

CanadaWatch

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A Moment for us to act on MAiD

Canadian pastors are being called on to walk closely with parishioners who have chosen medically assisted death.

Because of the expansion and increased acceptability of MAiD in Canada, many pastors have already experienced this new reality, and for others it's only a matter of time.

These pastors might also be walking with congregants who are trying to figure out how to love and be present with family members choosing MAiD when they themselves do not agree with it. It is an excruciating experience for them.

The interviews with pastors found in the cover article of the May/June issue of *Faith Today* illuminate this new reality.

"With permissibility comes popularity," states the article. Pastors share that they are seeing MAiD more and more

frequently. "And once a door opens, it never closes again," says one.

The prevalence of MAiD is evident to anyone reading the obituaries in any of Canada's major newspapers. Euthanasia is becoming more common and if left unchecked it will continue to expand in Canada.

This is an issue on which the EFC is spending considerable time and effort, with your help, because it is literally a life-and-death moment in Canada. The choices our country makes now on expanding euthanasia will either save lives or hasten the deaths of many more Canadians.

Right now, a special committee of MPs and Senators is reviewing Canada's laws on medical assistance in dying. The committee will also consider whether to expand the laws



so that mature minors (youth under 18 years old) can be eligible for euthanasia or assisted suicide.

The MAiD laws were already expanded last year to make people with disabilities or chronic illness eligible for euthanasia or assisted suicide, even if they were not nearing death. Reports have indicated that people with disabilities are choosing to end their lives via MAiD because they feel they have no better choice; the support they need is not available and they feel they cannot afford to live.

"People living with disabilities describe the effect of this change as devastating, a fast track to death when the supports to live are not available," says Julia Beazley, the EFC's director of public policy.

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How you can help

- Please partner with us in advocating to stop the expansion of MAiD. Find your MP's name and contact information at ourcommons.ca/members/en.
- Please send the enclosed postcards or a letter in your own words. For even more impact, call your MP's office to tell them you've sent a letter or postcard and would like a response.
- If you don't receive *Faith Today*, email us to receive this important issue at editor@faithtoday.ca



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



SANCTITY OF LIFE



CHURCH & MISSION



FAMILY & COMMUNITY



CARE FOR THE VULNERABLE

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In March 2023, just less than a year away, people with mental illness as their only underlying medical condition will become eligible for euthanasia and assisted suicide. This change was made to the laws in 2021 but did not take effect for two years.

The special committee's mandate is now to study mental illness, the protection of people with disabilities, the state of palliative care in Canada, as well as whether to expand the law even further to allow mature minors to be eligible, and those who are not able to consent at the time MAiD is provided.

The committee will report back to Parliament in the fall with recommendations on whether to expand or change the laws. The government will take the committee's report into consideration as it drafts new laws.

The EFC is very concerned that the committee will recommend expanding access to MAiD to mature minors and by advance directive. The EFC is making a written submission to the committee, which is the avenue available to concerned groups. We are strongly urging the government to stop the expansion of MAiD.

Your gifts help make this work possible, but there is another additional, hands-on role for EFC donors to take. Could you join with us even further and contact your Member of Parliament to share your concerns? This is a crucial time to let your MP know that you don't want MAiD to be expanded further.

Rest assured, our approach to euthanasia and assisted suicide is based in biblical principles. Life is a gift from God to respect and protect through all its stages.

And God calls us to care for one another, particularly for those who are vulnerable.

**CONTACT
YOUR MP
TODAY**

**Canada must not
expand access to
MAiD**



Love Is Moving keeps moving

"I love contributing to a diverse community of Christian thoughts and ideas," says *Love Is Moving* writer Taleshia Patterson. "Writing articles forces me to take a deeper look into certain aspects of our faith and really analyze why I believe what I believe. Our Christian community needs a space where we can share our stories and perspectives."

This desire to inspire and equip younger generations to grow deeper in their love for God and their neighbours has been a through-line since the EFC's publication for youth, *Love Is Moving*, began. Of course, a lot has been changing and growing too.

The ministry now offers regular online articles as well as a print/online magazine three times per year and focuses on serving Christian young adults across Canada.

In 2021 *Love Is Moving* hosted a think tank for regular young adult writers. They expressed the need for a space devoted to supporting young adults, saying they don't always feel they receive understanding and equipping within their local churches. Campus ministries can be a great source of spiritual support for young adults during post-secondary,

but there's often a gap after they graduate.

By being a platform created primarily by young adults for young adults, our contributors address an audience of peers – helping them deepen their faith and engage thoughtfully in Canadian culture.

Another exciting change in 2022 has been the shift to paying writers. This allows *Love Is Moving* to meaningfully equip young adults in their faith and also support their creative vocations. The ministry is also hiring a new marketing and community relations coordinator who will help *Love Is Moving* grow by hosting events, workshops and launching other resources that nourish the creative and spiritual lives of Christian young adults in Canada.

You can subscribe for free in Canada to *Love Is Moving* at www.FaithToday.ca/Subscribe-LIM or to enjoy the latest essays, personal narratives, and poetry, join our email list (at <http://eepurl.com/gPuh75>).



Message from the President, Bruce J. Clemenger

Each issue *Canada Watch* provides updates you on some of the issues we are working on and provides a window the range and depth of the work we are engaged in. What we accomplish is impressive and it is all made possible by the generosity of EFC donors and the commitment of our affiliates and partners. We deeply

value your prayers and your support. Our priority is to be good stewards of the opportunities and resources that God has given us. The EFC is doing good and necessary work. Thank you for valuing the gathering of Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus.

Faith Today awarded by Evangelical Press Association

F *aith Today*, the EFC's magazine, won three awards at the annual convention of the Evangelical Press Association (EPA), held recently in Colorado. The EPA is a professional organization of Christian print and digital publications in North America. This is the first year *Faith Today* joined the EPA and entered work into its contest.



"We were really gratified and proud of how *Faith Today* made a bit of a surprise splash, at least for us, at the EPA awards," says Karen Stiller, one of *Faith Today's* editors. "It was a great international affirmation that the work EFC donors help make possible can stand among the best in the field."

Faith Today regularly wins awards of excellence from other organizations such as the Canadian Christian Communicators Association and The Word Guild. *Faith Today* also recently held an online writers workshop, to help encourage and nourish some of the regular group of writers who contribute to the publication.

"It's very important to us to provide free opportunities for our writers to connect and grow in their craft," says Bill Fledderus, *Faith Today* editor. "We try to do these workshops semi-regularly. This one was about how to write well about contentious or divisive topics, and we've had a few of those in our pages recently. The writers appreciate the chance to share and learn together."

CANADA'S CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE

FAITH TODAY

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Personal home subscription to the EFC's print magazines is now free in Canada! Six issues of insightful Canadian Christian journalism per year delivered to your door.

Sample and sign up at www.FaithToday.ca. Also try our audio podcasts!



Updating you on Canada's most immediate issues

■ **Charitable status:** The EFC is concerned about proposed changes to charitable status. The prime minister has instructed the finance minister to make changes to the *Income Tax Act* to make "anti-abortion organizations that provide dishonest counseling to women about their rights and options" ineligible for charitable status. This seems to single out organizations with particular beliefs about abortion for greater scrutiny. All charities are at risk if a charity can lose its charitable status simply because they hold different beliefs from the government of the day. The EFC has a new toolkit to help concerned Canadians contact their MP about these proposed changes, www.TheEFC.ca/CharitableProLife.

■ **Prostitution:** The parliamentary justice committee has held a long-delayed review of the prostitution laws. The EFC's brief to the committee advocated support for the law as an essential tool in fighting sexual exploitation. The committee heard from groups that supported the law and from those lobbying for prostitution to be decriminalized. For updates and more, see www.TheEFC.ca/prostitution-law-review

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The EFC has been granted intervener status in a court challenge of the prostitution laws. The Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform has launched a constitutional challenge of the laws. The case will be heard in the Ontario Superior Court. Intervener status enables the EFC to make written and oral arguments to the court in support of the laws.

■ **Human trafficking:** Among the many other changes Bill C-5 would make to the *Criminal Code*, it would allow for house arrest for a human trafficking-related offence. The EFC's brief to the justice committee on Bill C-5 asks that human trafficking be treated as a grave violation of human rights and that human trafficking-related offences not be considered for house arrest. www.TheEFC.ca/C5

■ **Pornography:** A Senator's private bill would hold organizations responsible for making sexually explicit material accessible to children and youth online, for a commercial purpose. Bill S-210 is intended to protect children and youth from the serious harms associated with sexually explicit material. The EFC submitted a brief in support of Bill S-210 to the Senate committee reviewing the bill. www.TheEFC.ca/S210

Updates on the issues are available on our website www.TheEFC.ca

Heart and hands

Julia Beazley is the EFC's director of public policy.

work out of our Centre for Faith and Public Life in Ottawa, and I'm often interacting with MPs and other politicians on the big issues the EFC works on. Our work involves research, writing, networking, listening and also speaking boldly and always with compassion and care when the moment is right.

We rely on networking and collaboration with partners to help reach our goals of impacting policy. Right now, much of our focus is on Medical Assistance in Dying, as you'll read in this *Canada Watch*. We're so grateful to the EFC donors who make this work possible. I'd like to thank you personally for your prayers and support. This work matters and together we are making a difference.



EFC office relocates

In a move to increase productivity and decrease costs, the EFC's Richmond Hill office moved recently to Scarborough, to a suite in a building occupied by several Canadian Christian organizations, most of whom are EFC affiliates. It has felt like coming home!

Warm words from donors

We love to hear from our donors and partners in our mission to "unite Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus." Thank you for praying for us and our work, and we consider it a privilege to pray for you as well. Here is a recent note of encouragement from a donor.

"Thank you for standing watch there in Ottawa. But remember we are on the victory side, even when things seem to be the other way. God moves in mysterious ways his wonders to perform!"

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The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (*Alliance évangélique du Canada*) is the national association "uniting Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus." Since 1964 the EFC has provided a national forum for Evangelicals, fostered ministry partnerships, conducted research on religious and social trends and provided a constructive voice for biblical principles in life and society.



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