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The EFC strengthens three centres

Every now and then we all reorganize ourselves for a fresh perspective. The EFC has done that recently, with a slight reorganization into three more clearly defined centres for ministry. These centres will help us do our work well and communicate about that work even more effectively. We hope clearly defining these centres will also help our donors and friends understand even more the work they help make possible with their generous support. Here's a brief explanation of each centre, with just one example of recent work they have done.

The EFC Centre for Faith and Public Life in Ottawa is strategically located near Parliament Hill, as you know. Our experienced and widely respected staff there identify, build and maintain strategic relationships with MPs, Senators and other government

officials. We interact on the issues of the day and make submissions (such as research, position papers and briefings) for the consideration of those in power.

This centre also works to educate, equip and encourage Evangelicals to contact their elected officials to express their concerns clearly and effectively on the crucial issues of the day. When you receive an invitation to send in a postcard or contact an MP about an issue, it usually comes from the small team at this centre.

Through this centre, and with your help, we advocate for laws and policies that: respect the sanctity of all human life; strengthen protections for those who are abused, exploited and oppressed; promote the well-being of families and communities; and respect religious freedoms. **Think of:** The EFC's recent work on Medical Assistance in Dying.



The Centre for Ministry Partnership and Innovation

is the newest EFC centre and was established to encourage collaboration between individuals, churches, denominations and ministry organizations who work in similar areas of ministry. The goal is to advance the gospel together and partner for effective ministry to meet the needs of young and old in our communities and our nation.

This centre exists to listen, convene and facilitate innovation in ministry. It provides valuable training and equipping resources in areas such as family discipleship, abuse prevention, anti-racism, and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. **Think of:** Welcome Church, a free course to help Canadian churches better welcome newcomers to Canada.

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How you can help

- Please pray for the three EFC centres and their work
- Consider additional ways of supporting this work at www.TheEFC.ca/Support
- Visit www.TheEFC.ca to learn about other EFC projects



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



SANCTITY OF LIFE



CHURCH & MISSION



FAMILY & COMMUNITY



CARE FOR THE VULNERABLE

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The Centre for Research on Church and Faith conducts vital research to understand the changing contexts in churches and society. We know demographic, cultural and technological megatrends are rapidly reshaping our ministry landscape. Understanding Canadian church and faith trends helps us better explain who we are as the Church and helps us understand our place in the broader culture. With a fuller understanding, we can make better ministry decisions.

Members of evangelical and other Christian traditions alike are eager to participate in our projects because they are confident we conduct research with humility, respect, integrity, thoroughness and impartiality. It's also actionable, relevant and Canadian. **Think of:** Family Faith Formation, a current research project to understand parent and church roles in the discipleship of their children.

While not a centre, the **EFC's communication and public relations team** works to share the work, accomplishments, needs and offerings of the three centres through traditional and digital channels. Our flagship publications *Faith Today* and *Love Is Moving* are both award-winning magazines that tell the stories of evangelical ministries and leaders, and profile the challenges and opportunities for ministry in Canada. Our two podcasts, the Faith Today Podcast and the newer Faith Trends Podcast, further Canada's Christian conversation and help resource the Church.

The EFC's communications team is small but effective, and critical to informing the Church and broader public about the work of the centres and communicating who we are and what we do to a variety of audiences. Social media, podcasts, videos and digital interactions across multiple platforms are essential to reaching a multi-generation audience, and our team is always considering how best to do that important work.

"THESE CENTRES WILL HELP US DO OUR WORK WELL AND COMMUNICATE ABOUT THAT WORK EVEN MORE EFFECTIVELY."



Family Faith Formation research is bearing fruit

Fifteen EFC affiliates have partnered with the EFC's Centre for Research to understand the state of faith formation among children in Canadian families.

A phased research plan was developed that: assessed the landscape of research on family faith formation; interviewed family ministry experts; and spoke with parents about what they were doing in their home to pass their faith with their children. After those initial steps EFC researchers developed a national survey, which closed last month, to measure the prevalence of the findings from previous phases.

Here are two initial findings indicating how some parents approach faith formation.

First, some parents want to differentiate the way they shape their children's faith from the way their parents shaped theirs. Many parents in the sample emphasized the importance of choice, wanting to avoid an approach to faith that demand-

ed unquestioning obedience and belief in the style they experienced in their own childhoods. The research also shows parents today are more likely than previous generations to invite open conversations and questions related to faith. They are more likely to expose their children to a range of religious traditions and opinions to promote a faith choice.

Second, despite feedback from ministry leaders and pastors indicating parents need help passing their faith to their children, most parents are satisfied. Parents were asked if they would change anything about their faith formation efforts, and most said "nothing." This suggests parents and ministry leaders understand the state of family faith formation very differently, and it may be that ministry leaders are identifying a need that, for the most part, parents do not share.

A final public report will be released this fall. Thank you for your generous support of this project and other EFC collaborative research.



Message from the President, Bruce J. Clemenger

The reorganization of the EFC brings focus to the breadth of the work of the EFC. We think of the three centres, along with the communications work of the EFC, to comprise four pillars of our work and ministry in Canada. Our plan is to deepen our work in these four areas in order to expand our impact and influence. These four

pillars give expression to how we gather Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus. Your prayers and support are necessary and enable the work we do. Thank you.

The EFC launches Creative Collective

The EFC is preparing to launch a new initiative to support emerging writers, graphic artists and videographers who can help churches communicate successfully in a noisy world.

The Creative Collective will be a networking hub that helps find paid work for Christians with creative vocations. It will help bridge the gap for new professionals entering the job market at a critical time when they need connections and mentorship opportunities.

"If churches can come alongside young adults in their vocational pursuits, they are highly likely to remain engaged with the Church," says Joel Gordon, director of ministry partnership and innovation at the EFC, citing the Canadian study *Renegotiating Faith*. "This initiative will ultimately improve church communications, but it will also help artists stay linked with the Church."

The Creative Collective will link Christian creative professionals with organizations and churches in need of their services. Ministries will be able to benefit from connecting with talented Christian storytellers, designers and digital communicators. As well as being a platform for job opportunities, the Creative Collective will offer training, networking and mentorship opportunities.

One of its first events is a \$1,000 commission on the theme "imagining reconciliation." Applicants pitched projects in the medium of their choice, such as a performing arts, video, visual art, digital media or writing. The winning commission may be featured in *Love Is Moving* magazine or used to promote Reconciliation Through Relationships, an EFC initiative that pairs Indigenous and non-Indigenous people for a guided process of learning and building friendships.

"A sense of belonging within a community is really important for younger creatives," says Gordon. "They're going to seek out that community and belonging somewhere, so why not a Christian network?"



Updating you on Canada's most immediate issues

■ **Prostitution:** The parliamentary justice committee has reviewed the prostitution laws. MPs heard from witnesses in support of the current laws, which penalize sex buyers and pimps, and from those who want the laws repealed. The EFC's brief was quoted several times in the report. The EFC strongly disagrees with the report's assertion that the laws cause harm and its assumption Canada should move to decriminalization. Continued advocacy is needed. See www.TheEFC.ca/Prostitution

■ **Assisted dying and mental illness:** A special committee of MPs and Senators released an interim report in June. It does not recommend legislating any additional safeguards before eligibility for assisted dying is expanded next March. The EFC's brief to the committee had asked to stop the expansion, which will extend eligibility to people with mental illness as the sole underlying medical condition.

■ **Assisted dying and minors:** A special committee studying Medical Assistance in Dying has heard from many witnesses arguing MAID should be expanded to minors and suggest-

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Find out more at www.LovelsMoving.ca/ImaginingReconciliation

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ing removing the minimum age, currently 18 years. The EFC strongly urged the committee not to recommend assisted dying for children or teens. The committee will make a full report by October 2022.

■ **Religious freedom:** An advisory panel has recommended excluding certain faith groups from military chaplaincy. Military chaplains provide pastoral care to personnel of any belief and no belief, without discrimination. However, a panel has recommended the defence minister not employ chaplains who belong to religious groups with certain beliefs, such as groups that do not ordain women. See www.TheEFC.ca/chaplaincy-diversity-comment

■ **Child sexual abuse:** Private member's Bill C-291 would change the wording in the *Criminal Code* from "child pornography" to "child sexual abuse materials." It was introduced by MP Mel Arnold in June. This more accurate language would ensure sexualized images of children aren't legitimized in any way or associated with voluntary images of adults. The change underlines that no child can consent to sexual activity, and any such depiction is child sexual abuse.

Is your church an EFC affiliate?

The EFC's affiliates are precious and dear to us. Affiliates are denominations, Christian higher educational institutions, ministry organizations and local churches. Together we learn, grow and help one another to be better followers of Jesus. Recently we have had prayer gatherings that bring our affiliates together, and if you've attended you'll know how powerful and uplifting it is to be together.

Affiliation means: taking a stand together as the EFC intervenes before the courts; identifying with other evangelical Christians as we address religious freedom issues in Canada and promote prayer and intervention around the world; and producing resources, seminars and workshops to help you in ministry. These are a few examples of how we work alongside our affiliates. If you are not sure if your church is affiliated, please talk to your pastor, or contact us and we'd be happy to talk to you about next steps. Learn more at www.TheEFC.ca/Affiliate.



EFC donors help with Ukraine efforts

Christians in Canada prayed, gave generously and in some cases travelled to help alleviate the suffering related to the conflict in Ukraine. "Globally, collaboration and networking between Christian ministries is happening and making a difference," says Phil Wagler, global director of the Peace and Reconciliation Network (PRN), an initiative of the World Evangelical Alliance and the EFC.

How is the church in Ukraine responding? Stories continue to emerge through the WEA network, "including Russian believers sacrificially and with breaking hearts serving the needs of Ukrainians often forcibly displaced into Russia," says Wagler. He shares an inspiring story from Kharkiv, Ukraine about Andrey, an NGO leader who is a Ukrainian board member of the PRN. "The subway station ten minutes from where we live now has about 1,800 people. God gave the assignment to take care of the people there. I saw how much chaos and disorganization there was.

"I came with a written proposal to the subway administration and the police. They really liked the idea, and the head of the metro station appointed me to the role of internal manager. After that, other churches began to ask how they could serve in the same way. We are now serving in two more stations." Wagler says a church was planted in the metro station, and financial gifts to the WEA and PRN helped provide a vehicle to move more people to safety, among other initiatives.

> The EFC and the PRN are pleased to present a new, short podcast series called **All Things Reconciled**, featuring stories of how the Church is helping with reconciliation. The first series focuses on Ukraine. **Listen at www.TheEFC.ca/Podcasts.**

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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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