

# Effects of Religious Exemption Laws on Child Mortality: A Study for the Community “Followers of Christ” in Idaho, United States

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## ABSTRACT

Idaho is one of the states in the US that permits parents to forgo medical care for their children due to religious beliefs. On the other hand, a family could be accused of child neglect if it stops providing medical care for any other reason. This study compares age-specific death rates among ‘The Followers of Christ’, a group that rejects medical care, and the general population in the same region to assess the implications of the practice. The comparison is done by using data from the cemetery where the members of the community are interred, and the Dry Creek cemetery in Boise, ID, used by the general population. Because of variations in child mortality rates, the difference is statistically significant.

**Keywords:** Religious exemption laws, child mortality rates, demographic analysis.

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## INTRODUCTION

Idaho is a state that permits parents to withhold medical care for children for religious reasons. However, if a family refuses medical care for any other reason, they may be prosecuted with child negligence.<sup>1</sup> Several organizations, including The Campaign to Protect Idaho Children, [Idahochildren.org](http://Idahochildren.org) and the Idaho Children at Risk Task Force (Idaho Fatality Review Team, 2017) among others- have looked at individual cases in which children have died of preventable causes because medical care was not sought by their parents, but no study has attempted to measure the effects of the practice on the members of the community.

This study measured the effects of the practice by calculating death rates, and average age of death for the community known as ‘The Followers of Christ’, which refuses medical care, and the general population in the same area. This was accomplished by combining cemetery data from the Peaceful Valley cemetery (Wolf, 2018), where many of the members of the community are buried and the Dry Creek cemetery in Boise,

Idaho<sup>2</sup>, where the general population buries its dead.

## SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

A 2020 Idaho Governor’s task force on child deaths identified at least 16 cases of preventable deaths due to natural causes (Idaho Fatality Review Team, 2017). The task force identified three deaths in 2018 as a result of refusing medical care for religious reasons, a 33% rise from its 2015 findings (Idaho Fatality Review Team, 2017 updated 2020).

It is difficult to estimate the actual number of preventable deaths to religious objectors since Idaho Vital Statistics does not compile the number of deaths to children who are not treated medically due to religious or personal beliefs. In reviewing the causes of infant and child deaths, the team discovered that three (3) deaths were to infants from families who refused medical care because of religious beliefs. The team determined that

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<sup>1</sup> See Idaho Legislation in the References section for a list of Idaho State statutes.

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<sup>2</sup> See Cemetery Data in the References section for details about the data.

these deaths may have been prevented with timely medical treatment, compliance with scheduled vaccinations and/or proper prenatal care for the mother” (Idaho Fatality Review Team, 2017).

The incidence of child deaths that result from religious exemptions for medical care remains largely unknown and underreported due to a variety of factors discussed in this article, including a culture of silence in faith healing communities, a lack of uniform laws governing the reporting and investigation of child deaths, a patchwork of state and county laws regulating the burial of the deceased on private property and the inability of law enforcement and prosecutors to investigate such deaths (Conversation with Linda Martin, February 2018; Wolf, 2018).

## SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The goal of the research was to attempt to empirically measure the effects of the group’s beliefs on the life expectancy of the group known as ‘The Followers of Christ’.

Idaho is one of the few states that still allows parents to forgo medical care for their children based on religious beliefs. According to the Child Friendly Faith Project (n.d.), “While the state protects children from many forms of maltreatment, it has next to no protections for children who are denied the needed medical care by those who claim they were following their religious beliefs”. In fact, Idaho is one of just nine states where adults who allow a child to die from “faith healing” medical neglect cannot be prosecuted for manslaughter. Idaho Statute Chapter 73 title 4a protects religious beliefs. Religious exemption protects a parent from medical neglect charges against a child. In other cases, the same level of protection is not provided. Estimates of the children who have suffered from such practices vary. Swan (2020) offers a comprehensive overview of the issue, with a specific section on the Idaho case.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Although several groups and institutions have examined specific cases of child deaths due to medical neglect based on religious beliefs, not much exists in terms of academic research on the effects on mortality rates for the group known as ‘The Followers of Christ’. Several studies have compared health and life expectancy outcomes for closed religious groups living among the general population in the United States (Matthews, 1999), but none addressed specifically the Followers of Christ.

In the United States, the Amish are one group among several that isolates itself from the rest of the surrounding community in similar ways. Although the Amish do not participate in Medicare or Medicaid, have lower immunization rates and tend to avoid prenatal care, they

are religiously free to seek medical care from a religious standpoint (Ohio Amish Country, 2021). Amish infant mortality rates are comparable to those of non-Amish populations living in the same area (Acheson, 1994). There have been no recent specific research comparing Amish infant mortality rates to the general population (Colyer et al., 2017).

Matthews (1999) finds that “Despite a higher prevalence of several risk factors for perinatal and infant death among the Amish, neonatal and infant death rates for Geauga Settlement Amish have been very similar to the corresponding rates for white children in rural Ohio and the state as a whole.”

The Amish belief system differs from that of the Followers of Christ in that they refuse modern technology but not medical care. According to a study conducted by Heima et al. (2017), “the high cost and long-distance travel associated with routine, professional dental care makes it difficult for children to maintain good oral hygiene”. Our analysis revealed that bleeding disorders were more prevalent among this gene pool compared to the nation at large; however, asthma was less common.”

Swan (2020) emphasizes that some more conservative Amish groups are reluctant to place a financial burden on their communities, but makes no reference of studies on life expectancy and outcomes.

## LEGAL BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES

When the United States Congress passed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act in 1974<sup>3</sup>, it delegated the Department of Health and Human Services to determine the religious exemptions of the act. To secure federal funds for child safety programs, states were obliged to enact religious exemptions (NDAA, 2015). The department repealed this provision with new regulations in 1983, but by 2015, 39 states, including the District of Columbia and Guam exempted parents or guardians from criminal liability if they failed to provide medical treatment for their children for religious reasons (NDAA, 2015).

“Any person who, under circumstances or conditions other than those likely to produce great bodily harm or death, willfully causes or permits any child to suffer, or inflicts unjustifiable physical pain or mental suffering, or having the care or custody of any child, willfully causes or permits the person or health of such child to be injured, or willfully causes or permits such child to be placed in such situation that such child or health may be endangered, is guilty of a misdemeanor (Idaho Code 18–1501)” according to the law in Idaho. However, “the practice of a parent or guardian who chooses for his child treatment by prayer or spiritual means alone shall not for that reason alone be construed to have violated the duty of care to

<sup>3</sup>United States Code. 42 U.S.C.A. § 5106i (2009).

such child (Ida. Code 18–1501(4), 18–401(2), 16–1602(25)).”

Bills have been drafted by Idaho State legislators aimed at overturning the faith healing exemptions to Idaho child neglect law but failed to make it out of committee. (Foy, 2018, 2020; Child Friendly Faith Project, n.d.). In 2020, anti-vaccination advocates joined efforts to curtail lifting religious exemptions from Idaho law. Anti-vaccination advocates fear that lifting medical exemption measures would violate their “vaccine freedom” (Foy, 2020).

Child rights and abuse prevention advocates that like Rita Swan, a survivor of religious-based medical neglect challenged opponents of efforts to strike religious exemptions from Idaho’s child neglect laws arguing that “Religion should not be the basis for providing this exemption,” and that “parents do not have a first amendment right to neglect or abuse their children” (Wolf, 2018). According to Swan, it is also the independence of the Western culture that they do not like government telling them what to do. “There is also this feeling that parental rights are absolute while religious freedom rights are absolute” (Wolf, 2018).

Some states have succeeded in repealing faith healing exemptions. However, in the absence of a universal federal ban on religious exemptions, members of the faith healing community have relocated from states with newly enacted faith healing probations to states with faith healing exemptions (Conversation with Linda Martin, February, 2018).

## HISTORY OF THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST

The Followers of Christ church traces its origins to the early Church of Latter Saints (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020) and faith-healing Pentecostal movement (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020; Casey, 2019) of the late 19th century. According to scant historical reports on the church and some reporting on the church’s’ background following lawsuits charging child neglect and abuse through faith healing in states where religious exemptions do not exist, church and ex-members estimate the church was founded around 1880 (Conversation with Linda Martin, August 2020; Casey, 2019) in Chanute, Kansas, by Marion Reece following a splintering of a sect of LDS members during the early days of the LDS church.

According to historical accounts of Martin based on family oral history and personal genealogical research, Joseph Smith (founder of the LDS church) and Jacob McDonald began preaching in New York (Conversation with Linda Martin, February, 2018).

“Everyone says the Followers are a split off from the Mormons, and it is highly likely that they are. Additionally, they claim that it is Pentecostal. Pentecostalism arrives in the early 1900s from Pennsylvania. Some members of

the Followers of Christ Church joined the Pentecostal Churches to increase their membership.

“The Church of the First Born and the Followers of Christ merged in Oklahoma in the 1940s as a result of the Church of the First Born’s status as a government-approved consciousness objector during the war”. The churches were registered as First Assembly and Church of the First-Born True Followers of Christ since the Followers of Christ did not, and as a result they joined the Church of the First Born. Although it has a lengthy title, that is how they were officially recognized by the government to be granted conscientious objector status.

“Then after the war, the churches began to split up again”. There will be many splinters because there will be an argument inside the family or the leadership will disagree on something.” There were many different stories. However, in the 1940s, everyone assumed that the Idaho church had split off from the Oregon churches, but this was not the case. Churches can now be found in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, California, Colorado, Oklahoma and Kansas” (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020).

Currently, according to Martin (Conversation with Linda Martin, February, 2018), in a directory for the Church of the Firstborn, 10,000-20,000 members and over 100 churches in 29 different states are listed. She estimates that about 500 families comprise the Southwest Idaho Followers of Christ community, with most members concentrated in the Canyon County area. The exact numbers of church members are difficult to estimate due to scant public and historical records, the secretive and reclusive nature of the community and a reluctance to let outsiders observe or join the community (Conversation with Linda Martin, February, 2018).

Martin estimates that about five percent of the Followers of Christ community members eventually leave the church (Conversation with Linda Martin, February 2018).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Followers of Christ are a close-knit community. Although it may have a list of its members, it is not public, and the group shuns outside interference (Conversation with Linda Martin, February, 2018).

For this reason, it is virtually impossible to use standard demographic techniques to estimate life expectancy. To calculate life expectancy, the initial population size, the number of deaths in a year, and the number of survivors at the end of the year must all be known (Rowland, 2014). Since this information is not available, this study will use a technique sometimes referred to as “Cemetery Demography” (Flood, 1993; Lanza, 2012; Matthews, 1999). Given the fact that many of their dead are buried in a cemetery known as Peaceful Valley cemetery (Shaw, 2020; Wolf, 2018), data for each grave was collected by

the authors in the cemetery in November, 2019.

To make the analysis comparable, the data was then compared with grave data from Dry Creek cemetery in Boise, Idaho. Dry Creek cemetery is used by the general population of Ada and Canyon counties in Idaho. The reason for choosing a cemetery in Boise is the proximity and similar environment of the two populations and the ease of collecting data since Dry Creek cemetery has a comprehensive database of all graves available online.

We created survival functions for the two populations for people born after 1950 that were deceased at the time of the data collection. The average age at death calculated for the two populations is not comparable to the life expectancy value calculated with standard demographic techniques, since it includes only people who were born after 1950 and died at the time the data was collected in November, 2019.

The data can be used to generate a survival function, which represents the proportion of individuals of an initial population alive at a given time. The survival function gives the probability that a subject is alive at time  $t$ . The probability of being alive at  $t = 0$  is 1, while the probability of being alive is 0 as the time the data is collected.

In general, the survival function is normalized to an initial specific number of individuals for all populations, usually 1000 or 100 individuals. Additionally, there are three main types of survivorship curves. One with a high initial survival rate and high late mortality; another with constant mortality rates across the life span, and one with high initial mortality rates, but lower mortality rates in older ages. Ortiz-Ospina (2017), calculates survivorship for humans between 1851 up to an estimate for 2031.

In general, survival functions are calculated for each year. In our study, given the relatively small sample size of the Peaceful Valley cemetery, we used 5-year intervals. The average age at death can be easily calculated by adding all ages at death divided by the number of individuals. We use statistical testing to determine the probability that the difference between the two values is significant and not due to chance. Given the small sample size for the Peaceful Valley cemetery, we do not differentiate between male and female, although this can be an important issue for further analysis.

One of the main methodological difficulties in this type of analysis is the creation of survivorship curves based on the number of people who died at different ages of all born after a specific year (1950). Medical development changes over time, as does life expectancy. According to Macrotrends, the United States' life expectancy was just over 63 years in 1950, while it is currently around 79 years with substantial differences among geographical areas (<https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/USA/united-states/life-expectancy>). Our study eliminates geographical factors by focusing on populations from the same geographic area.

One of the main issues in comparing the two populations, especially when looking at infant mortality rates is the treatment of stillbirths and miscarriages.

According to Idaho law, stillbirths are recorded differently than when a child is born with signs of life but dies right after. For a child to be recorded as a live birth, there must be some signs of life [Idaho Code §39-241(10)].

Linda Martin reports that the small graves could be stillbirths or infant deaths and they are treated in a similar way in regard to death and funeral rituals among Followers of Christ members. Most of the children are not given a funeral (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020).

We do not count all the graves from Peaceful Valley cemetery that reflect a single date as a live birth due to the potential similarities in the treatment of stillbirths and miscarriages. We specifically counted as live births 60% of the graves with a single date beginning in 1950<sup>4</sup>.

"The Canyon County, Idaho coroner... where many of the deaths have occurred ... in 2011 that she did not even do autopsies on Followers of Christ children because state law requires autopsies only when a crime is suspected and she and the law enforcement agree that Idaho allows parents to withhold lifesaving medical treatment from children on religious grounds" (Swan, 2020).

To address the issue of stillbirths and miscarriages, we estimated mortality rates for children aged one year, one to three years, and one to nine years at the time of death.

It is worth noting that not all members of the group are buried in the Peaceful Valley cemetery. According to Linda Martin (Conversation with Linda Martin, July, 2021), there are burials in Picabo-Gannett, Marsing-Homedale, Middleton, Dry Creek, Cambridge, Star, Twin Falls and Hailey (Idaho) to name a few. There are also Idaho Followers of Christ buried in Oregon (Conversation with Linda Martin, July, 2021).

Finally, this research does not address specific causes of death. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides comprehensive statistics on causes of mortality for the general population in Idaho and the United States.

## RESULTS

When discussing results, it is important to keep in mind the limitations of the study due to the nature of the data. First, we calculated the average death age for the two cemetery populations. As previously stated, it was decided not to consider some of the Peaceful Valley cemetery (PV) gravesites that merely had a date in order to avoid including stillbirths and miscarriages. For comparison, a random sample was selected for the Dry

<sup>4</sup>According to the CDC, in the United States approximately 16% of pregnancies end in stillbirths or miscarriages, 22% in voluntary abortion, and 62% in live births. Since we haven't explored the issue of abortion in the community of the Followers of Christ, we used the value 60% as a conservative estimate. Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Trends in Pregnancies and Pregnancy Rates by Outcome: Estimates for the United States, 1976-96. Vol. 21, No. 56. 60. pp. (PHS) 2000-1934.

Creek cemetery (DC) using the search option on their website. The difference between the two populations is 6.4 years. The value is statistically significant. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 2 shows a comparison of death rates for selected age groups. This is measured by dividing the number of deaths in the specific age group, by the total number alive at the age 1.

**Table 1:** Average age of death descriptive statistics.

Variable	Peaceful Valley	Dry Creek	Difference
Average age	19.64	26.07	6.43*
Median	9	25	
St. Dev.	21.81	21.71	
n	255	1485	

\*p-value < 0.001.

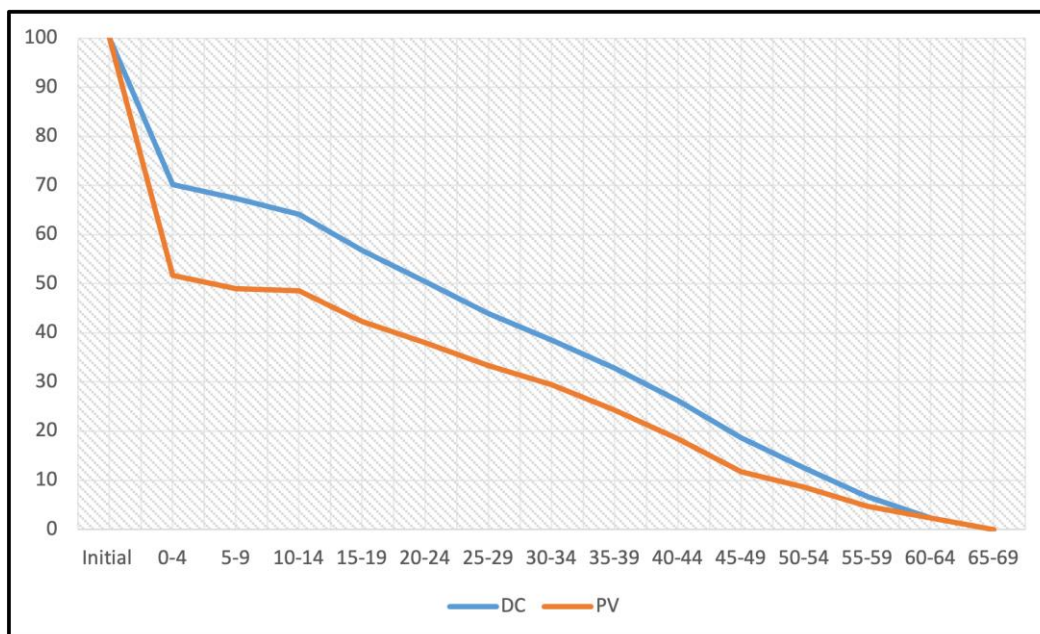
**Table 2:** Death rates for selected age groups.

Age range	Peaceful Valley (PV) (%)	Dry Creek (DC) (%)	Ratio PV/DC	p-value
Age 1	8.97	2.33	3.8	0.00001*
Age 1 to 3	13.45	5.38	2.5	0.00014*
Age 1 to 9	18.59	10.22	1.8	0.00194*

\*Significant at the 1% level.

Figures 1, 2, and 3 summarize the findings by 5-year age groups. The reason to select 5-year groups (0 to 4, 5 to 9, etc.) is the limited size of the Peaceful Valley population. The differences between the two groups are mostly explained by the mortality rates for the 0 to 4 group. After that, the differences tend to be relatively

small. As shown in Table 2, even excluding graves of children who died before the age of one (to eliminate the difficulties in differentiate infant mortality from stillbirths and miscarriages) the difference is stark. In another section, we discuss possible explanations for this observation, based on interviews with former members.



**Figure 1:** Percentage of individuals still alive by 5-year age group.

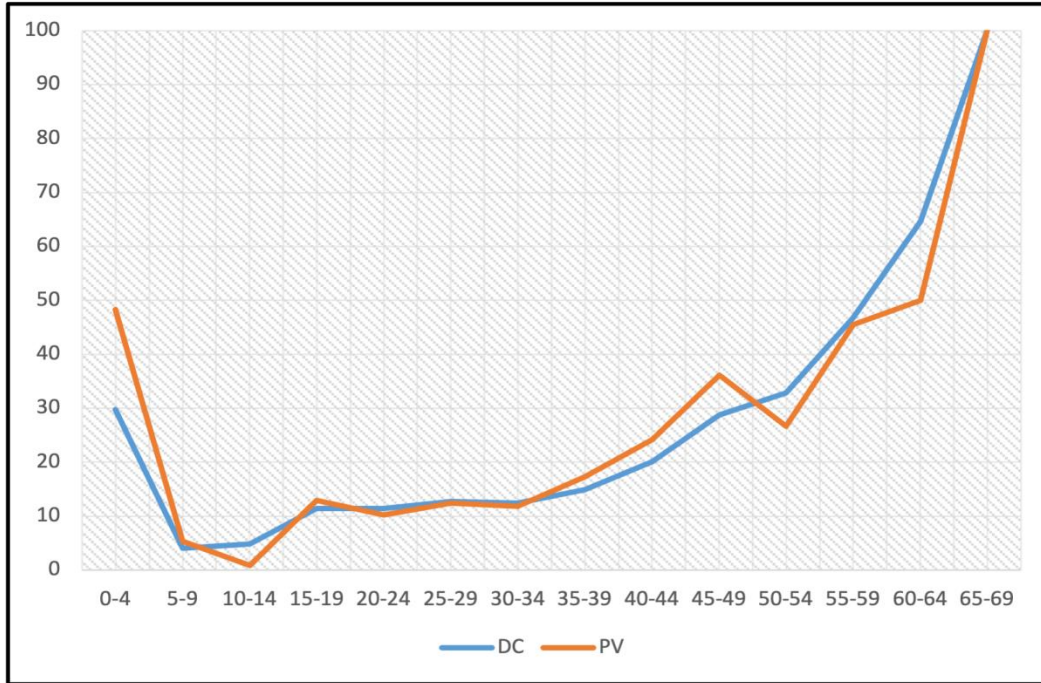


Figure 2: Death rates by 5-year age groups.

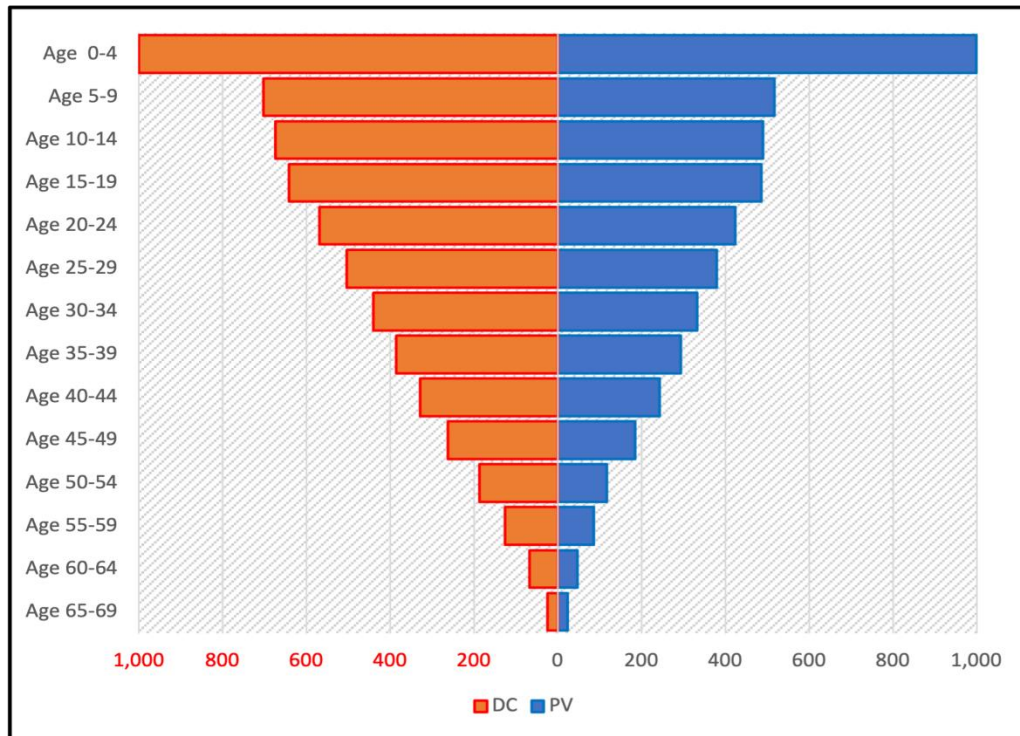


Figure 3: Population pyramids for the two cemeteries.

According to two primary schools of thought, infant and child mortality has an impact on life expectancy (Hatton, 2011). According to the selection effect, embraced by

eugenicists, “the fall in mortality rates for infants and young children was leading to the survival of the unfit” (p. 951). The second is the scarring effect, “... where infant

mortality stands as a proxy for the general disease environment” (p. 951).

From the data collected, it is impossible to make assumptions on the life expectancy of the two groups. Given the higher infant and child mortality rates, it is possible that the Followers of Christ have a lower life expectancy than the general population in southwest Idaho. For comparison, according to County Health Rankings and Roadmaps (2021), a program of the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, life expectancy in Idaho varies by county. Ada county's life expectancy is 81.0, while Canyon county 79.1, and Owyhee 78.2.

Interestingly, in selected counties, County Health Rankings and Roadmaps reports data by race. For whites -most, if not all members of the Followers of Christ are white- (Conversation with Linda Martin, July 2021) Ada county's life expectancy is 80.8, while Canyon county is 78.5, and Owyhee 76.6.

## **FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST CULTURAL PRACTICES AND MEDICAL CARE**

Linda Martin (2018, 2021) chronicles a long list of ailments she witnessed among Followers of Christ Church members as an adult and a youngster. She reports that children in the community died from common, preventable, and treatable childhood ailments such as diabetes, pneumonia, and sepsis. She further reported that some of the older children died from appendicitis.

In Idaho, the age of consent is eighteen, and Martin reports that around that age, some church members begin seeking medical care (Conversation with Linda Martin, August 2020).

Martin claims substantially reduced disease and death among Christ Followers aged 18 years and above (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020).

“It is almost as if the adults are proving their faith by not taking in the children”. And they make a completely different choice for themselves than they do for their children. This act reminds me of my brother. My nephew died at the age of two from untreated pneumonia, but my brother and his wife, on the other hand, sought medical attention when their illnesses became uncomfortable and they had problems. This is quite common (Conversation with Linda Martin, August 2020). “How do you define medical care? Approximately 95% of them have gotten glasses, dental procedures, or hearing aids. This is all medical care. They, on the other hand, do not see it that way. It is not considered medical care since they do not believe it will save their lives. They do not realize, however, that dental care can save your life because bad dental care affects your heart and the rest of your health. Most children do receive dental and eye care” (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020).

“Medicine is for the weak, and because it is God's

mission to save a life, doctors are doing God's work by saving people's lives. That is a sin. That is not possible”. They claim that pharmacy is a witchcraft and diabolical practice. As a result, many followers think that medication is a product of Satan and hence cannot be used (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020)

Martin estimates that 60-70% or more of the adult population of the Southwestern Idaho Followers of Christ seek medical care in adulthood. She estimates that some children receive dental and eye care but no other medical care.

“There are a few that are very hardcore that will not go to a doctor. There are some that cannot see or hear and their teeth are falling out but they have never visited a doctor. However, they are quite scarce” (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020).

Martin reports that in the Followers of Christ community, God dictates everything in their life. “Everything that happens in their life is God's will.” (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020).

While Followers of Christ almost exclusively eschew medical treatment for their children but will often seek medical care for themselves as adults, other social practices that influence health closely align with that of the surrounding community and broader U.S. populations. Diet and obesity rates of Followers align within that of the general population, according to Martin.

“It might be a little higher in cholesterol. A lot of them were raised on farms. So, they raised their own meat and vegetable. So, you've got a high cholesterol diet in a lot of them. And that would explain a lot of the heart problems in the older people which is similar to the general population” (Conversation with Linda Martin, August 2020).

While Followers of Christ virtually universally forgo medical care for their children but frequently seek it for themselves as adults, other social behaviors that affect health closely resemble those of the local community and larger U.S. populations. According to Martin, Followers' obesity and diet statistics are comparable to those of the general community.

“It might have a little more cholesterol. They were reared on farms in large numbers. They therefore produced their own meat and vegetables. Therefore, many of them have a high cholesterol diet and that would account for a lot of the heart issues of older folks, who are representative of the overall population, experience” (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020).

Martin reports that genetic diseases and illnesses are not on par with the general population and are a common occurrence in families that are a part of the Followers of Christ Southwest Idaho community. Few outsiders join the church (Conversation with Linda Martin, August, 2020).

Martin reports that death due to infections and the flu are common among Followers of Christ and that these illnesses are often disregarded and ignored, even among adults.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In the United States, there is no federal law requiring a parent or guardian to provide child medical care that conflicts with their religious beliefs (UCSA, 2014). Despite the adoption of new Department of Health and Human Services requirements in 1983 that struck down requirements that states maintain religious exemptions to receive federal funds under the 1974 Child Abuse and Prevention Act, few states repealed religious exemption laws (NDAA, 2015), while sixteen states have no religious exemption laws (Sandstrom, 2016).

Past efforts to repeal faith exemption laws across the nation often pitted parental rights and religious freedom against advocates' concern for children's welfare (Wolf, 2018). Decades of lobbying efforts that began in the 1990s succeeded in repealing state faith healing exemptions in a handful of states including Hawaii, Massachusetts, Maryland, Oregon, and Tennessee (Wolf, 2018). Many of these changes often followed a well-publicized and widely reported child death (Conversation with Rita Swan, February, 2018).

States that have enacted laws that repeal faith healing exemptions have had some success prosecuting parents accused of withholding medical care for their children because of their religious reasons and drawing attention to cases that would have previously gone unreported, unnoticed and/or unprosecuted had the refusal to provide medical care that occurred prior to the laws that repealed faith healing exemptions.

In 2011, the State of Oregon passed legislation that repealed faith healing laws (Oregon Legislature, 2011). That same year, Oregon City prosecutors charged and convicted a couple that belonged to the Followers of Christ community of first-degree criminal mistreatment after they failed to provide medical care for their daughter who suffered from hemangioma, which eventually engulfed their daughter's eye and left her on the verge of blindness (Bailey, 2017).

Another couple suspected of refusing medical treatment due to religious beliefs in 2011 was charged with manslaughter after the faith healing exemptions in Oregon were repealed in 2011. After refusing to seek medical attention for their premature infant, who ultimately passed away, the couple was given a six-year prison sentence for manslaughter (Mayes, 2017). Another Oregon couple was charged with murder in 2017 after it was claimed by the prosecution that they neglected to seek medical attention for their newborn daughter who stopped breathing and passed away shortly after birth (Everton, 2017).

The extent of child neglect and deaths that were previously hidden by religious exemption laws, as well as the effectiveness of such laws in holding parents and guardians accountable for the abuse and neglect of their children, are brought to light by recent convictions and prosecutions in states that have repealed the last remaining faith healing exemptions.

## CONCLUSION

The practice of refusing medical care to children for religious purposes has been outlawed in most states in the United States, with the exception of Idaho. Although several religious groups have different approaches on modern medicine, the Followers of Christ are one of the most controversial and least studied groups (Sinal et al., 2008; Swan, 2020).

This study shows a statistically significant difference in death rates for children between the Peaceful Valley cemetery, where the Followers of Christ tend to bury their dead, and a cemetery in Boise, known as Dry Creek cemetery. The difference appears to be attributable to the practice of negating medical care to children for religious reasons. Idaho still allows parents to negate medical care to sick children for religious reasons but treats medical neglect in any other instance as a reason to involve child protective services.

The study demonstrates that the practice hurts children and it seeks to advance the debate and open up new lines of research with the scope of moving Idaho legislators to approve laws that will protect children from unneeded suffering.

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## Cemetery data

Peaceful Valley Cemetery collected by the authors

Cemetery data from Dry Creek Cemetery collected from the cemetery database, available here: <http://www.drycreekcemetery.com/PlotSearch.aspx>

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