



CanadaWatch

CENTRE FOR FAITH & PUBLIC LIFE

The EFC in the courts and on Parliament Hill.

SPOTLIGHT

Religious freedom in Canada – Spotlight on the Ktunaxa case.

EFC RESOURCES

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Questions you may have



■ What is a literature review?

Literature reviews are an essential first step in research. This phase involves combing through what has already been researched and published in a particular area of study.

■ Who are our research partners for the youth project?

The EFC's research partners for the YATR project are: Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship; Power to Change – Students; The Leadership Studio, Muskoka Woods; Truth Matters; and Youth for Christ.

■ How can donors help with this research?

You help by supporting the EFC. You can share this copy of *Canada Watch* with a church leader who might benefit from our latest research focus. Thank you!

The EFC and Our Affiliates Doing Ministry Research Together

Your gifts help the EFC discover how, why and when Canadian congregations do missions and how we can all do better.

What do Canadian evangelical congregations think about missions? What are their priorities and how do we establish them?

In the fall of 2014, the EFC partnered with a ministry affinity group called the Canadian Missions Research Forum to understand how Canadian evangelical congregations are thinking about and practising missions.

This multi-phase research project started by interviewing denominational leaders, Christian higher education leaders and mission agency leaders about the changes and practices they were seeing in the local church. We then moved on to interview pastors and laypeople about their understanding of missions and what their churches were doing. In total we conducted 56 one-hour interviews and then analysed them in order to develop a survey of pastors and a survey of laypeople.

Thirty-eight of the EFC's 43 affiliate denominations partnered with us to promote the survey with their pastors. Today we have a broadly representative sample of 1,415 respondents from across Canada – valuable information gathered together for the good of the Church. What a great example of what we can accomplish when we work together.

In total we have heard from more than 3,500 Canadian Evangelicals.

We are now doing analysis of this national data. The research partners will host events where we will ask pastors and ministry leaders to help us develop ministry responses to what we are learning. Those ministry responses will bring this data to life and help guide how Canadian churches not only understand – but do – missions in the years ahead.

Separate research project looks deeper at why youth stay and leave the church

This fall the EFC and its partners launched another collaborative ministry research initiative looking at the faith transitions of young adults from high school to the next phase in life.

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This Young Adult Transition Study (YATR) builds on the idea that there are significant declines in young adult religious participation/affiliation across major life transitions (this was a key finding of our 2012 study, *Hemorrhaging Faith*).

We want to learn how parents and ministry leaders can support young adults through this transition so that they maintain a robust connection to their faith and their Christian communities.

This multi-phase research project began this fall with a literature review and in-depth interviews with 20 experts on youth and young-adult ministry. We will then conduct 40 in-depth interviews with young adults raised in church about their experiences with the post-high school transition and how it affected their faith journey.

We believe it is important to understand the perspectives of both ministry leaders and the people they minister to. We need to learn from the wisdom of leaders, and leaders need to check their perspectives against the views of those they serve, just as “iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17).

When the data is all in, the work has just begun. The purpose of research is to foster conversations in church, coffee shops, small groups and homes about how we do ministry, why we do ministry and how we can do it better.

It’s about how to be faithful in a changing culture.

The research we do, although a seemingly quiet, academic exercise on the surface, has huge implications for the Canadian Church. Thank you for your support!

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RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN CANADA

Spotlight on the Ktunaxa case

The Ktunaxa (pronounced “k-too-nah-ha”) people of British Columbia are locked in a court battle as they fight against the construction of a proposed year-round ski resort that would infringe on their religious beliefs and freedom.

Their case, which is heading to the Supreme Court of Canada, will be of significance to the big picture of religious freedom in Canada. The EFC is intervening in this case jointly with the Christian Legal Fellowship.

Q Why is the EFC involved?

How the government of B.C. and the lower courts treated the claims of religious freedom raised by several Indigenous nations raises critical questions about how the religious freedom guarantees in Canada’s *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* are understood by the courts and applied in cases.

The case itself is about a dispute between the Ktunaxa Nation and several other Indigenous nations in B.C. who are objecting to the development of a ski resort on land that has deep religious significance to them.

Issues before the court include: Can governments ignore religious freedom guarantees, or must they at least seek to understand them and accommodate the concerns? Do the freedom guarantees (in section 2a of the Charter) apply if the freedom impacts others outside of our community? Since religious expression often involves certain means necessary to fulfilling that expression – a place of worship, a religious school – will the Supreme Court affirm that vehicles or mechanisms integral to the expression of religion are included in the meaning of section 2a?

Q How does the EFC decide which court cases to be involved in?

Because the interpretation and application of our religious freedoms impact how people of faith and religious organizations are treated in Canada, it is vital that when religious freedom is being debated by the Supreme Court we are there to promote a full and robust understanding of religious freedom.

Q How can donors help from a distance in these and other cases?

Pray for our lawyers and staff, and judges hearing the cases. Talk to your friends and families. We need to steward our freedoms well, and to do this we must understand our freedoms. The laws being challenged impact us all and the nature of the society we are leaving for our children. And of course we depend on your financial support to do all that we do.



JOIN US FOR UPCOMING WEBINARS

We are not afraid of the hard topics: religious freedom and pornography

webinar



EFC webinars are a unique opportunity to participate live as EFC experts and guests discuss the issues of the day. As viewers listen and watch, they can also type in their own questions and have them answered live during the 45-minute session. Our webinar archive also gives you the opportunity to view the recorded programs at your own convenience.

HERE'S OUR FALL SCHEDULE:

■ Why does the EFC care about the religious freedom of other religions?

How does the religious freedom of other religions impact our own? Why does the EFC care about cases like the Ktunaxa case? **Join us as we interview Bruce Clemenger, president of the EFC, on Thursday, October 20 at 12:00 noon EST.**

■ Is pornography a public health issue?

What is the price of the widespread use of pornography to our society – more accessible, graphic and more violent than it ever has been? What can our churches do? **Join us as we interview Glendyne Gerrard from Defend Dignity and Julia Beazley from the EFC on Wednesday, November 16 at 12:00 noon EST.**

Register for the next webinar and view archives of previous session at

www.TheEFC.ca/Webinars

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A subscription to Canada's Christian magazine is a great gift. For a limited time we have

opened up a special offer page at www.FaithToday.ca/3for1 where you can order three subscriptions for the price of one. Imagine, one subscription for yourself delivered right to your home, another for a young person off to university and a third for a friend or relative – all for the cost of one regular subscription (\$29.99). This offer is available only for Canadian addresses, and only for a limited time.

3-FOR-1 OFFER (Hint: Christmas gifts!)



CANADA'S CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE

FAITH TODAY

On Parliament Hill



Updating you on Canada's most immediate issues

◆ **Pornography:** The EFC is raising awareness of the public health impacts of pornography, bringing in an academic expert for events and meetings on Parliament Hill in November. These events, co-hosted with Defend Dignity, will educate about pornography's impact on sexual, emotional, psychological and relational health.

Already this fall, the EFC has made a submission to a parliamentary committee, emphasizing that pornography is shaping the sexual attitudes and behaviours

of young people, contributing to violence against women and fueling sexual exploitation.

A vote is expected before the Christmas break on MP Arnold Viersen's motion M-47, which calls on the parliamentary health committee to study the public health effects of easily accessible, violent and degrading sexually explicit material online. (Download our latest resources, including a sample letter on M-47, at www.TheEFC.ca/PornographyResources).

◆ **Conscience protection:** The EFC is urging the Ontario government to extend conscience

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protection to long-term care facilities and nursing homes in Ontario. These institutions may be compelled by the province to facilitate or allow euthanasia and assisted suicide on their premises.

The EFC is supporting conscience protection for doctors and will seek to intervene in a court challenge of an Ontario policy that requires doctors to provide a referral against their conscientious objection.

◆ **Religious Freedom:** The decisions of three provincial law societies not to accredit Trinity Western University's proposed law school have been reviewed by appeal courts in Ontario, Nova Scotia and British Columbia. The Nova Scotia Court of Appeal ruled that the reasons for the refusal of accreditation by the Law Society were invalid and that the decision infringed on TWU's religious freedom. The Ontario Court of Appeal ruled in favour of its provincial law society. At time of publication, the B.C. Court of Appeal had not released its decision. This matter is expected to be appealed to the Supreme Court.

The EFC is intervening at the Supreme Court with the Christian Legal Fellowship in a religious freedom case known as the Ktunaxa Nations case. The EFC and the CLF will be arguing that religious freedom protects not only private expression but the public expression of religions belief as well.



The *Faith Today* blog posts exclusive new material several times per week, following up on important issues raised in Canada's Christian magazine. Visit blog.faithtoday.ca



Join the conversation and like us on Facebook.
www.facebook.com/theEFC

A word from the President, Bruce J. Clemenger



"We are not afraid of the hard topics." That's what it says in the description of our upcoming webinars. That is true. We can't afford to be. The EFC, with your help, is constantly bringing a biblical perspective to issues that impact our lives. Sometimes that means speaking on behalf of others, such as in the Ktunaxa case you will

read about in this *Canada Watch* and in the weeks to come in *Faith Today* and elsewhere. This case is an excellent example of how the decisions made in one case can impact outcomes in others – how freedom for one religion (or lack thereof) can impact the freedom of all religions. So, no, we will never be afraid of the hard topics, or the hard work needed to resolve them. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. We count on you, just as we know you count on us.

Warm words from donors We love to hear from you.

We appreciate when you contact us with encouraging words and with your own prayer requests. The EFC prays for the requests you send us every Thursday during devotions.



"Be encouraged and strengthened in the Lord Jesus, and may His Holy Spirit give you wisdom and guidance and boldness as you minister for our nation."

"I thank the Lord for you all, may you never give up. Thanks for all the hard work you have to do to keep God's word alive. The challenges are great at times, but Jesus will continue to see you through. We are not alone; your work is not just for today but for years to come."



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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.