



TOGETHER FOR INFLUENCE, IMPACT AND IDENTITY • SPRING 2010



CanadaWatch

CENTRE FOR FAITH & PUBLIC LIFE:

The EFC in the Courts and on Parliament Hill

MINISTRY SERVICES:

Youth and Young Adult Roundtable Update – five new priorities

NEW EFC RESOURCES:

Euthanasia, *Faith Today* and God's EarthKeepers



Did you know?

Euthanasia: an action which directly and intentionally causes or hastens the death of another in order to put an end to a person's suffering, with or without the person's consent; or deliberate killing in order to put an end to a person's suffering, with or without the person's consent.

Assisted Suicide: involves a person knowingly and intentionally arranging with someone else to provide that person with the means (e.g. a quantity of medications or some kind of machinery) whereby that person can kill himself or herself.

Excerpts taken from the EFC's discussion booklet by the same name

How Merciful? Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

Mark Pickup, who lives in Alberta and is founder of Human Life Matters, shared his story this way in 2008:

The onset of multiple sclerosis is sudden. I went dead from the waist down. Overnight, I lost the use of my right hand, and I am right handed. Within a week, I had gone from the world of the able-bodied to the world of the disabled.

The pattern of attack and remission was so volatile that I would go to bed at night not knowing what I would wake up with or without. During my darkest days, if I had not belonged to a significant community, I would have wanted to die.

Mark continues: Where do we find this significant community? A community is us, you and me. A caring community has no place for euthanasia. It is committed to the promotion of good palliative care... to the idea of supporting people in their search for life with dignity.

We are a nation... a Canadian family. Let us stop all this talk of killing and recommit ourselves to each other, to life, to interdependence. Canada stands at a crossroad about how we view human life. We must ask ourselves... do we value even the "useless?" If the answer is no, I need to know that because I am one of the "useless." I need to know my country's answer.

Did you know that euthanasia can include removing basic provisions such as food and water in order to starve and dehydrate a patient instead of allowing natural death to occur? Where proper palliative care seeks to lessen pain and make a patient more comfortable, euthanasia seeks to hasten death.

It should be noted that allowing a person to die of natural causes is not euthanasia. Thus, a decision to discontinue treatments that can no longer achieve their medical goals or are excessively burdensome to the patient's life is not classified as euthanasia. The reason >>

– Continued on next page

– Continued from page 1

for this is that it does not end the patient's life but instead allows natural death to occur. Under the current law in Canada, a person has a right to refuse any medical treatment, even life-saving treatment, so respecting the person's decision to refuse treatment is not euthanasia.

In a recent letter to our Prime Minister, the EFC's Don Hutchinson wrote: *The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) believes that human beings are created in the image of God and have inherent dignity and worth. Our worth is not determined by what we can do but by who we are. Human life must be valued, respected and protected throughout all its stages, and in all circumstances.*

Good News! On April 23rd, the House of Commons said a resounding "no" to private member's C-384 proposing the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide. The vote of 59 in favour of and 228 opposed was a stronger reflection than anticipated. It was the prayerful and financial support from friends like you which positioned the EFC to engage strongly and successfully. Thank you!

As in the past, the EFC will continue to work tirelessly to protect the sanctity of human life – for those who are most vulnerable in our society. Your support helps us do this well. Thank you!

>> INFLUENCE

"The responsibility to hold high the traditional Christian faith we embrace falls to us. However, many of us are not equipped to speak to some of the issues of changing moral values that are all around us. We are very blessed to have the EFC team speaking for biblical/Christian values and appreciate the articulate manner in which they address contemporary issues, without passing judgment on those with whom we differ. They are sought out and respected by members of the media and politicians alike. We are so pleased that they are there."

– Anonymous Supporter



>> EFC Argues Religious Freedom in Marriage Commissioners Reference:

The EFC appeared before the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal on May 13 and 14. The decision could potentially impact all public service employees in Canada. Watch for more details in the next *CanadaWatch*.

Ontario Court decides **Christian Horizon Case**

The Ontario Divisional Court issued a decision in *Heintz v Christian Horizons (CH)* on May 14. Ms. Heintz joined the Evangelical Christian ministry that serves the needs of people with developmental disabilities five years before entering into a same-sex relationship in contradiction to her signed agreement with CH's Lifestyle and Morality Policy. That relationship became the root of a human rights complaint that challenged the ability of CH to retain its Christian identity. The decision in this case had the potential to impact every Christian ministry that serves or evangelizes outside its own faith community.

The Court agreed with the EFC's position that the section of Ontario's *Human Rights Code* that grants the right for religious organizations to be selective in hiring is to be considered from the perspective of the religious organization, i.e., the religious organization defines whether it is religious. The Court also agreed that a religious organization can include its "statement of faith" and "lifestyle and morality statement" as part of its employment requirements.

However, the Court found that the faith and lifestyle statements must be objectively established as legitimate requirements for the performance of the job in question.

Although deciding against CH on this last point, the earlier components of the decision are good news for Evangelical ministries and the latter is instructive.

CRCE finds evangelical church plants just outpacing church closings

Almost 1% of evangelical congregations closed (had their charitable status revoked) each year between 2003 and 2008. For every 10 rural congregations that closed only 9 were planted (registered as a charity) compared to 11 urban plants. An analysis of inter-provincial congregational income rates suggest that as the concentration of evangelical churches rises in population, the incomes of all other evangelical congregations decline meaning that much of a new congregation's growth is from transfers. For the full details see *Church & Faith Trends*.

The next issue of *Church & Faith Trends* will look at evangelical congregation investment in education and training for their staff and volunteers.



Because of the prayerful and financial support from friends like you, the EFC has made a difference. Be encouraged by the following brief review:

- Bill C-384 – legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide – was defeated (see cover story – p.2 for more).
- The EFC has endorsed and is engaged on Bill C-268 (minimum sentences for trafficking in children) which is now at the committee stage in the Senate.
- The EFC was engaged with several parents groups that were fighting the sex-ed curriculum proposed in Ontario. These parents were well positioned to speak out when the issue finally gained public attention in April.
- **Ahead:** The EFC has endorsed Bill C-510, a private members bill that would make it illegal to coerce a woman into having an abortion.
- **Ahead:** The EFC has opposed the licensing of pornography channels in Canada and is encouraging Canadians NOT to subscribe so that these cable subscription channels will run out of funding and fail.

On Parliament Hill



EFC Ministry Services

The Youth and Young Adult Roundtable operates on the administrative and communications platform of the EFC.

Its mission is to:

1. serve as a hub for gathering and distributing information and research;
2. act as a connecting point & catalyst for national youth ministries; and
3. advocate on behalf of youth and young adults and the faith based organizations that work among them

The Roundtable has contracted the services of All About Youth, a youth/young adult ministry consulting group, to develop a national youth/young adult ministries directory and resource clearinghouse; profile best practices; and tell about success stories and new initiatives from youth/young adult ministry practitioners across the country.

Roundtable Chair, John Wilkinson, says, "We are hopeful that a higher communications profile will make it possible for the Roundtable to serve youth and young adult ministry at the local church and community level across the country."

>> IMPACT

"While I am increasingly concerned about the impact government legislation on moral and ethical issues will have on marriage, the family and society as a whole, I often struggle with how best to have my convictions and concerns, and the concerns of other Christ-followers, heard by our legislators. It is for this reason that I am thankful for the EFC which not only advocates for the Christian community but does so in a gracious, life-giving way. As the EFC presents sound biblical principles to Members of Parliament and the Courts, this organization provides 'salt and light' to the legislative process, and on that basis I enthusiastically endorse and support their ministry."

– Rev. Dr. Henry Schorr, Senior Pastor, Centre Street Church, Calgary, AB



Another Way to support EFC

Start collecting Air Miles with an EFC Air Miles card! Your practical support in this way will make it possible for the EFC's senior leaders to travel to the various regions in Canada for attendance at court interventions and as we seek to resource and connect with our affiliate leaders and supporters. Request your card today via one of the following ways: email: airmiles@evangelicalfellowship.ca OR phone: 1-866-302-3362, select donor services (option #1) OR sign up online: www.theEFC.ca/airmiles.

>> IDENTITY

"Affiliating with the EFC was our board's decision to identify with Canadian Christians in a formal way. We desired the accountability and transparency that comes through formal partnership which has challenged us to broaden the scope of our activities; brought joy to participate alongside colleagues in multifaceted outreach; and given us renewed hope that God is at work in our nation through the Christian church."

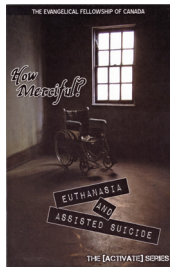
– Mark Petersen, Executive Director, Bridgeway Foundation, Cambridge, ON

EFC Resources >>

For more information on any of the following resources, visit www.evangelicalfellowship.ca or call toll free 1-866-302-3362 (ext 234).

◆ **How Merciful: Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide:**

The EFC's second booklet in the [ACTIVATE] series: for those who seek to examine critical social issues of our times in the light of Scripture. Great for stimulating biblical discussions.

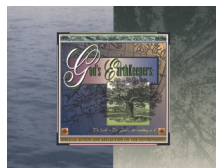


◆ **Faith Today:** Examples of believers putting their faith into action. Clinte Curle and Ken McLaren of Ottawa; Jane Halton and Cheryl Bear of Vancouver and Tim Huff of Toronto.



◆ **God's EarthKeepers: Biblical Action and Reflection on the Environment**

by William Van Geest and the EFC's Social Action Commission is a discussion on environmental issues, drawing on Christian perspectives of God's creation. Includes study sections appropriate for personal or group purposes. Call for your copy or read it online at www.theEFC.ca.



Activate CFPL is the EFC's law and public policy blog – Visit www.activateCFPL.theEFC.ca



Come join the EFC on Facebook. www.facebook.com/theefc

Together We Are Stronger! >>

Since 1964 the EFC has provided a national forum for Evangelicals and a constructive voice for biblical principles in life and society. The EFC's affiliates currently include 39 denominations, 85 ministry organizations, 36 Christian higher education institutions and more than 900 local congregations.

WE WELCOME OUR NEWEST AFFILIATES:

- Cremona Country Fellowship Cremona, AB
- Fellowship Christian Reformed Church Brighton, ON
- The Spirit of Truth Church North York, ON
- Living Hope Community Church Estevan, SK
- Macoun Evangelical Missionary Ch MacOun, SK
- Lakeview Community Church Killarney, MB
- McKee's Mills Baptist Church McKee's Mills, NB
- Calvary Pentecostal Church Peterborough, ON
- Evangelistic Tabernacle Nanaimo, BC
- Beddington Pentecostal Church Calgary, AB
- Highview Community Church Kitchener, ON
- Covenant Christian Reformed Church Barrie, ON
- Logos Christian Family Church Mississauga, ON
- Islington Evangel Centre Etobicoke, ON
- Calvary Temple Belleville, ON
- Creekside Church Waterloo, ON
- Causeway Christian Assembly Ennismore, ON
- Destiny and Dominion Word Ministries Toronto, ON
- Elk Point Baptist Church Elk Point, AB
- Community Pentecostal Church Ottawa (Orleans), ON

If your congregation has not yet affiliated, please encourage your pastor to visit our website at www.theEFC.ca (click on "Affiliate") or call 1-866-302-3362 for more information. This coming fall, we will launch an exciting new "Portfolio of Affiliate Benefits."



EFC

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

M.I.P. Box 3745, Markham, ON L3R 0Y4
Tel: 905.479.5885 Fax: 905.479.4742 Email: efc@efc-canada.com
www.evangelicalfellowship.ca

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada is the national association of Evangelicals, gathered together for influence, impact and identity in ministry and public witness. Since 1964 the EFC has provided a national forum for Evangelicals and a constructive voice for biblical principles in life and society.