

**CENTRE FOR FAITH & PUBLIC LIFE**

The EFC in the courts and on Parliament Hill.

**SPOTLIGHT** Youth research project will answer important questions about kids and faith.

**EFC RESOURCES**

EFC launches podcast to reach more Canadians.

## What does it mean that the EFC now has a Resident Theologian?

*David Guretzki introduces himself and his work*

I've always been impressed by the way The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) has been able to bring biblical and theological perspectives to issues at hand.

This attention has allowed the EFC to speak in such a way that it both represents, and at times, leads Evangelicals on the issues facing us today.

This is the first time the EFC has employed a resident theologian, so the specific tasks I'll be doing will emerge in the weeks and months to come. However, I will be doing three basic kinds of work:

**Ensuring Theological Consistency and Coherence**

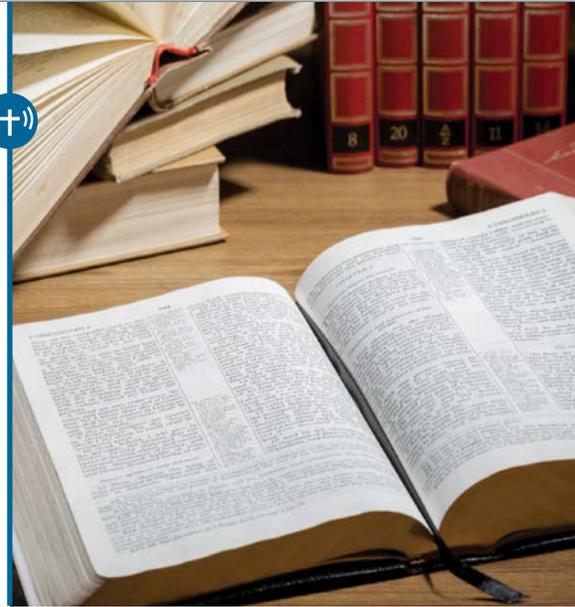
Most importantly, my job will be to help us be sure we are being faithful to the teachings of the Bible and our own doctrinal statement.

But the EFC is also a fellowship of denominations, schools and ministry organizations which have self-identified as evangelical. This means that we need to be sensitive to the currents and conversations they are having so that we can speak with consistency and coherence with them as well.

I'll be thinking of ways to better equip our staff to engage, speak, write and represent us with biblical and theological integrity – and again in a way that is theologically consistent with our affiliates and members. The big but exciting challenge for me will be to find ways of listening well to our affiliates and understanding the issues they are facing.

**Theological Facilitation and Teaching**

I am deeply committed to the principle that theology is the task of the



whole Church, and not just individual theologians. A good theologian is not one who works in isolation from practising Christian communities (the old "ivory tower" image) but one who works together with and on behalf of confessing Christian communities.

Because the EFC is a fellowship of Evangelicals, I see part of my role as facilitating conversation between Church and organizational leaders to come to common conclusions where possible. I will also be available to serve our affiliate churches and organizations to speak and teach on theological issues they are facing.

I welcome churches and leaders to contact me about coming to spend

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**What you can do:**

- Pray for David as he enters his new role.
- Consider how David might help equip your congregation for the new challenges facing Canadians.
- Check back regularly at [www.TheEFC.ca](http://www.TheEFC.ca) for new resources to help build up the Church in Canada, and bless Canada in the name of Jesus.

David Guretzki, PhD, is the EFC's new Executive Vice-President and Resident Theologian. You can reach him at [GuretzkiD@TheEFC.ca](mailto:GuretzkiD@TheEFC.ca).

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time with them consulting, speaking or teaching. I have considerable experience working with pastors and church leaders in their own context to teach either them or their congregations on a topic they've requested.

I may or may not have expertise already in the issue, but I do have the training and gifting to come up to speed quickly on the issues. My hope is that I can help Christians understand the main biblical and theological issues they need to grapple with in their own ministries and communities.

Of course, I'm also available to brief churches and organizations on some of the major issues the EFC is working on, whether that be an Ottawa legal or political issue, or a theological or ethical issue churches are facing.

#### Ongoing Theological Research and Writing

I'm grateful that Bruce Clemenger is a scholar himself and therefore understands that speaking and writing with theological and philosophical veracity requires time to read, reflect and research on matters that may not always appear to be immediately relevant to issues at hand.

Thoughtful and faithful theological response needs time for spiritual and intellectual percolation and prayer. Here the President has mandated that at least part of my time as resident theologian includes trying to "keep up" with and contribute to broader theological scholarship.

There will also be limited opportunities for me to teach in some of our affiliate seminaries upon invitation and as time permits.

Of course, I will also be writing articles, documents and briefings on projects the EFC is working on. You can expect to see me contribute articles in our publications such as *Faith Today* and *Canada Watch*, or in the various resources we are constantly developing.

My hope and prayer is that all I do will be a resource to our affiliate pastors, leaders and congregations.



## Youth research project will answer important questions about kids and faith

The EFC, along with its partners Power to Change, Youth For Christ, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Truth Matters Ministries and The Leadership studio, is engaging in a long-awaited new youth and young adult study.

**T**he new study explores one of the key findings of *Hemorrhaging Faith*, the 2012 research on why and when young people leave the Christian faith. That research revealed that life transition times are key moments when youth leave the Church or disengage from their faith.

"There were about four types of transitions that were significant," says Sid Koop, chair of the Young Adult Transition Research project. Transition towards autonomy, transition of leadership, transition into another community and finally, transition from one program to another, including from high school to post-secondary realities.

"A significant portion of kids who disengage from the Church and their faith do so during that particular transition," says Koop. "This research will help us understand why this happens and what

can be done about it. What do we need to do pre-transition, mid-transition and post-transition to help them make that movement in a spiritually healthy way?"

Research like this, Koop explains, creates accountability. "It forces us to come face to face and acknowledge the current reality, and then by God's grace it should move us to become very intentional in pursuing a new reality, a new God-glorifying Kingdom reality."

Koop and his team are more convinced than ever of the importance of research like this in the Canadian context. "Not because it necessarily gives the experts new information – most of us in the field intuitively have an idea of what is taking place. But this brings clarity to the reality and demands a right response," says Koop.

"The research provides clarity for intentional, strategic response, and it demands accountability to the reality that is clearly seen. We need it."

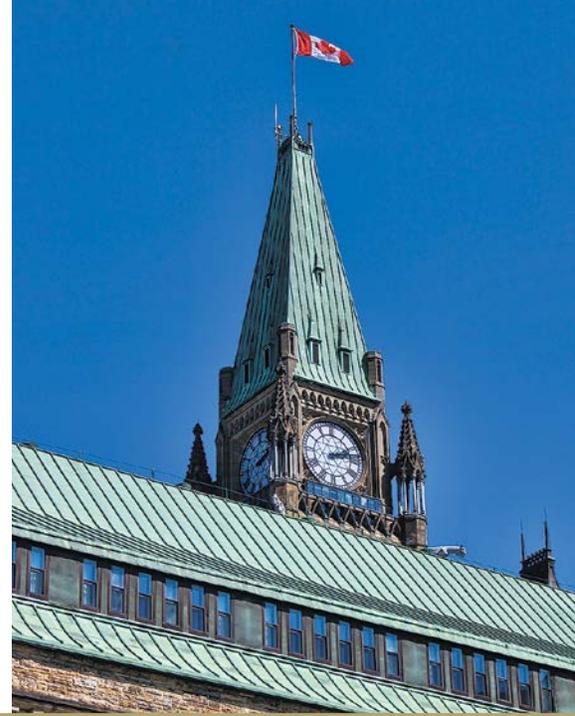


**EFC donors make research like this possible. Thank you. Your help benefits the whole Church.**



## Message from the President, Bruce J. Clemenger

Canada's 150th birthday celebrations have come and gone. Here in Ottawa, at least one downtown evangelical church gave out water and offered shelter to weary festival-goers – a direct response to a need. It is symbolic of the practical and essential role churches play in our communities, providing a safe shelter and making communities better and stronger – blessing Canada in the name of Jesus. Caring for people, stewarding our freedoms, living out the Gospel in word and deed; in our respective places and ways, and together through the work of the EFC. We are so pleased to have Dr. David Guretzki join our team as executive vice president and resident theologian, strengthening our capacity to do what God has called us to. Thank you for all you do to make the work of the EFC – and our mutual witness – possible.



## EFC launches podcast to reach more Canadians

**P**odcasting is the new blogging, proclaimed *The Globe and Mail* in a recent article. The new EFC Podcast is not replacing the EFC blog, but it is a new addition to the family of communication vehicles the EFC uses to help to bless Canada in the name of Jesus.

The weekly audio podcasts will introduce a new audience to the EFC's thoughtful and provocative material and resources that help Canadians think about their own faith and the issues facing Canada and beyond. The podcasts



will also highlight the global Church with episodes featuring Brian Stiller, global ambassador of the World Evangelical Alliance.

**Listeners can access the EFC Podcast at Google Play, iTunes, SoundCloud and RSS (Feedburner). Get details at [www.TheEFC.ca/Podcast](http://www.TheEFC.ca/Podcast).**

## Support Christian journalism in Canada

Where there is faith, there are stories to tell. *Faith Today*, Canada's Christian magazine, tells those stories – which are our stories – from coast to coast. As we wind up our country's 150th birthday celebrations, there is no better time to subscribe to *Faith Today*. We continue to extend our half price subscription offer to *Canada Watch* readers. We know you likely pick up complimentary issues of *Faith Today* at your church. We're inviting you to consider subscribing to help support Christian journalism in Canada. It is more important than ever.

**Canada Watch readers can Subscribe to Faith Today for only \$14.99 a year.**

To subscribe call toll-free 1.866.302.3362 or [www.FaithToday.ca/CanadaWatch](http://www.FaithToday.ca/CanadaWatch)

## Updating you on Canada's most immediate issues

■ **Pornography:** The EFC is asking the federal health minister to initiate further study on the public health impact of pornography and to take steps to protect children from accessing violent pornography online. A sample letter is posted at [www.TheEFC.ca/Pornography](http://www.TheEFC.ca/Pornography).

■ **Religious Discrimination:** The Canadian Heritage Committee is expected to begin its study this fall of systemic racism and religious discrimination. The EFC has asked to appear before the committee and is preparing a written submission.

■ **Prostitution:** The EFC plans to make a submission to the Minister of Justice asking her to uphold the prostitution laws. The House of Commons Justice Committee has passed a motion to study human trafficking in Canada. The EFC will look to engage in this study.

■ **Palliative Care:** Bill C-277, a private member's bill on palliative care which the EFC supports, has passed the House of Commons and is now in the Senate. This bill brings much-needed attention to palliative care, including the need for data collection and

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identifying education and training needs. For updates see [www.TheEFC.ca/C277](http://www.TheEFC.ca/C277).

The EFC is developing a new toolkit to help churches and individuals become involved in offering palliative care. The toolkit will include stories, tips, definitions and further resources.

■ **Conscience protection:** In June the Ontario Divisional Court heard the legal challenge to policies that compel doctors to refer patients for assisted suicide, even if it goes against their deeply-held beliefs. The EFC argued for freedom of conscience with co-interveners the Christian Legal Fellowship and the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario. For updates see [www.TheEFC.ca/Conscience](http://www.TheEFC.ca/Conscience).

■ **Famine appeal:** The EFC joined with other faith leaders to ask communities to mobilize in response to the famine crisis in four African countries. Learn more at [www.TheEFC.ca/Famine2017](http://www.TheEFC.ca/Famine2017).

■ **Bill C-51:** A federal bill to clean up outdated criminal laws would remove the law that currently makes it illegal to interfere with clergy and wilfully disrupt religious gatherings. Bill C-51 will be reviewed by the justice committee this fall when Parliament resumes. The EFC will raise concerns about this section in Bill C-51 with MPs and the committee this fall. We are also preparing resources to inform and equip Canadians to respond.

## Canadians are battling pornography with new resource

So far, the EFC has distributed approximately 500 copies of our new resource booklet *Battling Pornography: A Guide for Canadians*. Canadians are calling to request it on an almost daily basis.

We have heard from Navy chaplains, church pastors, organizations that serve and counsel families, denominations, youth leaders and pregnancy support service organizations.

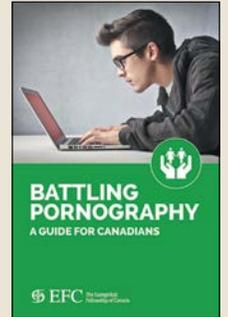
"Pastors are saying this is what we needed all along," says Blake Weller, EFC donor services. "These resources are so helpful. Especially today, to have a resource on this issue that you can hold in your hands is so fantastic."

The 38-page booklet contains articles, graphics, discussion questions and

resource lists that help parents, leaders – or any Canadian concerned about the rising use of pornography and its impact in our society – to quickly learn about the issue.

The booklet considers what can be done, and then moves us forward with positive steps and actions to help combat the destructive nature of pornography today in Canada.

**It is the EFC donors who make resources like this possible. On behalf of every Canadian who is using this resource, thank you. You are having an impact.**



Download a free copy from [www.TheEFC.ca/BattlingPornography](http://www.TheEFC.ca/BattlingPornography), or if you'd like printed copies for your home and church, call us toll-free at 1-866-302-3362.

## Warm words from donors

What a blessing it is for the EFC to receive encouraging words from our donors. We often share these with the staff in our devotional time. Here is one of the latest notes we received from you:

***"God bless each one of you as you stand up for the truth and religious freedom in our country and helping Christians who want to stand by their convictions. May God give you wisdom in all your deliberations with government, and in various other instances that you are involved in."***

 The Faith Today blog posts exclusive new material several times per week, following up on important issues raised in Canada's Christian magazine. [Blog.FaithToday.ca](http://Blog.FaithToday.ca)

 Join the conversation and like us on Facebook. [www.Facebook.com/TheEFC](http://www.Facebook.com/TheEFC)

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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.

