox parishes has a charitable budget of \$30,000 per year and serves a total of 2,300 people annually. A representative reports that the needy population to which he ministers has remained relatively unchanged in recent years. He sees mostly single homeless individuals who need food, money, and sometimes medication. This may be a function of the downtown location of the main cathedral and possibly contributes to the cynicism that he sometimes feels. He notes that it is often the case that those approaching the church for money truly desire drugs or alcohol. For him, it is irresponsible to not carefully screen those who appear to need charitable services.

In stark contrast to the above and representing a sector of private religious organizations that may become more significant given an increase in federal or state reform policies, the pastor of one Unitarian Church noted that with a parishioner base of only 140, his church is unable to provide charitable services. Their entire budget is consumed in providing worship services to the faithful.

The pastor of another Unitarian Church has a fairly low cash budget set aside for charitable services, but the volume of in-kind donations made available to him allows his parish to provide significant aid to a local inner city elementary school in the Salt Lake City School district. This particular school can be characterized as low income and routinely educates the children of immigrants from war-torn regions in Europe, South America, or Africa. This Unitarian Church provides an English program for adults at Edison Elementary School as well as lawyers to defend them in tenants' rights disputes. In addition, parishioners have donated a new computer lab to the school. This parish also donates five hundred sandwiches per month to the Salvation Army. The pastor estimates that his parish serves six hundred and fifty individuals per year with a cash budget of only \$1,000. He has seen the number of people served increase in recent years. Fortunately, in-kind donations provided by the parish have expanded the variety of services available to what the pastor perceives as a consistently diverse population. This is a parish that is stretched to the limit of its generosity by real world constraints and certainly not its sense of community responsibility. The

pastor notes that, in the event of further welfare reform policies, it will be impossible for his parish to aid any more individuals or families seeking assistance. He noted that, in the event of a disaster or any other short term increase in need, his church is willing and available to serve, but that his parish's ability to cope with a long-run scenario would be limited.

A representative of a Jewish synagogue reported that this congregation makes financial donations to three local food banks, provides meals for the homebound or currently ill, and undertakes food drives to provide for the needy. Further, children in the synagogue's religious school bring money when they attend which is donated at the end of the year to varying charitable organizations. The synagogue actually has little direct contact with the needy so it was difficult for her to report any changes in the composition of the needy population. It was, however, possible for her to assert that the synagogue is providing more funds to the needy in support of their increasing numbers.

#### Post-Deadline Follow-up

In May of 2000, each parish discussed above was contacted again. This was an effort to see if arrival of the 36-month maximum receipt of public assistance for the first 200 or so of Utah recipients had a noticeable impact upon the demand for private charitable services in the Salt Lake Valley. With a few noted exceptions, the overall answer seemed to be "no." The vast majority of parishes reported that they had perceived no increase in the demand for charitable services since December 31, 1999. It is important to remember, however, that most parishes had already perceived an increase in the demand for their services in the months immediately prior to the implementation of welfare reform. There has been earlier speculation that some welfare recipients had been leaving the programs ahead of the December deadline in an effort to preserve future welfare eligibility. If for whatever reason, some of those leaving AFDC and TANF rolls the previous year sought church help during their adjustment to a new lifestyle, that impact would be attributable to welfare reform as well. At any rate, the general response was that there had been more impact on parish budgets before than since the December 31, 1999 deadline.

LDS welfare authorities continue to maintain that there has been no noticeable bulge in demand during the spring of 2000. As examples of the responses of other denominations, a new pastor at a non-denominational church reported no increase in the demand for his charitable services. He did note that the percentage of the parish budget dedicated to such activities has grown from 17.8% in 1997 to an estimated 23% in 2000 but the pace of expenditures had not noticeably increased during the early months of 2000. Over these years the total parish budget has been roughly \$300,000. In contrast, the pastor of a Catholic Church reported only a slight increase in the number of people needing help and no budgetary changes. The pastor of another Catholic Church also reported no increase in the demand for the services offered there and has actually experienced a reduction in his budget to provide assistance of this sort. This last report points out the impact that changing parish reputation may have upon the reports from these parishes. A parish experiencing a reduction in its budget for charitable services will most likely see a decrease in the demand for charitable services, not because the needy individuals do not exist, but because those who are in need know where charitable services are most readily available. Thus, there is the likelihood of the demand for charitable services chasing the supply rather than vice versa.

Some parishes, however, reported significant increases in the demand for their services since December of 1999. The Baptist Church earlier noted as being in a low income suburb reports a significant increase in the demand for the food that they provide on a daily basis. Over the last ten years, the food pantry that she oversees has served between 1,000 and 1,500 people per month. In January of 2000, this same facility served 1800, the highest ever. Currently, the food pantry provides three meals per day for this population and, given enough food, does so between three and six days per week.

In contrast, representatives from a Lutheran Church and another Baptist Church reported no increase in the number of needy coming to their doors. The Lutheran minister initially expressed surprise at this fact in light of welfare reform's implementation but then noted that his parish had, since December, become more selective in the determination of who is to be considered "in need." This, it is noted, could again be a case of demand chasing more readily available supply outlets. The actions taken by the Lutheran minister were mirrored by a Baptist Church minister who has turned to the utilization of larger, more

established, local charities as a screening mechanism by which his parish can more effectively allocate scarce funds.

Representatives from three other Lutheran Churches and one Baptist Church all reported no increase in the demand for their charitable services and similarly no budgetary changes over the last few months. In contrast, however, an inner city Baptist Church reported a significant increase in the demand for their services. This parish is now receiving an average of three to four calls per day from those in need of some sort of assistance. Similarly, the pastor of a non-denominational congregation has witnessed an increase in the number of people being served annually from between two hundred and five hundred to a figure consistently over five hundred and fifty.

In a pattern similar to that which was exhibited above, representatives from two other Lutheran Churches and one Catholic Church all reported no increase in their financial resources dedicated to the provisioning for the welfare of the poor. Similarly, they reported no increase in the number of poor coming to them for assistance. Again, in contrast, the Cathedral of the Madeline reported a large increase in the number of people being served since December. In November of last year, the Cathedral served roughly 3000 sack lunches per month. Currently, that number has swelled to over 8000. This may be largely due to the proximity of The Cathedral to the downtown area. Residential parishes surveyed seemed to be exempt from the increase in demand associated with welfare reform. It is also important to note, however, that most urban parishes surveyed cited no increase in demand. Most lacked the responsive institutional structure present at The Cathedral of the Madeline. It is therefore possible that the demand for charitable services in the downtown area simply followed the most responsive supplier of those services.

Evidence of demand chasing supply is also to be found at another Catholic Church. The pastor of this parish actually reports a decrease in the demand for the charitable services offered. He noted that the decrease in demand that has been experienced may be a result of the changing reputation of his parish. He notes that the parish formerly administered to the needs of the poor directly, but has recently funneled most of its charitable work through Catholic Community Services. This action on the part of smaller parishes

undoubtedly encourages the needy to seek more centralized outlets for charitable services and would explain the increase in demand experienced by larger parishes with more flexible budgets.

The representative of another non-denominational congregation notes that her parish has done just the opposite. Their charitable work has evolved over the last few months into a more direct intra-parish system in which individuals help one another as needed without the institutional structure of the parish itself as an intermediary. Therefore, this church no longer has a fixed charitable budget and has no way of measuring changes in the demand for charitable services. This representative notes an underlying sense that demand for charitable services at her parish has decreased. This is not surprising since the flow of charitable services to individuals not associated with the parish has been significantly restricted.

A Catholic student Center, a Presbyterian Church, a Greek Orthodox Cathedral and another non-denominational congregation all report no increase in their charitable budgets due to a lack of any increase in the perceived demand for private charitable services. However, it may be that these parishes which have either experienced no change or a decrease in the number of people coming to their doors in search of assistance have either already responded to an increase in demand in the months prior to the December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline or are known by the needy population to be on a plateau with respect to what they can offer. These individuals then seek more likely supply outlets for charitable services in the Salt Lake Valley.

The recent record of Catholic Community Services is particularly interesting. Coincidental to but unconnected with the progress of welfare reform was the agency's decision to move from a policy of crisis management to one of case management. This change involves serving fewer people, but doing so more intensively. For instance, the number of clients served by the CCS Family Counseling System has fallen from 275 in 1997/98 to 159 in 1999/2000. The number of women served by that program fell from 166 to 57 over those years. But the number of hours spent in their service did not decline. In fact, more time was spent with each client. The number of women served by the Women's Substance Abuse Treatment Program fell from 89 in 1997/98 to 70 in 1999/2000. Yet the units of therapy provided—defined as 15 minutes of counseling time—increased from 2,076 to 3,399 while the average weeks of treatment lengthened from 15 to 17.2. At the St. Vincent de Paul Center, the number of meals served fell from 159,281 to

143,967, while the number of volunteer hours spent in serving those meals declined from 49,593 to 41,765. The number of families seeking assistance from the Weigand Homeless Day Center has fallen from 1997/98's 103 to 54 in 1999/2000. Also shelter nights at the Marillac House have fallen from 10,045 in 1997/98 to 9,446 in 1998/99 and 6,036 in 1999/2000. The CCS Kidstart program experienced a rise in the number of homeless children served from 143 in 1997/98 to 290 in 1998/99. Then fell back to 162 in 1999/2000. This was directly attributable to funding cuts. However, the number of volunteer hours devoted to that program rose from 30 in 1997/98 to 448 in 1998/99 and 455 in 1999/2000. Case management units devoted to Kidstart rose from 2,698 to 8,970 and then fell back to 5,723 over those same years. These fiscal year figures are not directly responsive to what has happened since December 31, 1999, since the relevant months are only one-half of the 1999/2000 fiscal. However, the numbers also support the CCS staff's judgment that there was no appreciable change during the first few months of the year 2000.

Undoubtedly the impact of welfare reform is significant to the people exiting the programs and certain parishes described above have also felt the impact. On a wider scale, however, it seems clear that the resources of most private charities in the Salt Lake Valley have yet to become stressed much beyond previous levels. It is important to remember that the demand for charitable services, particularly by families, had already increased in the months prior to the fall survey. Recent impact of welfare reform upon a few outlets for charitable services cannot be denied. Those parishes that had felt a significant increase in demand since the December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline may be bearing the burden that the less financially endowed or less responsive parishes cannot carry.



## Lessons from the Experience

A dynamic interplay between religious and secular forces is apparent in this analysis of charitable services offered by local churches. We turn to the lessons that may be drawn from our survey.

### Lessons from LDS Welfare Efforts

The over-riding lesson from the LDS experience during the welfare reform years has been the value of mentoring. That is especially true for both the Inner City Project and the Family Support Service, of which mentoring has been the essence. Having people of reasonable substance and successful lifestyles come into the home, demonstrate loving commitment, after winning confidence, help identify goals and obstacles and provide access to resources for overcoming those obstacles has been effective in restoring hope. The fact that the service missionaries were called and assigned for long-term service avoided the high turnover that weakens most volunteer organizations. In effect, loving grandparents with access to substantial resources were introduced into the lives of discouraged people with commitment not just to serve them but to help them to move ahead under their own efforts.

A second lesson is the difference between self-sufficiency and self-reliance. Given the obstacles faced in terms of family structure, physical and mental health, education and employability, self-sufficiency was beyond the foreseeable reach of the overwhelming majority of those served. But to move forward step by step by undertaking gradually increasing responsibility for meeting their own needs and at the same time reaching out to help others was within the reach of all. Just doing a better job of home care or personal grooming, for instance, was progress in self-reliance. Any willing person can make progress along that path and can build self-confidence in the process. The feeling of making some contribution to the well-being of other needy persons, no matter how minor, is also a significant step towards the building of self-esteem and added well-being.

A third lesson is closely related. It is the need for a return by the LDS Welfare Program to its self-reliance base. In the historical moves from New York to Ohio, Missouri, Illinois and on to the Great Basin, the emphasis had been on helping members to obtain land and other opportunities to support themselves. The program initiated during the 1930s had emphasized receipt of commodities in return for donated labor. However, in the post-World War II period it had become customary for LDS bishops to provide short-term emergency assistance in the form of fast offering cash or commodities from Bishops' Storehouses and Deseret Industries, asking for but not insisting upon offsetting volunteer work at Church facilities. Now the emphasis is returning to self-reliance planning in pursuit of individually set goals. The emergency assistance is still there but is expected to be included in the longer-range plans.

Fourth has been the universality of charitable urges. The service missionaries and mentors have been instructed to network among themselves to identify sources of services and commodities needed by those they serve. The needs may be clothing, furniture, home or auto repairs, Christmas gifts or medical, dental or legal services. Members of the service missionaries' home wards or people from whom they purchase such services are generally willing to contribute. Their generosity is reinforced if someone they know: is deeply and personally involved; expresses concern for those in need; will assure the giver that the objective is self-reliance and that progress toward that goal is evident; and sees to it that no one giver is overwhelmed. Beyond the ward level, the members of the Storehouse of Specialists—experts in their own right—have been generous with their own time and have had little difficulty finding others in their professions who are willing to serve. As long as those same commitments to pursuit of self-reliance and the spreading of the service opportunities and responsibilities are followed.

A fifth lesson is that, though community resources are rarely adequate to meet all of the needs of the poor, there are always more resources available than one is aware of until one learns how and where to pursue them. The responses of the staffs of anti-poverty agencies, public and private, proved especially heartening. Rather than resent incursions on their turf, they welcome as non-threatening the help of mentors who can do what they rarely have time to do. The mentors follow the applicants for their programs and the recipients of their services into their homes and stay with and guide them toward the self-reliance, which is the ultimate goal of every program but rarely in reach for lack of personal rapport.

Lesson six may be an unexpected bonus: the change of attitude of previously self-satisfied suburbanites who had impersonally criticized the inner-city poor in aggregate as “those people.” Now, the mentors know them personally, are concerned for them, understand their problems and their yearnings, and develop a different attitude toward public anti-poverty programs designed to serve those they understand and even love. Seventy percent of the mentors have chosen to extend by months the length of their initial commitment to serve.

A seventh and vital lesson is that even an organization with the capacity of the LDS Church in its Utah home base cannot carry a 21<sup>st</sup> century welfare burden alone. It can offer food and clothing to substantial numbers of the needy. It can offer employment to relatively small numbers at its own facilities and make a substantial contribution in preparing many of those for competitive employment. It can provide short-term emergency help from its own resources for many in many ways. It is dependent upon community resources and partnerships with other agencies, public and private, to accomplish its commendable long-term objectives of self-reliance. For instance, education and training must be long-term, even inter-generational, contributors to a successful family rise from poverty. That must of necessity be supplied by the external community. How effective the LDS Church can be in pursuing that self-reliance goal for members and nonmembers alike will depend to a substantial degree upon the extent to which those community resources and those community partnerships are available.

All of that being said, however, no non-governmental organization on the Utah scene has either the history of or the capacity for assisting the poor that the LDS Church has. Even including government, no organization, except perhaps the educational system, has, over the long term, been as effective in promoting both the philosophy and the capability for self-reliance.

## Lessons from Diverse Churches Experiences

The heterogeneous nature of parishes and religious denominations yields a wide variety of charitable services offered as well as greatly differing abilities across separate entities to offer such services. However, while religious organizations are inherently diverse, the impact of welfare reform leaves a homogeneous trace across the budgets of differing charitable organizations and thus serves to impact the abilities of each parish to aid those in need. Some very small parishes are simply unable to provide charitable services that reach beyond a few members of their own congregation, while others reach far beyond their own walls to aid those in all areas of the city. This may also be a reflection of diverging opinions regarding the role of a church in the performance of charitable acts. Some parishes offer services that are very limited in scope while others offer a wide variety of programs to those in need. Many reported only the ability to aid families needing to meet this month's rent or unable to provide sufficient sustenance due to a temporary financial hardship. Conversely, other parishes, either alone or in concert with others of the same denomination, successfully manage a soup kitchen, a men's shelter, food drives, or immunization programs. These distinctions serve to illustrate the heterogeneous nature of religious organizations and their differing abilities to cope with the possible increase in demand for private charitable aid resulting from federal and state reforms. A few suburban parishes had experienced little change in demand for charitable services. Most suburban and all inner city churches had experienced increased demand for such services, though none had evidence that welfare reform was the cause, despite the coincidence in timing. Few could identify significant increases in demand following the December 31<sup>st</sup> application of welfare reform deadlines, but several had felt an undoubted impact.

Corresponding to the number of people served by various parishes and the variety of services offered are, of course, parish budgets. Smaller parishes are largely unable to dedicate substantial amounts of money to charitable work, while more predominant denominations with a larger parishioner base were able to dedicate thousands of dollars to charitable causes. Not surprisingly, these larger budgets enable such parishes to offer a wider variety of charitable services to a greater number of individuals. This ability will be and has been constrained, however, as the number of individuals demanding charitable services has increased. The diversity described above is countered by a few constants. All parishes surveyed stated

that their charitable budgets had either remained a constant percentage of their total budget while increasing in nominal terms or that the resources dedicated to the performance of charitable work had increased as a percentage of their total budget to the exclusion of other programs. In light of this, the impact of welfare reform is feared by many of those surveyed.

Parishes also reported that, as the demand for charitable services has increased and charitable budgets swelled, the composition of the population receiving these charitable services has evolved. Many pastors have noticed that efforts previously going to the aid of single men or the elderly were now dedicated to the assistance of families, children, younger singles, and those who might otherwise be perceived as middle income. They reported that the connotation of the word “poor” is estranged from its denotation. The poor are now those who may have the trappings of the modern middle class yet remain unable to meet all of their financial commitments and sometimes even adequately nourish their children. While nearly all pastors reported giving aid to the occasional transient single male, more reported that their budget was consumed largely by those falling short on the monthly house payment or unable to provide groceries sufficient to nourish an otherwise intact family unit.

Several pastors reported having learned significant lessons from providing charitable services, especially the realization that “anyone can be poor.” Poverty is viewed in modern society, as it has been historically, as an individual moral failing. Pastors noted seeing the social and institutional factors at work which have the power to remove someone from a life of comfort and place them in a life of want.

These institutional factors do not avoid confrontation with any race, class, or gender, but in recent years seem to have been targeting those who were previously privileged. These are the families and children who would have been spared misery or flourished in the economic prosperity of the past, but today find themselves in need of adequate shelter, clothing, and food. Productive and “moral” members of society can find themselves in the most immoral of financial straits. Some expressed concern that the governmental imposition of welfare reform will further impoverish these victims of progress as private charitable organizations become unable to meet the increased demand for their services, though there was little evidence that such impacts have arrived as yet.

The most intense increases in the demand for charitable services have been felt by a few downtown facilities. However, there were inner city parishes which reported no increases in demand for services. Noticeably, these were the organizations most lacking in policies and institutional structures conducive to responding to requests for charitable services. Several had opted to contribute their charitable budgets to facilities designed for that purpose, such as Catholic Community Services, for parishes of that denomination. Doing so not only led to their turning away potential recipients but also led those they might otherwise have served to follow the resources. Others have encouraged their members to share directly with the poor without involving their church. These parishes also have been exempt from added requests. Clearly, there was a tendency for demand to follow supply.

Undoubtedly the impact of welfare reform is significant to the people exiting the programs and certain parishes described above have also felt the impact. On a wider scale, however, it seems clear that the resources of most private charities in the Salt Lake Valley have yet to become stressed much beyond previous levels. It is important to remember that the demand for charitable services, particularly by families, had already increased in the months prior to the fall survey. It is not inconceivable that welfare reform was already having an impact before the December 1999 deadline as individuals sought to preserve their 36-month welfare allocation or sought to take advantage of a favorable job market rather than await the inevitable. That being said, the impact of welfare reform upon a few outlets for charitable services cannot be denied. A few of the parishes described above had felt a significant increase in demand since the December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. These parishes may be bearing the burden that either the less financially endowed or less responsive parishes cannot carry.

## The Impact of Welfare Reform on the Faith Community

We end this research with the confession that we cannot as yet quantify the impact of the post-1996 state and federal reform upon the religious organizations of the Salt Lake Valley. Almost all of these organizations reflect upon an increasing flow of applicants for assistance, but none of them have any means for identifying clear ties to the demise of AFDC and consequent changes in the administration of public assistance. The absence of demonstrated connection between welfare reform and charitable demand may well be a matter of timing. Though AFDC has disappeared, its descendant TANF lives on. December 31, 1999 was the first application of the 36 month lifetime limit on the receipt of public assistance. Public assistance rolls had declined by the thousands of households before that date but only by scores thereafter. Those who had left public assistance rolls before the deadline could be expected to be the most capable of self-reliance. The greatest need and the consequent greatest pressures on the faith community may yet be ahead. All one can say at present is that the pressure, though substantial in some cases, has been far less than expected and not beyond the faith community's ability to carry the load.

However, also noticeable were increases in the demands for charitable services, which were unrelated to the welfare reform phenomenon. Respondents to these interviews frequently noted the increased requests for help from two-parent families who were not and never had been eligible for public assistance. Family breakup, the rise in consumer consciousness and the need to keep up with the desires of children to keep up materially with their classmates may all be involved in the increased demand for charitable services. Some, as in the case of the LDS Church, may have generated greater awareness of need and a responding pursuit of available assistance as a result of their own self-generated expansion of services.

Stressed throughout by all respondents was the apparent shift in need from unattached and transient or homeless men to needy families, most (but by no means all) of them headed by a single parent. Many were identified as being, to all external appearances, "middle class," yet needing material assistance. Only the single-headed families could have been the victims of welfare reform. Two parent families or single-

parent families of above-poverty but still insufficient incomes are more likely victims of temptations to live beyond their means when caught between the social pressures of consumerism and the low wage structure of the Utah economy.

Of course, the measure of welfare reform's impact upon the alleviation efforts of the faith community may merely be premature. The close of calendar 1999 confronted the first cohort of public assistance recipients with the realities of the 36-month limit. Protected on the one hand by plentiful employment options and, on the other, by the 20 percent extension possibilities for those excused of employment responsibilities, few, if any, were initially deprived of income. More immediate had been the move from welfare poor to working poor. As a result, churches will more likely find themselves supplementing earned incomes, mostly with in-kind contributions, rather than replacing public assistance incomes, and dealing with the consequences of stress more than actual deprivation. Only throughout the millennial year 2000 will the real consequences for welfare reform on the faith community become known. Three facts are apparent at the end of the eighth month of that year:

(1) The faith community can never successfully replace the monetary contributions to family subsistence provided by government over the years since the Great Depression;

(2) As purveyors of faith in God and interpersonal love among the human race, what churches can and should provide is:

(a) The faith and foresight to prepare for and to function more successfully within the society and the economy, and

(b) The mentoring by already successful individuals to reassure and guide through life's exigencies those burdened most by its uncertainties;

(3) A partnership will always be needed between the democratically-enforced sharing of society's resources governmentally, the organized advocacy and service of secular charitable organizations, and the compassionate volunteer mentoring that can only be sparked by the commitments of duty and love generated by religious commitment.