

Canada Watch

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Equipping you to share Christian principles on urgent social issues

We've heard so many encouraging stories recently of Christians reaching out to meet the needs of their neighbours. What a joy and privilege to have been able to help equip them along the way!

For example, one group that contacted us draws from several churches in a small town. They're organizing to provide practical help for their neighbours, underlining the value of their neighbours' lives so they won't seek MAiD because of a lack of options.

Another contact was from a small group forming within a church to focus on advocacy, to explore how they can seek the good of the country and love of neighbour through civic engagement, based on the biblical principles

of justice and love.

A group of pastors in a big city also contacted us looking for accurate information on what's happening with proposed legislation so they can inform their congregations and encourage constructive responses.

EFC staff have been able to provide constructive, accurate resources to equip churches and Christians as they seek to respond to the needs and issues they see.

"One of the ways that we love our neighbour is by seeking good laws," says Julia Beazley, EFC director of public policy. "It matters which laws and policies get put in place – they affect our communities and our neighbours in vulnerable circumstances."

One of our most popular resources



this year has been on the proposed hate crimes bill, Bill C-9 – a two-page summary on what the bill proposes, why we're concerned and how to communicate with MPs about it. It outlines central concerns related to religious expression with a practical emphasis on how to respond.

Other resources at TheEFC.ca/C-9 include an EFC submission to a parliamentary committee with recommendations on ways to improve the bill. Plus an overview of the religious belief defence – what it is, when it's used and why it matters.

The EFC has also delivered briefings to church groups and EFC affiliates on Bill C-9, equipping Christian leaders with context, up-to-date information and con-

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What you can do

- Pray for our leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-2) and that God would help Canadian Christians love our neighbours well
- Check out resources on the hate crimes bill (TheEFC.ca/C-9), on stopping MAiD for mental illness (TheEFC.ca/HaltMAiD) and on civic engagement (TheEFC.ca/CivicEngagementKit)
- Consider prayer and financial support for the work of the EFC.

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structive Christian response options.

Another top resource this year explains our call to cancel the expansion of MAiD to those with mental illness alone. This expansion was legalized in 2021 and has been delayed twice. If nothing happens, people with mental illness as their sole medical condition will become eligible for MAiD in March 2027. Bill C-218 would stop that expansion.

Our one-page summary outlines Bill C-218, why it's needed, how to find your MP and what you might say. This concise resource is practical, action-focused and draws from the EFC's more substantive research and submissions on MAiD.

"A big surprise this year has been an EFC brochure on MAiD going viral," says Beazley. "Through what I affectionately call 'brochure-gate,' it's obvious many Canadians aren't aware a law has already been passed to expand MAiD for mental illness."

While there are inaccurate comments and posts about the brochure circulating on social media, it is serving to raise awareness about MAiD expansion. The EFC's website has links to the sources used in making the brochure and unpacks the status of MAiD expansion.

Those looking for resources on how to communicate effectively with their MP and how to pray for them are finding helpful tips, direction and language at TheEFC.ca/CivicEngagementKit. This download walks through how to contact an MP, why tone is so important, and outlines the stages a bill goes through and when there are opportunities to engage on it. A version in French is also available.

We are ambassadors of Christ as we engage with our neighbours and civic leaders. The EFC is privileged to provide constructive responses and resources to inform and equip public engagement on key issues. We're grateful to all our supporters who make this possible!



Survey available in
French or English at
TheEFC.ca/IFS



Social media surveys close April 30

Evangelicals are usually early adopters of new technologies because we see potential to reach people with the gospel. We were quick to radio, tv and social media.

As each technology settles into our ministry rhythms, there comes a time to take stock. Is it fostering discipleship? Is it doing something unintended?

The EFC and 11 affiliate partners are deep into a research project to understand how social media affects the faith formation of teens and how youth ministry workers use social media in their ministries.

Social media is a whole other world layered onto the lives of our teens. Some studies suggest it might be bad for children's mental health. Some schools are banning phones from classrooms largely to keep out social media.

Despite the negatives, many ministry leaders also feel it has potential good uses. The [#influencing_faith_study](#) is trying to sort all of this out.

This research partnership has two surveys open until April 30. One is for youth ministry workers (including volunteers), the other is for youth.

In the last two years we've interviewed 80 experts, youth ministry workers and youth about how they use social media and the reasons they do it. We probed specifically for how they use it for evangelism and discipleship.

We took their insights and wrote surveys to measure how prevalent their experiences and outlooks are.

We're going to publish a research report on all this along with ministry tools in September 2026, but first we need your help. Please, before April 30, ask the youth ministry workers in your circles to take our survey, in English or French, at TheEFC.ca/IFS.

Please ask your youth
ministry workers
to take our survey, at
TheEFC.ca/IFS

Our survey for youth requires parents be informed. Because of their developmental stage, youth may not be able to adequately assess the risks and benefits associated with participating in survey research. So we're also asking for help ensuring parents are informed about the survey before youth are invited to take it.



A note from EFC President David Guretzki

February 24 was the 4th anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. I joined with my peers at the Canadian Council of Churches and the WEA Peace and Reconciliation Network to produce a document (TheEFC.ca/Ukraine2026) that calls Canadians to action and prayer in response to this

ongoing tragedy. The document is informed by relationships with Ukrainian Orthodox, Ukrainian Catholic, Evangelical and other Christian leaders. It calls for sustained prayer, accompaniment of and advocacy for Ukrainians in Canada, and ongoing learning and truthful teaching about the war. EFC staff later learned personally from a virtual visit by Ivan Rusyn of Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary. Please join me in ongoing prayers for justice and peace. Thank you for the support that makes this and all the EFC's diverse ministries possible.

Celebrating Black History Month

To celebrate February as Black History Month, the EFC highlighted important contributions of Black pastors and churches in Canada online.

Our continued ministry mandate of promoting united gospel witness in Canada involves maintaining an open, curious posture to the spiritual formation experiences of Evangelicals nationwide.

This includes exploring and celebrating intercultural realities from Caribbean and African-Canadians in municipalities big and small.

Our social media feeds highlighted historically Black churches such as New Horizons Baptist Church in Halifax and First Baptist Church in Toronto. The EFC also recognized the leadership of Pastor Sam Owusu, lead pastor of Calvary Worship Centre in Vancouver.

The EFC continues to support the African and Caribbean diaspora in Canada through affiliation and various ministry partnerships. TheEFC.ca/BlackHistory2026.



COMING EVENTS See TheEFC.ca/Calendar for details and to register

- > **Made for Life: What's Wrong With MAiD Tour** (co-sponsored with CMDA/Inspire.fm/PEI Life/Focus on the Family Canada), morning session for pastors, evening session for the public, with EFC President and Resident Theologian David Guretzki, Halifax, April 13; Moncton, April 14; Charlottetown, April 15
- > **MAiD in Canada: A Matter of Life & Death**, featuring EFC President and Resident Theologian David Guretzki, Calgary, April 25
- > **Parenting Faith: Passing Faith to the Next Generation**, featuring EFC Senior Researcher Lindsay Callaway, Barrie, Ont., May 2



Updating you on Canada's most immediate issues

■ **Hate crimes bill:** Bill C-9, a bill that creates new hate crime offences, is moving through the House of Commons at time of publication. The bill was changed in committee to remove a religious belief defence to the wilful promotion offence in the *Criminal Code*. This is an important protection for religious expression. The EFC is asking for clear protection of religious expression in the bill. See resources and updates at TheEFC.ca/C-9

■ **Equipping parents to protect kids online:** The EFC has partnered with Defend Dignity and Ally Global on a series of webinars to equip parents and caregivers. Experts have presented helpful information, tools and strategies for keeping kids and youth safe online. Recordings of these webinars are a great resource for parents, caregivers and leaders: DefendDignity.ca/digital-dignity-webinar-series.

■ **Harvest Ministries case:** In February a Quebec court heard the case about a provincial cabinet minister cancelling Harvest Ministries' rental agreement because its pro-life beliefs were

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deemed contrary to the state's fundamental principles. The EFC is part of a coalition arguing religious groups should have equal access to public space (in this case, a government-owned convention centre) and not be denied because of their beliefs. We'll note the court's eventual decision at TheEFC.ca/HarvestMinistries.

■ **New MAiD committee:** A new committee of MPs and Senators has been formed to study MAiD (assisted death) for mental illness. The formation of the committee was mandated in the last bill that delayed MAiD for mental illness until 2027. The committee will hear from experts and stakeholders and will report back to Parliament with recommendations by Oct. 2, 2026. The government has delayed MAiD for mental illness when past committees have recommended delays. Please pray.

■ **MAiD for mental illness:** Bill C-218, a private member's bill to stop MAiD on the basis of mental illness alone, is now expected to come up for its second hour of debate in mid-April, followed by a vote. If it passes the vote, the bill will be sent to a parliamentary committee for study. The bill will need broad support to pass. A phone call or email to your MP in support can make a difference.

TheEFC.ca/C-218

Can Christian hospitals choose to be MAiD-free?

In April 2026 the EFC will appear in a B.C. court, arguing for a Christian hospital to be able to provide health care without compromising its Christian ethic.

Providence Health Care is being taken to court by a family and some euthanasia advocates who are challenging the government policy which allows faith-based facilities not to provide euthanasia.

St. Paul's Hospital, a member of Providence, will transfer the care of a patient who requests MAiD (euthanasia) to another facility. St. Paul's argues this policy protects its integrity and Christian ethic.

"A truly public system welcomes this provision of health care that reflects the religious diversity of the province and the provision of care animated by religious communities," says Bruce Clemenger, the EFC's director of legal affairs.

Christians have offered medical care throughout Church history as an expression of God's love and the belief that everyone bears the image of God.

This has been a defining feature in Canadian history as well. Yet the ability to provide care consistent with a facility's founding vision and mission is being challenged as governments have assumed increasing financial responsibilities.

The St. Paul's case will determine whether faith-based health care facilities are able to be MAiD-free spaces, protecting both medical professionals who do not want to participate in the provision of MAiD for reasons of conscience or deeply held belief as well as patients who are concerned about being pressured toward MAiD.

The government of B.C. recognized the distinctive ethos of faith-based care institutions and developed an agreement with a group of them that "preserves the respective religious missions and values of the founding owners and sponsors of their health care facilities in the province."

This group represents 44 facilities of 12 different religious groups including Baptist, Mennonite, Pentecostal, Salvation Army and Roman Catholic.



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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.



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



SANCTITY OF LIFE



CHURCH & MISSION



FAMILY & COMMUNITY



CARE FOR THE VULNERABLE