



TOGETHER FOR INFLUENCE, IMPACT AND IDENTITY • FEBRUARY/MARCH 2013



CanadaWatch

CENTRE FOR FAITH & PUBLIC LIFE:

The EFC in the Courts and on Parliament Hill

MINISTRY SERVICES: Q & A with Matthew Gibbins, the Executive Director of the EFC's Global Mission Roundtable

PARTNERS IN FAITH: The EFC Plays Key Role in World Evangelical Alliance General Assembly 2014

How You Can Help



- Contact your own MP to express your support for Bill C-400
- Visit www.theEFC.ca/activateCFPL the EFC's Centre for Faith and Public Life blog, and search "housing" to read blogs on this topic
- Investigate issues of affordable housing in your own community and consider how your church can get involved.
- Prayerfully and financially support the EFC's work on this and other issues. Visit www.theEFC.ca for updates on this bill and others.

UPDATES ON THE ISSUES

that the EFC is currently involved with are always available at www.theEFC.ca 1-866-302-3362

The EFC Throws Support Behind National Housing Strategy

Is your church one of many that operates an out-of-the-cold program to help people without homes in your community survive the winter? Perhaps you and some friends prepare sandwiches to distribute to people who are homeless in your downtown or neighbourhood. Or, as one church does, provide hot dogs from a small RV to offer something warm on a cold night.

Next to government, the Church is the second largest provider of care to the quarter of a million people in Canada who have been identified as homeless or inadequately housed. As followers of Jesus, we are called to protect and care for those who are vulnerable and marginalized in our society. In accordance with the Scriptures, we believe that every person is created by God, made in God's image, and therefore possessing of inherent and inestimable dignity and worth.

Both the Church and the government have a unique responsibility and role to play in meeting the needs of vulnerable Canadians, and finding solutions to issues of poverty and homelessness. The roles are so critical that the failure of either to fulfill that role and responsibility will mean that the housing and homelessness crisis in Canada will continue to worsen. And that's why the EFC supports private members' Bill C-400, introduced by MP Marie-Claude Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot).

Bill C-400, an Act to ensure secure, adequate, accessible and affordable housing, is complementary to existing federal housing initiatives across the country, including the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The Bill calls on the federal government to do what only it has the capacity to do in Canada: bring together the leaders of provincial and aboriginal governments, private and public sector housing providers, representatives from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working with those living in poverty and homelessness, and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to develop a coordinated solution to a nation-wide problem.

In May 2012 Motion No. 331 was passed by the House of Commons with government support. M-331, introduced by MP Rejean Genest (Shefford) states, "That, in the opinion of

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the House, the government should: (a) keep with Canada’s obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the right to housing under the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; (b) support efforts by Canadian municipalities to combat homelessness; and (c) adopt measures to expand the stock of affordable rental housing, with a view to providing economic benefits to local housing construction businesses.” Passing Bill C-400 would be an appropriate follow-up to that commitment.

Affordable and emergency housing in Canada is currently a patchwork of municipal, provincial and federal programs – some short-term and some long-term – working with NGOs and housing providers. And still, homeless shelters are full beyond capacity and people are sleeping in church basements to get out of the cold. The EFC believes the time to develop a national strategy may have been yesterday – but the opportunity to do so is now.

Coming up in the March/April *Faith Today*

- Evangelical perspectives on Idle No More.
- Inside the lives of families raising children with disabilities.
- Our article on *Hemorrhaging Faith* talked about the strength of churches with a solid inter-generational mix. We look at how to build just that.



www.faithtoday.ca



Q&A Spotlight on



GLOBAL MISSION ROUNDTABLE

Matthew Gibbins is the executive director of the EFC’s Global Mission Roundtable www.globalmission.ca, which provides a platform for collaboration around common issues, challenges and opportunities key to the Canadian Church’s effectiveness in global mission.

Q: Matthew, what is new and exciting happening with the Global Missions Roundtable (GMR)?

Operation World Canada (OWC) and the Canadian Missions Giving Study are two GMR projects that are both unique catalysts for missions but in very different ways. OWC is a vision to see 10,000 Canadians commit to praying for the world regularly through Operation World for one year. Operation World www.operationworld.ca is an amazing comprehensive day-by-day global prayer guide that leads one in praying for every country of the world. The giving study is landmark research into Canadian missions giving trends using Canadian Revenue Agency data. It will give us a better understanding of how much Canadian Evangelicals give to global mission, where that giving goes in terms of regions and types of ministry, and how that has changed in recent years.

Q: What is the most important thing you want EFC donors to know about the work/ministry of this Roundtable?

We have the privilege of living in extraordinary times! The explosive growth of the Church and the birthing of new missions movements in many parts of the world means that we must learn to work together to effectively declare and demonstrate the gospel among places and peoples who have not heard. It involves humbly and sacrificially partnering with others, both within the Canadian Church and alongside brothers and sisters globally. The EFC’s relationships with other national alliances and missions movements through the World Evangelical Alliance and its Mission Commission offer more tangible opportunities than ever before – and have never been needed more.

Q: How can EFC supporters be involved?

Pray. Prayer is intimately linked to the Canadian Church being faithful in our part of God’s global mission. And we need to constantly remind ourselves that engagement can be as immediate and as powerfully effective as our willingness to intercede for the nations, especially those who don’t yet have access to the gospel.



Q: What personal satisfaction do you derive from your work with the Roundtable?

The Global Mission Roundtable is primarily about partnership that comes out of relationship. Friendships are a treasured source of joy. The development of emerging Canadian mission leaders is one of the foci of the Global Mission Roundtable, and these younger Christians—often under the age of 30—are great fun, encouragement and inspiration. In them I often see the answers to the prayers and longings of many for a fresh new work of God in Canada that will impact the nations. And in a similar way, increasingly walking and working shoulder-to-shoulder with missions leaders from many different countries and cultures has added an inestimable richness to life and service.

"Prayer is intimately linked to the Canadian Church being faithful in our part of God's global mission."



The EFC Plays Key Role in World Evangelical Alliance

Aileen Van Ginkel, the EFC's vice president, ministry services, is the latest EFC staff person to be called upon by the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) to share their gifts on the global level.

The WEA represents 129 nations that have each formed an evangelical alliance – including the EFC – and over 100 international organizations joining together to give a world-wide identity, voice, and platform to more than 600 million evangelical Christians around the world.

"I am helping to organize the World Evangelical Alliance's General Assembly, which is scheduled to take place in Seoul, South Korea, in October of 2014. The WEA hopes to gather about 7,000 people to this event. Evangelicals will have the opportunity to talk about the particular challenges they're facing and about how God is equipping them to carry out His mission in the midst of those challenges," explains Van Ginkel. "Another focus will be on developing a strategy to increase levels of biblical engagement throughout the global Church."

Van Ginkel's primary role is program director for the General Assembly.

"I serve alongside three great team leaders. Together we work directly with WEA Secretary General Geoff Tunnicliffe (another Canadian with close ties to the EFC), who is providing great overall leadership. It's been a privilege to get a sense, through my work with the WEA, of how God is leading his people around the world."

The EFC's President Bruce J. Clemenger, along with Bill Winger, the EFC's vice president, operations, have both served the WEA in the past.



On Parliament Hill



◆ Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia

The EFC filed its written arguments in *Carter v. Canada* in December. This case is a challenge to Canada's laws that prohibit assisting someone to commit suicide. Learn more at theEFC.ca/carter (the EFC's written factum is there under "Legal Submissions"). The EFC also presented verbal argument in the Supreme Court of Canada in a different end-of-life case, *Cuthbertson v. Rasouli*. The EFC intervened in order to address the need to respect the importance of the patient's religious beliefs when considering the disconnection of medical equipment that is keeping someone alive. Learn more at theEFC.ca/rasouli. In January, the Quebec government announced plans to take steps to permit physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia in Quebec.

The EFC will be involved in this battle as we have been in Parliament, defeating similar legislative initiatives three times, and before the Supreme Court of Canada in the 1993 case *Rodriguez v. British Columbia*, where our arguments asserting the unique dignity and sanctity of human life were accepted by the court.

◆ **Motion 408** – In September, MP Mark Warawa (Langley) introduced Motion No. 408 in the House of Commons. M-408 asks, "That the House condemn discrimination against females occurring through sex-selective pregnancy termination." The EFC supports

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this motion which is scheduled to be assessed in March, according to House of Commons rules to determine whether it will be voted upon by MPs. For more information visit www.markwarawa.com/m-408.

◆ **Bill C-279** – The EFC has expressed concern that the proposal in private members' Bill C-279 to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to include "gender identity" and "gender expression" as prohibited grounds of discrimination is a proposal to add unnecessary – and thus legally dangerous – language to the law as both categories are already covered under the term "sexual orientation" which is already in the Act.

◆ **Bill C-400** – The EFC endorses the concepts promoted in private members' Bill C-400 which calls on the federal government to work with provincial and aboriginal leaders to establish a national housing strategy to combat homelessness in Canada.

Visit www.theEFC.ca/FaithToday
Choosing to read our story "Choosing to End a Life" in the Jan/Feb 2013 issue and become up to date on the latest developments with euthanasia in Canada.

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



From the EFC President, Bruce J. Clemenger

Let me remind you that you that you are part of a global fellowship of Evangelicals around the world that number 600 million strong – and counting. The EFC is a member of the World Evangelical Alliance. Just as we gather Evangelicals across Canada, the WEA gathers us all from across the globe. The EFC is a leader within the WEA, with Canadians regularly holding key positions within that fellowship. Aileen Van Ginkel is the latest EFC team member to step up onto the global stage. I believe EFC staff are often called upon because our steadfast, collaborative Canadian spirit lends itself well to the international arena, where prayerful diplomacy is a must. Thank you for your support of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. You are a part of something much bigger than ourselves!

Together We Are Stronger

Your voice. Your platform. Your public witness.

We appreciate all our EFC affiliates. Your affiliation strengthens our influence in the public square. Also our EFC affiliates get great deals on business phone lines, hotel accommodation, books, resources and much more! Check it out in the affiliate section of our website at www.theEFC.ca/abp to discover all the great benefits of being an EFC affiliate, and to join us today.

Visit www.theEFC.ca/calendar to find out about events across Canada that might interest you and your church.
You can post your own event online for free.



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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.