



# HUMANIST CANADA

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February 19, 2020

Greetings!

These are exciting times we live in as Canadians, world citizens, and humanists.

There are ample political distractions south of our border, the real-world challenges of climate change and the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, to name a few. Numerous challenges within Canada require sound critical thinking and solid scientific, research-based decision making. Updating Canada's Medical Aid in Dying (MAID) legislation is one such issue, and the Federal Government has just requested a four-month extension to deal with the foreseeable clause. In Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario, there are efforts to challenge the discriminatory funding of religious schools with public funds.

The good news is there are abundant opportunities for Humanists in Canada to make a significant difference. But only if we can rally ourselves, join forces and support the efforts for one public education system, humanist and secular officiants in every province, and making MAID accessible in all health care systems that receive public funding.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and invite you to go another step. Please share it with someone. Give a Humanist Canada membership to a friend or family member, so we can continue to grow our membership and speak to the many issues requiring critical thinking and science, research-based decision making.

Warmest regards,

Martin Frith,  
President & Newsletter Co-Editor

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## Freedom of religion widely valued in Canada, but the role of faith in modern society still a source of debate

A new study from the Angus Reid Institute - December 4, 2019 - investigates the intersection between personal and public faith in secular Canadian society.

One finding is that while a majority of adults in this country profess some belief in God or a higher power, a significant segment also wishes to see a more secular nation. Another key finding is that equal numbers of Canadians are found in both the Public Faith Proponents (36%) and Public Faith Opponents (35%) groups, three-in-ten (30%) make up the Uncertain.

[Read More](#)



### Webinar Series

Join us on  
Sunday March 8, 3 pm EST

#### Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) Legislation

In June 2016, the Parliament of Canada passed federal legislation Bill C-14, allowing eligible Canadian adults to request medical assistance in dying. Since MAID has been legalized, more than 6,700 Canadians have chosen to die peacefully with the help of a physician or nurse practitioner.

On September 11, 2019, the Superior Court of Québec found that it was unconstitutional to limit access to MAID to people nearing the end of life. The Court declared the "reasonable foreseeability of natural death" criterion in the federal Criminal Code, as well as the "end-of-life" criterion in Quebec's provincial law on medical assistance in dying, to be unconstitutional.

The Court's ruling will come into effect on March 11, 2020, unless an extension is granted by the Court. While this ruling only applies in the province of Quebec, the Government of Canada has accepted the ruling and has committed to changing the MAID law for the whole country.

**Shanaaz Gokool**, former CEO of Dying With Dignity Canada and one of the country's foremost subject matter experts on MAID will be providing insight on the current legislation and the status of accessing medical assistance in dying across Canada. Join us to learn more about the law and what it means for your right to a peaceful death.



[Register today and you'll receive a reminder](#)

## JOIN WOMEN DELIVER'S AWARD-WINNING



## YOUNG LEADERS PROGRAM!

### Spread the word and share in your networks

Women Deliver is looking for 300 passionate young advocates to join them in creating a more gender-equal world.

The Women Deliver Young Leaders Program connects young advocates ages 15-28 with the platforms, the people, and the resources that can amplify their influence on a larger scale.

To date, the program has trained 700 advocates from 138 countries who are on the front lines of initiatives to advance gender equality and the health and rights of girls and women.

Applications for the next class of Women Deliver Young Leaders are open until 13 March 2020 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET). [Apply Here!](#)

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## Upcoming Events



**2020**  
celebrating 100 years of service

### Human Rights in Israel & the Occupied Palestinian Territories

**Sunday, April 26, 2020, at 1 pm**  
Artscape Youngplace, Toronto

The fight for human rights—a fundamental principle of Humanism—does not stop at our borders. Nor should it limit our efforts to those with differing beliefs.

Mr. Michael Lynk is an Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, at Western University and the UN Special Rapporteur responsible for assessing & reporting on human rights issues in Israel, the West Bank & Gaza Strip. He has worked with governments and others to foster international cooperation in this crisis.



This event is organized by the Ontario Humanist Society. There are limited seats available.

[Click to Register](#)

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**Humanist Canada's 2020 AGM in Winnipeg**  
**May 2-3, 2020.**

Plans are underway for the HC's Annual General Meeting with a Conference Day to bring together Canadian Humanists. The Annual General meeting will be available for remote attendance though stay tuned for updates in the coming months.

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### Conference July 24 & 25, 2020, Sarnia Ontario

They have a super lineup of speakers already confirmed: **Dan Barker, Annie Laurie Gaylor, Dave Warnock, Hemant Mehta, Bob Ripley, Gretta Vosper & Marie LaPage.**

Registration details will be available in the spring so save the date if you'd like to attend. This Conference is organized by the Bluewater Atheists, Humanists, Agnostics

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### World Humanist Congress August 6-9, 2020

It is the largest humanist gathering in the world and happens once per year. Given it is being held in North America this year, it's an exceptional opportunity to gather with our International Community.

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#### Tell us what you'd like to see in the Newsletter.

To ensure the newsletter is relevant we invite your response to a few short questions. Having feedback from across the country is our goal. [Click here!](#)



#### *Why membership in Humanist Canada is important!*

We simply can't do it without you. We are entirely funded through memberships and donations. Your involvement is incredibly significant and goes a long way to support lasting change for a better society and a tolerant world where rational thinking and kindness prevail.

Your membership status/expiry date is on **you're currently not a member, so please consider joining Humanist Canada today** (M/D/Y). If it's time for you to renew, just click on your personal link below, confirm your information and make your payment today.

Click here: [http://weblink.donorperfect.com/humanistcanada\\_join](http://weblink.donorperfect.com/humanistcanada_join)

If you have any questions about renewing, please contact the National Office at [members@humanistcanada.ca](mailto:members@humanistcanada.ca) or 1-877-486-2671.