

Canada Watch

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How faith shapes Christians' engagement with new MPs

Following the election this spring, many MPs are returning to Ottawa, and others will be new to Parliament. This is an opportunity for all of us to engage in meaningful and proactive ways with MPs. What does civic engagement – deeply rooted in our faith – look like?

Certainly we're called to pray for our government and for our local MPs. Let's recommit today to praying daily or weekly for our country, our prime minister and our elected representatives (1 Timothy 2:1–2).

Serving in public office can bring pressure from all sides, as well as stress on family life and health. MPs must manage complex issues, balance competing interests and navigate the intricacies of legislation and governance.

We can pray for wisdom, clarity, grace and strength for them, for God's blessing on them, their staff and their families.

In Romans 13 Paul instructs us to obey the governing authorities since they are God's servant to do good. (Paul likely wrote this while Nero was emperor.) We can ask God for His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven, that justice and peace would flow in this world now.

We can also take a step locally to reach out to our MP. Congratulating a local MP on their election is a simple, positive way to build a bridge, regardless of political differences.

It doesn't have to be long or complicated. Send a card, write an email, leave a voice mail. Mention your name and that you live in the riding. Thank



your MP for being willing to represent your community. Tell them you're praying for them, for wisdom, grace and courage as they serve.

MPs receive a lot of criticism, negativity and even threats of violence. Imagine if Canada's Christian community was intentional about speaking encouragement and sharing God's love with our elected officials, thanking them for their service and assuring them of our regular prayers. This is a way for the light of Christ to shine in us.

When we communicate with MPs, we can remind ourselves they, too, are made by God in His image and loved by Him. They too are our neighbours. And we are called to love our neighbours as we are salt and light in the world.

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What you can do

- Pray for our country and government – and your local MP.
- Congratulate your local MP by email, voicemail or a card.
Find your MP at ourcommons.ca/members.
- Support the EFC's work in the new Parliament.



**Centre for Ministry Partnership
and Innovation**

Convening and collaborating to support
the evangelical church in Canada



**Centre for Research on
Church and Faith**

Connecting research with ministry



**Centre for Faith and
Public Life**

Faithful witness through thoughtful,
constructive engagement in public life

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Congratulating an MP can be the first step in developing a relationship and laying the groundwork for respectful engagement.

You can find your MP's name and contact information at OurCommons.ca. For more ideas about how to communicate well, see TheEFC.ca/CivicEngagementKit.

As citizens of God's kingdom and of Canada, we are called to be active participants in seeking the common good. Praying for and reaching out to our local MP is one of the ways we can fulfill this calling.

As the EFC's 2025 election brochure noted, "Our participation in discussions about public policy and politics, like our engagement in all of life and community, is part of our witness."

This brochure was one of the resources the EFC was able to prepare and circulate – thanks to your support – to equip Christians during the election. You can still visit TheEFC.ca/Election to see our summaries of a few key issues (such as euthanasia, protecting kids online, charitable status). Our resources also reminded churches about CRA guidelines on election-related activities by charities.

As we engage with this new Parliament, let's pray together for laws and policies that protect our neighbours in vulnerable situations, promote respect for human life and dignity and uphold religious freedom.

We are thankful for the many Canadian Christians who prayed and voted. We look forward to engaging together in the days to come.

**PLEASE PRAY
FOR OUR COUNTRY,
GOVERNMENT
AND YOUR LOCAL MP.**



**Take the survey at
TheEFC.ca/women-in-church**

Survey for women open until June 30

Canadian Christian women care deeply about their faith and living it out. But anecdotes and academic discussions dominate our understanding of how most women participate in the church.

The EFC and 13 other ministries are partnering to conduct deeper research into how Canadian evangelical women understand their roles in the local church and what factors influence their participation.

The *Women in the Canadian Evangelical Church* study invites Canadian Christian women 18 years and older to take an online survey that will shed light on how women engage in the ministry of the local church and what factors influence their involvement or lack of involvement.

The survey is available in both official languages.

Take the survey at **TheEFC.ca/women-in-church**

"Our research so far shows us that a majority of Canadian Christian women find meaningful ways to engage in their churches, but societal changes have altered the way many women think about their engagement in the life of the local church," says Lindsay Callaway of Ottawa, a senior researcher at the EFC.

"This result doesn't surprise us, but now we need to hear from more women about if – and how – they are participating in the Church. From there, we can begin to understand better how the Church can reach and support women."

The research will benefit church and ministry leaders as well as women who take the survey.

"Women who have already participated have shared that they found it a clarifying experience to simply take some time to think about how they are living out their faith as a member of the body of Christ," says Callaway.

Participants will also receive the research report when it is completed.

The full list of EFC affiliate organizations partnering in this project is at TheEFC.ca/women-in-church.

Research is valuable when the sample accurately portrays its population. "The more participation we have, the more relevant and representative the results will be for ministries to benefit from the findings," says Callaway.



A note from EFC President David Guretzki

Travelling to meet EFC supporters on their own turf is one of the best parts of my job as EFC President. Recently I met some of you in Moncton at a May 3 presentation I made on medical assistance in dying, and I'll be in Winnipeg June 7 for another. We also have plans to hold similar Faith Matters events in Calgary (September 30) and Guelph. It's exciting

to share from my career of theological and biblical study in such an applied and relevant way. As with all theology, Canadian Evangelicals don't always agree. But all of us can trust and cooperate with the Holy Spirit as we discern God's call, and as we strengthen collaborative relations among the beautifully diverse body of Jesus Christ. Thank you for your support as we humbly share our expertise on contemporary societal challenges and public policy for the benefit of Christians and all Canadians.

Meet the newest EFC staff

Please join us in welcoming these newcomers and thanking God for them!

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KAREN MONIE of Ottawa is the EFC's new finance and human resources assistant. She is also office manager for the EFC's Ottawa office. She has a background in economics and film, theatre and TV, is bilingual in English and French, is married and has three young boys. Storytelling and financial stewardship are her greatest passions. She is excited to be part of a workplace that is God-centred, she says. On personal time she volunteers graphic design pieces for Canada Virtuous Women, and her debut children's play is on tour in Newfoundland.



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JOEY GURETZKI of Ottawa is the EFC's new finance assistant, responsible for accounts payable. It's no coincidence that he has the same last name as the EFC's president – that's his father. Joey was an intern with the EFC in the summer of 2024 and was vetted for his permanent position through our impartial recruiting process. He says, "One of my favourite parts of opening and processing EFC mail is reading the letters or comments some donors include with their giving. I find this especially enriching because of the very real way they point to Christ's work in their lives."



Uniting Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus



Updating you on Canada's most immediate issues

■ Submission on charitable status:

The EFC participated in a consultation on the federal budget for 2025, submitting a written brief urging the finance department to reject two controversial recommendations from a December report by the House of Commons finance committee. The EFC emphasized the importance of the charitable sector and the benefits of religious charities to Canadian society. It also urged the department not to politicize charities and not to target charities based on their views on abortion and when life begins.

■ Intervening on religious freedom:

The EFC has been granted intervener status in a case about the ability of a Christian hospital in B.C. to offer care consistent with its religious beliefs. The EFC's arguments will focus on institutional religious freedom and the ability of Christian institutions to provide services to the public without being compelled to compromise their beliefs. This case will decide whether the state can compel MAiD in all medical facilities and care homes, regardless of the institution's religious beliefs.

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■ **International pressure to repeal euthanasia:** In strongly worded concluding remarks, the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has recommended Canada repeal the law allowing euthanasia for people who are not dying, known as Track 2 MAiD. It also recommended Canada stop the expansion of MAiD on the basis of mental illness alone and not allow euthanasia for minors or advance requests for MAiD. The EFC made a submission to the UN committee in January calling for a repeal of Track 2 MAiD and for expansion of MAiD eligibility to be halted, stating, "Eligibility for euthanasia on the basis of disability endangers and devalues the lives of disabled Canadians."

■ **Euthanasia law's impact on palliative care:** In a written submission to the UK Palliative and End of Life Care Commission this spring, the EFC outlined several ways Canada's euthanasia laws have negatively impacted palliative care for patients, healthcare providers and facilities. The EFC's brief urged the UK to ensure high quality palliative care is widely accessible and the integrity of palliative care and hospice facilities are protected and maintained.

Reconciliation seeds bearing fruit

The story of how Evangelicals contributed in the 1990s to events around the establishment of National Indigenous Peoples Day is still inspiring reconciliation work today.

The leading instigator of the June 21 holiday was Elijah Harper, an Indigenous Christian member of Parliament in the 1990s. Harper and Indigenous Christian Wally McKay gathered leaders from First Nations and various Christian institutions for a prayer and worship event called the Sacred Assembly.

The 1995 assembly resulted first in the Reconciliation Proclamation, an inspiring document the EFC is recirculating today. Several evangelical leaders contributed to it, and Harper's father, a pastor, prayed over the original draft in Cree, placing his hand on it and saying, "This is good!"

At the assembly Elijah Harper also called for a national holiday to celebrate the culture and resilience of Indigenous Peoples. The government of the day, led by Jean Chrétien, created the June 21 holiday a year later.

"The year 2025 is the 30th anniversary of the Sacred Assembly and its Reconciliation Proclamation," says the EFC's Joel Gordon. "That makes this June 21 a great time to revisit them and recommit to journeying together."

Gordon is part of the EFC's Seven Commitments Working Group, founded in 2020 to promote conversation and action related to healthier relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Check out its resources (including the proclamation) at TheEFC.ca/IndigenousRelations.

Gordon and representatives from several EFC affiliate denominations recently took training in the Kairos Blanket Exercise. They are now able to lead this experiential workshop that helps participants deepen their understanding of our shared history.

The Seven Commitments Group also highlights the need for reconciliation each Sept. 30, on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, by promoting reflection on our history of church-run government residential schools. (That date is also labelled Orange Shirt Day by an Indigenous-led movement working to increase awareness of the intergenerational impacts of residential schools.)

NATIONAL
INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES DAY

JUNE
21



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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