

CanadaWatch

UPDATING YOU

On Canada's most immediate issues. (Page 3)

SPOTLIGHT

Love Is Moving across Canada – youth and young adult initiative. (Page 2)

EFC RESOURCES

Who are our Roman Catholic neighbours? (Page 3)

The next Canadian election: How we can all be involved, and why we should be

It has been a fascinating few months in Canadian politics. The country has been glued to our screens as we watched recent events unfold in Ottawa – just blocks from the EFC's Ottawa office. The Canada Summer Jobs controversy and Supreme Court decisions have reminded us about the impact a country's laws and policies can have on religious freedom, and of the importance of our presence in the public square.

Our country is only months away from a federal election. We will be reminded again that there is no perfect political party or candidate.

However, Canadian Christians have an important role to play in this election, and every future election. Politics has a

profound influence on our society, influencing how we interact with one another and how we care for our neighbours. Strong Christian involvement in politics and public policy brings Christian witness to the public square in Canada.

Social and political participation, coupled with prayer, is an essential way we seek the good of those around us and our country (Jeremiah 29:5-7). The EFC believes our prayers and participation in public policy discussions and political activities, like our engagement in all other areas of society, is part of our witness.

Jesus did not instruct His followers to withdraw from society, but to



participate with God in its transformation. Jesus said we are to be like salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16). At the EFC, with your help and partnership, we have said a strong "yes" to that mandate.

Of course, there are many ways to work to see transformation of the world and bring it closer to the way God intended it to be. We have the privilege of hearing regularly how Canadian Christians are serving their communities – preaching the gospel with words and with loving action – every day in our country.

Elections provide another tangible way to live out the biblical call to serve our communities. We may focus on

... continued on page 2

How you can be involved:

- Contact us now at 1-866-302-3362 to put your name on a waiting list for the EFC Election resource package, scheduled to be released soon.
- Try to meet the candidates in your riding and have a positive interaction with them. Begin to pray for each of them.
- Visit www.TheEFC.ca regularly for updates on the issues we engage in, with your help.

...continued from page 1

issues that impact the vulnerable, freedom of religion, God's creation, poverty and justice issues – to name just a few. The EFC Ottawa team is at work right now, updating and creating an election resource package to help equip Canadian churches and individual Christians to think through the issues of the day.

One very important part of the EFC's election kit will help us all be clear about what churches can and cannot do in terms of political activities during an election campaign. There are specific guidelines that must be considered by churches and other charities registered with the Canada Revenue Agency.

But just as there are things churches cannot do, there are also things churches *can do*, and that individual Christians *should do*, such as get acquainted with the candidates running in your area and ask what their plans and priorities are with questions based on biblical principles. Here are some examples:

- What steps will you take to support freedom of conscience and religion in Canada?
- What legal protections for pregnant women and their unborn children do you support?
- Do you support the current safeguards for Medical Assistance in Dying that protect vulnerable Canadians or would you expand access to euthanasia and assisted suicide?

This is the kind of material we are working on now, to help resource churches and individual Christians in the months ahead.

Politics is not perfect. It never will be. No one party or candidate will ever deliver everything for which an individual voter might want or pray. But our faith affects all areas of life, and that includes politics. Our faith compels us to work to make the world better, and elections provide one way of doing that well.



www.loveismoving.ca

Love Is Moving across Canada

The EFC's youth and young adult initiative, known as Love Is Moving, recently wrapped up a national tour and sponsorship of the Canadian Youth Workers Conferences (CYWC). From October 2018 to March 2019, Love Is Moving staff participated in seven conferences across Canada that blessed more than 1,000 youth leaders. The EFC can do this work because of the generosity of donors like you, who care about youth and evangelical witness.

CYWC provides accessible and affordable youth ministry resources and training in a relationally-rich environment. Our team helped bring together participants and exhibitors at each event by hosting an interactive activity on the Love Is Moving app. The app has also helped hundreds of users learn about Christian post-secondary programs, ministries and organizations that can resource them and bless the youth they serve.

"I am very grateful for the EFC's donors who continue to support the equipping of youth workers and Canadian churches in their discipleship efforts," says Joel Gordon, Love Is Moving director. "Empowering the next generation continues to be an important priority for the EFC, and I'm delighted to work alongside our partners to make this work possible."



"I am very grateful for the EFC's donors who continue to support the equipping of youth workers and Canadian churches in their discipleship efforts." Joel Gordon



LOVE IS MOVING

EFC YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT INITIATIVE



Message from the President, Bruce J. Clemenger

As a friend to the EFC, I know you are an engaged and concerned citizen who believes followers of Jesus have space, place and a voice in Canada's public square. As public discussions heat up in the weeks and months to come with a

federal election on the horizon, please tap into the resources we provide to help you navigate the issues our country will be considering. You do so much to partner with us in our work, so let us give back to you by providing you with our Election 2019 resource package. Thank you for how you make the work of the EFC possible, uniting Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus.

Who are our Roman Catholic neighbours?

There are many times when the EFC finds itself working alongside the Roman Catholic Church. Friends of the EFC often see mention of our Roman Catholic partners in our court interventions.

Our respective communities share many similar concerns and priorities for Canada – for example, around issues of life and care for the vulnerable. By presenting a united front on such issues, when it is expedient to do so, we offer a stronger case in the courts of Canada. We respect and appreciate our Roman Catholic colleagues, and they respect and appreciate us.

The Roman Catholic-Evangelical Dialogue was established in 2011 by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the EFC to help us work better together, by understanding each other better.



**CANADIAN CONFERENCE
OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS**

Our Evangelical Neighbours is a resource created in 2016 and made available to Roman Catholic communities, in their desire to understand and appreciate the evangelical community in Canada even more. The EFC will soon publish a related resource, *Our Roman Catholic Neighbours*, to accomplish the same goal within our own community. The intent of both documents is to:

- Untangle confusion around stereotypical or outdated attitudes between members of Roman Catholic and evangelical churches
- Explore areas of common ground and agreement, and
- Clarify the differences between the two communities that continue to exist.

This work of furthering our mutual understanding – of how we are alike and how we are different – will strengthen our working relationship as we continue to be faithful witnesses to Jesus in our country. Our collaboration on urgent issues will be strengthened by these efforts. **Both resources will be available at www.TheEFC.ca/Resources/Documents.**



Updating you on Canada's most immediate issues

■ Hybrid offences on human trafficking, assaulting clergy:

The EFC is preparing a brief to a Senate committee on Bill C-75, the bill proposing to make offences, including relating to human trafficking, child protection and assault of clergy, into hybrid offences in the *Criminal Code*. Hybrid offences may be treated as less serious offences. The EFC is asking for these offences to remain as more serious indictable offences.

www.TheEFC.ca/C75

■ Federal conscience protection:

Private member's Bill C-418 would protect health care workers from being compelled to participate in Medical Assistance in Dying. The EFC sent a letter of support to sponsoring MP David Anderson. Let your MP know freedom of conscience is important to you, and ask your MP to support Bill C-418. See a sample letter and more at www.TheEFC.ca/C418.

■ Freedom of conscience in court:

Policies that compel doctors to participate in Medical Assistance in Dying against their beliefs were challenged in an Ontario Court of

...continued on back

...continued from page 3

Appeal hearing in January. A lower court found the policies infringed doctors' freedom of religion but ruled it justifiable to ensure access to medical services. The EFC, with co-interveners the Christian Legal Fellowship and Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, argued these policies exclude some doctors from the profession on the basis of faith, and urged the court to protect freedom of religion and conscience. The Court of Appeal decision is pending.

www.TheEFC.ca/CPSO

■ **Assisted suicide case:** The EFC will argue for the protection of vulnerable Canadians in a B.C. court challenge of one of the safeguards of the Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) provisions. The *Lamb* case challenges the requirement that a person's death be "reasonably foreseeable" to be eligible for MAID. The EFC and Christian Legal Fellowship will co-intervene and argue against expanding access.

www.TheEFC.ca/Lamb

■ **Special committee on charities:** A committee in the Senate has been formed to study the charitable sector in Canada and how government policies can support it. The EFC is preparing a submission on religious charities and their benefit to Canada.

What churches can and cannot do during an election

The EFC's Election Toolkit includes a comprehensive list of what churches can and cannot do during an election campaign. Here is a glimpse:



CHURCHES CANNOT:

- Promote or oppose a particular candidate or political party. A church must not use any of its resources to support a particular candidate or party.
- Invite candidates to speak at different times or at separate events or services.
- Endorse or post signs for a candidate or political party on church property.

CHURCHES CAN:

- Invite the congregation to pray for all candidates, to become well-informed and to vote.
- Hold an all-candidates meeting or invite all candidates to speak at the **same** event.
- Provide information on issues of interest or concern that flow from biblical teaching, if the church does not link its views to any particular party or candidate.

Visit www.TheEFC.ca/Election2019 this spring to find resources like issue summaries and questions for candidates, a full list of church do's and don'ts, and tips and instructions on how to plan an all-candidates meeting.

Warm words from donors

We appreciate your warm words and encouragement. We pray for you regularly, and we thank you for praying for the work and mission of the EFC.


We gratefully received this message recently from an EFC donor:


"Every morning I pray for you and the love and compassion you have for Jesus and the nation. We pray at church and prayer meetings too. The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing (Zephaniah 3:17)."

 [Facebook.com/TheEFC](https://www.facebook.com/TheEFC)

 [Twitter.com/The EFC](https://twitter.com/TheEFC)

 TheEFC.ca/Articles

 [Instagram.com/Evangelical Fellowship of Canada](https://www.instagram.com/EvangelicalFellowshipofCanada)

 [LinkedIn.com/company/The-Evangelical-Fellowship-of-Canada](https://www.linkedin.com/company/The-Evangelical-Fellowship-of-Canada)

 **EFC** The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

Box 5885 West Beaver Creek Post Office,
Richmond Hill, ON L4B 0B8 Canada
Tel: 905.479.5885 • Toll Free: 1.866.302.3362 • Fax: 905.479.4742
Email: EFC@TheEFC.ca • www.TheEFC.ca



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.

