

ARCHIVES

White house visit: Pres. Clinton meets with Pres. Hinckley, receives his six-generation family history

By Jocelyn Mann Denyer, Public Affairs Specialist, North America Northeast Area

Updated

18 NOV 1995

12:00 AM MST

In comments to the media after visiting President Bill Clinton at the White House Nov. 13, President Gordon B. Hinckley said, "It is our feeling that if you're going to fix the nation, you need to start by fixing families. That's the place to begin."

The family was the predominant topic of conversation during the visit President Hinckley had with President Clinton. The visit renewed an acquaintance dating back to 1992 when then-candidate Clinton visited Salt Lake City and met with the First Presidency. The last visit of a Church president to the White House was in 1986 when President Ezra Taft Benson called on President Ronald Reagan. "We had a very delightful visit," President Hinckley said. Vice President Al Gore was present for a short time during the visit. Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve and chairman of the Church's Public Affairs committee accompanied President Hinckley to the White House.

President Hinckley presented President Clinton a copy of the Church's "Proclamation on the Family," issued in September by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve. The proclamation calls for "responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society." (See Sept. 30 Church News.)

Presentation of the proclamation to President Clinton led to a discussion on the importance of families. President Hinckley said that President Clinton was very respectful and appreciative of what Church leaders had to say on the subject. "President Clinton has spoken a good deal about family values recently and we discussed that and expressed our appreciation for what he has said," President Hinckley added.

President Clinton was also presented a volume containing six generations of his family history and another containing that of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. A copy of each family history was provided for the Clintons' daughter Chelsea. President Hinckley described the President "as most appreciative and very grateful" to have the history. "He leafed through the book and we talked about his forebears," President Hinckley said.

President Hinckley said he told the President that "we advocate in the Church a program we call family home evening, reserving one night a week where father, mother and children sit down together and talk – talk about the family and about one another and study some together." He suggested that President Clinton might "get Hillary and Chelsea and sit down with those books and have a family home evening." President Clinton said he would take the family history books with him to Camp David for Thanksgiving where the family could have a good time discussing their heritage.

White House spokeswoman Mary Ellen Glynn said the conversation covered a range of issues, including welfare, education and the need for parents to be actively involved in their children's lives.

During the 30-minute visit, President Clinton and President Hinckley did not discuss any political matters. In response to a question as to whether there would be follow-up meetings, President Hinckley said, "I expect when he campaigns in '96 that he will come by and see us again. Our doors are always open."

On Sunday evening, Nov. 12, before his White House visit Monday, President Hinckley and Elder Maxwell met with full-time missionaries serving in the Washington D.C. North and South missions.

Elder Maxwell, who first addressed the missionaries, highlighted "the tremendous harvest basket that the Restoration has brought to us." He added that the New Testament speaks of a "harvest basket pressed down shaken together and running over. Now that's the Restoration. We have been given, Elders and Sisters, far more than we can possibly inventory at this time, let alone fully appreciate." He cited the additions the Book of Mormon brings to a full knowledge of the Atonement and the plan of salvation.

President Hinckley spoke of the often-unseen results of missionary work. "You never can foretell the consequences of your service as a missionary," President Hinckley said. "Don't get discouraged."

President Hinckley commented on the vicinity in which the missionaries are serving, noting there are many ambassadors in Washington, D.C. He told the missionaries they are ambassadors, also. "Do you know what an ambassador plenipotentiary is? One with full powers and authority granted by his government to act in its behalf. That's what you are. Each of us is an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ with authority given by Him to represent Him in this work of teaching the gospel to others."

After meeting with the missionaries, President Hinckley hosted an informal reception with LDS members of congress and their spouses. Sen. Orrin Hatch, Utah; Reps. Michael D. Crapo, Idaho; John T. Doolittle, California; Eni Faleomavaega, American Samoa; Jim Hansen, Utah; Wally Herger, California; Ernest J. Istook, Oklahoma; Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, California; Ron Packard, California; and Matt Salmon, Arizona; attended, along with Landra Reid, wife of Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada.

President Hinckley told those in attendance at the reception that he had not come to Washington to discuss politics, but to "express to President Clinton the fact that we pray for him as we do for all of our elected representatives." He related a story about a man who worked with a candidate who ran for president, and whose candidate lost the race. The day after the election in their family prayer, the man prayed for the new President of the United States. One of his children asked why he was praying for this president when he had just defeated the candidate the man had worked for. To this he answered, "He needs our prayers."

President Hinckley indicated that this is a critical time in the history of the nation and expressed confidence in the elected representatives who were present in going to work to help solve the problems that beset the country.

"Many of the members of Congress expressed appreciation to me for the opportunity to meet with and listen to the prophet," said LaMar Sleight, director of public affairs for the North America Northeast area of the Church who assisted in arranging the reception.

After his visit with President Clinton on Monday, President Hinckley traveled to New York for a luncheon at the Harvard Club with several business, industry and media leaders.

LIVING FAITH

What a national survey reveals about Latter-day Saints and their communities

By Scott Taylor

Updated

25 OCT 2021

12:47 PM MDT

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have far deeper feelings of community trust and connection than other religious groups, according to a recent American Enterprise Institute national survey on community satisfaction, safety and trust.

Published Oct. 20 by AEI's [Survey Center on American Life](#), the report — titled “[Public Places and Commercial Spaces: How Neighborhood Amenities Foster Trust and Connection in American Communities](#)” — finds that 72% of Latter-day Saints say they feel at least somewhat connected to their community.

Also, Latter-day Saints are far more likely than other religious groups to believe their neighbors are willing to help in times of trouble.

Daniel Cox — the center's director and founder and an AEI senior fellow in polling and public opinion — shared with Church News a closer look at survey findings representing Church members.

“What we see in the survey is that Latter-day Saints demonstrate a remarkable degree of social cohesion,” said Cox, adding that it's “exceedingly difficult” to find a Latter-day Saint who has no close connection to someone who shares his or her faith. The survey shows that 90% of Church members say they have not just acquaintances but very close friends within their own faith community.

More than half of Latter-day Saints spend time at least once a week with fellow Church members outside of formal worship services. “You don't actually see that to this degree across a lot of other religious traditions, so that's remarkable,” said Cox of the social interactions.

Such social engagement among Latter-day Saints is often facilitated by those living relatively close to their places of worship. “We found that more than two-thirds — 68% — are within a 10-minute drive, and that 1 in 3 can even walk there,” he said. “Again, that's much more than any other religious tradition.”

Cox also underscored how well Latter-day Saints know their neighbors — beyond just names and occupations — and he pointed to a survey question asking respondents if they knew the politics of their neighbors.

“A lot of people rightfully and understandably don't know the whole politics of the people who live around them, but Latter-day Saints — 90 percent — said they knew the political leanings of the people who live in their neighborhoods,” he said, adding that as many as a quarter to a third of those in other religious groups can't say the same.

Under the heading of “neighborly trust and connection,” the AEI report says “religious identity and involvement are strongly associated with community attachment” and cites that 72% of Latter-day Saints feel at least somewhat closely connected to the people who live within their community. That includes 24% who say they feel very close.

The breakdown of other religious groups and percentages that feel at least somewhat connected include white Catholics, 62%; white mainline Protestants, 61%; Jews, 58%; and white evangelic Protestants, 57%. Less than half of Hispanic Catholics (48%) and Black Protestants (48%) say the same, while only 41% of religious unaffiliated Americans say they feel connected to their neighbors.

Across religious traditions, Americans reporting higher levels of religious participation feel more attached to their communities and the people in them, with 58% of adults who are members of a local worship organization feeling close to their neighborhoods, compared to 46% for those who are not members.

Similarly, Americans who attend religious services at least once a week acknowledge greater neighborhood attachment than those who never attend — 62% to 40%.

While many Americans feel a lack of connection to their neighbors, 80% of the respondents say their neighbors would be very willing (27%) or fairly willing (53%) to help others in their area.

Overall, the national survey of 5,058 adults across the United States shows pandemic-prompted economic and social disruptions in cities across the country, with a majority of Americans preferring life in the suburbs and rural areas, opting for personal space over more amenities offered in urban neighborhoods.

Other survey sections focused on community safety and feelings of security; safety of drinking water; trust in law enforcement, police funding and support for community policing; feeling welcome in one's own neighborhood; local decision-making; political communities; community news and engagement; and neighborhood amenities and schools. Results included breakdowns according to race and ethnic groups, religion and other socioeconomic factors.

According to the report, nearly half of Latter-day Saints — 45% — say people living in their area would be very willing to help their neighbors, the highest among the religious groups and those unaffiliated with religion.

In a section titled “Community Leaders,” the AEI survey asked respondents if they personally know someone in their communities who will take on an informal role coordinating activities and events and connecting people in the neighborhood. Overall, 37% said they did, while 63% said they did not.

The survey report acknowledged that few differences from that response were evident across religious traditions — with the exceptions of those of the Latter-day Saint and Jewish faiths, who “are unique among religious Americans in their connections to community leaders.”

A majority of both — 58% of the Latter-day Saints and 53% of the Jewish participants — say they personally know someone who is engaged in organizing social activities and events in the neighborhood.

The AEI survey questioned what affects how Americans rate their communities, finding that one major driver is formal and informal social capital. “Formal engagement in religious and community organizations, such as volunteering regularly, elevates people’s views of where they live and how they see the future,” the report stated. “So does simply interacting informally with friends and neighbors.”

The relationship between faith and community satisfaction is especially pronounced in this area, the report continued, with 40% of Americans who report going to religious services more than once a week rating their communities as excellent, compared to 29% who seldom attend and 25% who never do.

A similar pattern is evident in belief that the communities will improve over the next five years and — 40% for the religiously observant, 31% for those who seldom attend and 30% for those who never attend.

The survey is the second in a series of three annual surveys looking at various facets of American life and trying to understand different dynamics, Cox said. Last year’s focused on social networks — the influences of family members and friends. Next year’s will be on the changing dynamics of family life in the country, such as marriage status and number of children.

[About Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Terms of Service](#)

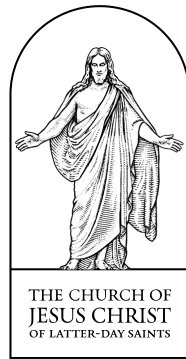
[Privacy Policy](#)

[Email Subscriptions](#)

Follow Us



Copyright © 2021 Deseret News Publishing Company. All rights reserved.



The Church News is an official publication of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Jointly published by the Deseret News and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, its content supports the doctrines, principles and practices of the Church.