



# Look Not to Your Own Interests, but to the Interests of Others

## 2021 FEDERAL ELECTION GUIDE

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For further information on or links to any of the resources mentioned please visit [www.councilofchurches.ca](http://www.councilofchurches.ca)

All Scripture quotations in this document are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

## INVITATION FOR PRAYER AND REFLECTION

We invite you to join The Canadian Council of Churches (the Council) in praying for a healthy and peaceful democratic process.

Federal elections provide an opportunity for people of faith to reconsider what their faith commitments have to do with Canadian public life. Faith can provide an enduring vision of hope, a penetrating perspective on justice for all, and deep convictions about community, care for others, a love for creation, solidarity, and service. We need the vision, perspective, and convictions of people of faith to move us beyond partisan promises and postures to genuine solidarity and service with all people and the whole earth. Issues of concern before us are both national and international in scope.

The two years since Canada's 2019 federal election have witnessed significant regional, national, and global developments that call for careful prayer and reflection.

Nationally, it has been devastating, heartbreaking, and traumatic to hear of more than 1,300 unmarked graves at the sites of several former residential schools. The search for more continues. This has renewed and amplified calls to work for healing and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

The murder of George Floyd, along with many other incidents in Canada and beyond, has called attention to anti-Black racism and other expressions of systemic racism. The Council has been supportive of the United Nations Decade for Peoples of African Descent and is prioritizing anti-Black racism and anti-racism efforts in the 2021-24 Triennium.

Globally, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its [latest report](#) on August 9, 2021, which summarizes the latest information from climate science and encouraging action to address the dangers of climate change. For Christians, this report encourages diligence and urgency in living out the ongoing call to care for God's beautiful world and to live in respectful relationship with the whole of creation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has painfully disrupted every aspect of life: personal, public, social, economic, and religious. It has revealed our global interdependence, highlighted existing inequities in all aspects of life, and forced reflection on the meaning of what is "essential" and "normal." The remarkably fast development of COVID-19 vaccines has been accompanied by a disappointing disparity in vaccine access. While approximately 65% of Canada's population has been fully vaccinated at the time of this writing, in Africa less than 10% are fully vaccinated.

In May, the Council's Governing Board engaged in conversations on "preparing for a new normal" in the Canadian context. Opening biblical reflections by Council President Das Sydney as well as talks by the Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne and Sr. Sue Wilson informed these conversations. Video recordings worth watching [are available here](#).

The Council offers this guide as a source of reflection for all participating in Canada's democratic process. Emerging from shared work and reflection over many years, the Council has identified the priority issues listed here. Each priority issue includes sample questions you can ask of candidates, then lists resources and links where you can learn more. You may use this resource to:

- **pray for Canada**, its leaders, and the election process;
- **think through** your own election priorities;
- **call a group** together to prepare for meetings with candidates;
- **organize** and **participate** in all-candidates meetings in your riding;

- **go deeper** into issues you care about and work on them with others;
- **ask questions** of your representatives and candidates for office; and
- **guide you** as you cast your ballot.

The good news of the gospel and all that it implies are not meant to be kept under a shade, hidden away, restricted to being a personal and private affair. Join with your family and community to work through the issues you care about deeply and be sure to vote.

Here is a prayer in which we can all share:

*God of love and hope, we pray for a healthy and peaceful democratic process.*

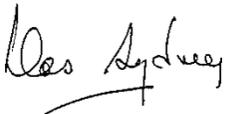
*We give thanks for each candidate, willing to offer their vision, gifts, and service for consideration for leadership in Canadian public life.*

*We pray for justice and peace throughout Canada; for the stewardship and care of our planet and all the people in it.*

*We give you thanks for your gifts of Christ, Community and Compassion to support us in faith and witness.*

*Bless us with your Holy Spirit to guide our reflections, actions, and decisions; and to energize our work for healing and reconciliation before, during, and after this federal election. Amen.*

In Christ's abundant love,



The Rev. Dr. Das Sydney  
President, The Canadian Council of  
Churches



The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Schmidt  
Associate Secretary: Intercultural  
Leadership; Justice and Peace

With gratitude to the Election Guide Writing Group and in consultation with the Governing Board Executive Committee of The Canadian Council of Churches.

September 2021

## RECONCILIATION

In 1987 many of Canada's Christian churches called for the recognition and guarantee of the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determination and to be consulted on resource development projects on their territories. They reaffirmed their commitments in 2007 with [A New Covenant: Towards the Constitutional Recognition and Protection of Aboriginal Self-Government in Canada](#).

In 2015 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools concluded by issuing 94 Calls to Action and lifting up the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as a framework for reconciliation.

In 2019, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls released its final report revealing "persistent and deliberate human and Indigenous rights violations and abuses as the root cause behind staggering rates of violence."

2021 saw the passage of Bill C-15, an Act respecting UNDRIP.

Testimonials to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission told of unmarked graves at residential schools. In 2021 these graves came more fully into public awareness.

### Questions for candidates

How will you and your party work to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)?

How will you and your party work to implement the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission? How will you and your party respond to the findings and recommendations of the *Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*?

### Resources

In 2021 the General Secretary of The Canadian Council of Churches [wrote to the Prime Minister of Canada](#) noting the passage of Bill C-15 and looking forward to the development of an action plan to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Also in 2021, the President and the General Secretary [released a statement on the unmarked graves at residential schools](#).

In 2015 The Canadian Council of Churches, church leaders, and other faith leaders drafted and signed "[On Promoting Climate Justice and Ending Poverty in Canada: Faith Communities in Canada Speak Out](#)." The content is still relevant today.

In 2014 The Canadian Council of Churches and the leaders of member churches together offered an [Expression of Reconciliation](#) during the Edmonton National Event of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

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### MICAH 6:8:

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.*

## RACISM

Racial discrimination and the perpetuation of white supremacy impact the lives of persons in Canada who are Black, Indigenous, or people of colour (BIPOC) in multiple, often-intersecting ways. BIPOC persons are over-represented in the prison and child welfare systems; they face continued discrimination in housing, employment, and education, and experience violence and harassment at greatly elevated rates.

Racism is a barrier to the full participation of all God's children in our shared society. It denies the dignity with which God endows all persons. It separates us from one another. Christians are called to work to dismantle racism in our congregations and denominations as well as in our wider communities.

In 2018, the Government of Canada formally recognized the International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD) and in 2021, parliament unanimously recognized August 1 as Emancipation Day in Canada. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report and 94 Calls to Action identified the impact of racism on Indigenous communities. The Government of Canada has also recognized the harm of anti-Semitism, anti-Asian racism, and racism against other groups in Canada.

### Questions for candidates

How will you and your party create equitable opportunities for Canadians who are Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC)?

How will you and your party address systemic inequities that result in negative outcomes for BIPOC persons in Canada?

### Resources

In June 2020, the President and General Secretary of The Canadian Council of Churches issued the statement "[A Recommitment to Recognize and Combat Racism, Discrimination, and Unearned Privilege.](#)"

In 2020, the Canadian Council of Churches hosted "[A Cross-Canada Conversation: 'Recognition, Justice, and Development: Peoples of African Descent and Canadian Churches.'](#)"

At its November 2020 meeting, the Governing Board of the Council approved the International Decade for People of African Descent in principle and mandated its bodies to integrate the goals of this Decade (recognition, justice and development) into program priorities, with anti-racism and anti-Black Racism as priorities for the 2021-2024 Triennium. Resources about the Decade produced by the Council and others [can be found here.](#)

[The Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racism Network](#) and the [Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning \(FILL\)](#) have long term and active commitments to education and transformation for addressing racism and becoming a just intercultural community.

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### 2 CORINTHIANS 13:11:

*Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.*

## POVERTY

Poverty, and the fear of poverty, affects many in Canada. One in seven Canadians is currently living in poverty. That means 4.9 million Canadians struggle to meet their most basic needs every day. Poverty rates are higher among Indigenous and elderly populations as well as in single-parent families and with workers in precarious jobs, many of whom are people of colour. Inequalities of all kinds have become more evident due to COVID-19 and a Guaranteed Livable Income is one response that could provide a stable base for a dignified life.

Christians love their neighbours by countering the scarcity, vulnerability, and fear with actions that provide basic needs and community. We can also work for public policies that transform our country into a place of abundance, resilience, and trust.

### Questions for candidates

Canada has a federal [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#). What will you and your party do to advance and strengthen the current federal strategy and ensure it is effective?

Canada has a national [Housing Strategy](#). What will you and your party do to advance and strengthen the current federal strategy and ensure it is effective?

Recovering from COVID-19 provides a unique opportunity in Canada to address long-standing injustices. How will your and your party's post-COVID policies centre on and be shaped by the experiences of the most oppressed and marginalized communities in Canada?

### Resources

The Council's May 2021 Governing Board meeting included a session [Preparing for a New Normal: A Vision for a Just and Caring Canada](#).

In 2019 the Council's Commission on Justice and Peace released [Healing Poverty](#). This reflection and suggestion action guide is offered for communities of faith to engage in dialogue and action for a faithful response to overcoming poverty in Canada. In 2021 the Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning hosted a webinar: [The Canadian Churches, Poverty, and Intercultural Analysis](#).

In 2015 The Canadian Council of Churches, church leaders, and other faith leaders drafted and signed "[On Promoting Climate Justice and Ending Poverty in Canada | Faith Communities in Canada Speak Out](#)."

In 2009 The Canadian Council of Churches was among the first to endorse the [Dignity for All](#) campaign for a poverty-free Canada.

In 2007 The Canadian Council of Churches and all its member church leaders [wrote to the Prime Minister](#) about ending poverty in Canada.

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### PROVERBS 14:31:

*Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but those who are kind to the needy honor him.*

## CLIMATE

The 2021 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns that limiting global warming to close to 1.5 degrees Celsius or even 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels “will be beyond reach” in the next two decades without immediate, rapid, and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change is now affecting every continent, region and ocean on Earth, and every facet of the weather. Since 1970, global surface temperatures have risen faster than in any other 50-year period over the past 2,000 years.

These changes are a threat to ecosystems, food production, and to the sustainability of human communities. Climate change unjustly and disproportionately affects vulnerable populations. This includes women and girls, and those who are poor and marginalized in Canada and in the global south.

In Canada, reducing greenhouse gas emissions will impact sectors of the economy and regions of Canada differently. This will require attention to creating alternative employment and shifting local economies.

As Christians, we have a responsibility to care for our neighbours (Matthew 25) and to be diligent caretakers of this beautiful planet God has blessed us with (Genesis 1:26–28). This includes being aware of how climate change adversely affects all God’s creation including people living around the world.

### Questions for candidates

How will you work to ensure Canadian public policy leads us to meet and surpass the Paris Accord emissions targets and do our part to keep global warming below a 1.5 degree Celsius rise in global average temperatures?

What is your and your party’s plan to establish more stringent and ambitious greenhouse gas emission targets?

How will you and your party work to invest in a just transition to a fair, inclusive, green economy?

Will you and your party commit equal support for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in the global south?

### Resources

For Easter and Earth Day 2019, church leaders recorded [a video](#) for the love of all creation, for the love of the Creator. Currently, many Canadian faith communities are participating in the [For the Love of Creation](#) campaign.

In 2015 The Canadian Council of Churches, church leaders, and other faith leaders drafted and signed [On Promoting Climate Justice and Ending Poverty in Canada | Faith Communities in Canada Speak Out](#). The content is still relevant today.

The Arctic perspective on climate is crucial for Canada and for Canadians. For a view from the North, see the 2015 [Storforsen appeal](#).

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### PSALM 24:1:

*The earth is the LORD’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.*

## PEACE AND DISARMAMENT

The so-called [Doomsday Clock](#), a metaphor established by the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* to illustrate how close the world is to human-made global catastrophe, is currently set to 100 seconds before midnight. The rationale for eliminating nuclear weapons rests in the possibility that a catastrophe could occur, by accident or design, that would likely involve more powerful bombs than those used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Until all nuclear weapons are eliminated, there remains an entirely preventable risk of disaster.

In recent years, renewed attention to the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has been both a catalyst and rallying point for a growing number of states and international civil society organizations. The widespread and long-term devastation that even a limited nuclear-weapons exchange poses to ecosystems, the global economy, and human society could end human civilization and all life. Complete nuclear disarmament is the only certain way to avoid such a humanitarian catastrophe. Yet Canada has offered only lukewarm support to the new humanitarian campaign to ban nuclear weapons through the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

### Questions for candidates

Will you and your party pursue a policy leading to the Government of Canada acceding to the international Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)?

How will you and your party work to ensure that Canada takes a lead in international diplomacy to ban and then eliminate nuclear weapons within the next decade?

### Resources

In 2019 The Canadian Council of Churches and the leaders of member churches [wrote to the Prime Minister and the leaders of all political parties](#) to reaffirm our longstanding call to eliminate nuclear weapons around the world and call on the Government of Canada to end its opposition to the UN's Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Project Ploughshares, the peace research institute of The Canadian Council of Churches, has long been a leading advocate in Canada and around the globe for [nuclear disarmament](#).

In 2018 The Canadian Council of Churches adopted [Principles of Peace](#). These *Principles* articulate the shared witness and testimony of The Canadian Council of Churches. Peace is central to the mission and identity of all member churches and the heart of ecumenism.

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### ISAIAH 2:4:

*He shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.*

## SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Commercial sexual exploitation is a harmful reality for people in communities across Canada.

For decades, trafficking for sexual purposes has been a widespread and devastating reality for many women in Canada. Canada's *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act (PCEPA)* is based on the success of the "Equality Model" in Sweden and recognizes the inherent violence, exploitation, and racism of the sex industry. PCEPA shifts the criminal liability from those selling their own sexual services to the buyers and pimps.

Indigenous women and girls are grossly and tragically over-represented in commercial sexual exploitation due to their vulnerability in Canada. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls formally released its final report on June 3, 2019, which included the finding that Canada's treatment of cases has amounted to a genocide and issued 231 calls for justice.

### Questions for candidates

How will you and your party support the approach of the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act (PCEPA)*?

How will you and your party respond to the 231 calls for justice named by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls as well as its finding that Canada's treatment of missing and murdered cases has amounted to a genocide?

### Resources

In April 2021 the Sexual Exploitation in Canada Working Group of The Canadian Council of Churches [wrote to federal ministers](#) to urge them to uphold the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act (PCEPA)*.

In 2016, the Human Trafficking in Canada Working Group of The Canadian Council of Churches [wrote to federal ministers](#) and called their attention to the link between sexual exploitation and missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. It called for the causes and consequences of gendered, racialized, and sexualized violence to be examined and included in the National Inquiry.

In 2014, the Human Trafficking in Canada Working Group of The Canadian Council of Churches submitted [a brief](#) to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights regarding the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act*.

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### LUKE 4:18, 19:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*

## REFUGEES

Today, one in every ninety-five people on Earth has been forced to leave their homes. War, persecution, community violence, and climate change have made it impossible for millions to remain in their communities, prompting them to seek safety and security far from home. Refugees are not able to protect themselves in the current health crisis. And they face additional economic and legal restrictions, because COVID-19 has resulted in stringent lockdowns, economic exclusion, and stalled resettlement. The pandemic has made international action on refugee assistance even more urgent.

According to the UN High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), there are now over 82.4 million people forcibly displaced, and 26.4 million of these are now refugees. Canada welcomed 30,000 refugees in 2019 but continues to bar the way to those who seek asylum via the United States of America. The Council and others continued to question Safe Third country legislation but have not been successful thus far.

From the Jubilee story in Leviticus to Paul's letter to the Romans, the biblical call to extend hospitality to strangers is unmistakable. How will we continue to advocate for extending that hospitality through Canadian refugee policies?

### Questions for candidates

How will you and your party guarantee that all asylum seekers, refugee claimants, and refugees who arrive in Canada are treated fairly and protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms once they arrive in Canada?

How will you and your party work globally with others to address the causes of displacement abroad?

### Resources

In 2021, Project Ploughshares produced "[The impact of COVID-19 on refugees.](#)"

In May 2017 the Governing Board of the Council voted to challenge the US – Canada Safe Third Country Agreement under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Read more about the [Charter challenge on our website.](#)

To learn more about the broader global context of migration and forced displacement, visit the resources available at [Project Ploughshares.](#)

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### HEBREWS 13:1–2:

*Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.*

## PALLIATIVE CARE

As Christians in Canada, we support just access for all to dignified, quality palliative care.

Serious inequities exist in access to specialized palliative care. For example, there are differences between urban and rural settings, there are variations in care standards between provinces and there are ongoing challenges to providing health care for more remote Indigenous communities.

Christians in Canada view providing dignified, quality palliative care as an intrinsic human responsibility toward the suffering person and their family. Palliative care places the priority on the worth and dignity of the whole person and their biological, emotional, physical, environmental, social, and spiritual needs, wherever they may be in Canada.

According to the World Health Organization, palliative care:

- *improves* the quality of life of patients and their families;
- *includes* early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other physical, psychosocial, and spiritual problems;
- *provides* relief from pain and other distressing symptoms;
- *affirms* life and regards dying as a normal process;
- *intends* neither to hasten nor postpone death;
- *integrates* the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care;
- *offers* a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death;
- *provides* a support system to help the family cope during the patient's illness and in their own bereavement;
- *uses* a team-based approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counselling, if indicated;
- *enhances* the quality of life, and may also positively influence the course of illness;
- and is applicable early in the course of illness in conjunction with other therapies that are intended to prolong life.

### Questions for candidates

What specific steps will you and your party take to ensure that high quality palliative care is available to all Canadians?

What is your and your party's position with respect to ensuring universal access to palliative care, as defined by the World Health Organization, in Canada?

### Resources

In 2016 the Commission on Faith and Witness of The Canadian Council of Churches issued a [Statement of Support for Universal Access to Palliative Care in Canada](#).

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### MATTHEW 25:35–36:

*I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.*

## GLOBAL ACCESS TO VACCINES

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact Canada. Canada has procured vaccines for its residents and a significant number of them have been vaccinated, which is understood to be the most effective way to combat the virus.

Yet COVID-19 continues to spread in many countries, causing a devastating number of deaths and levels of human suffering while also overwhelming often-underfunded and sometimes precarious health systems. The ongoing spread is also producing new variants with the potential to evade our vaccines and put us all back at risk. The pandemic will not end in Canada until it ends everywhere, and that means getting enough vaccines to every country, quickly. Dr. Tedros, the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), has called for higher-income countries to support a massive push to vaccinate a significant portion of every country's population by September 2021. Much higher global vaccination rates are needed to end the pandemic.

Most of the world's wealthier countries, including Canada, have committed to provide financial support to, and share vaccines through, COVAX, the global COVID-19 vaccine distribution initiative. While an important contribution, these commitments are not yet enough to end the pandemic.

### Questions for candidates

What is your and your party's plan to provide COVID-19 vaccines, funding for their distribution, and support for health systems for lower income countries?

How do you and your party plan to meet and exceed Canada's commitments to COVAX, the global COVID-19 vaccine distribution initiative?

### Resources

In 2021, as a Vaccine Champion for the World Council of Churches, the Council's General Secretary, Pastor Peter Noteboom, issued a [letter of encouragement](#) toward vaccine equity.

In a historic joint pastoral statement released in 2020, the Council joined the World Council of Churches and other Regional Ecumenical Organizations to [affirm the urgency of standing together to protect life](#) amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

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### PHILIPPIANS 2:4:

*Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.*

## RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

In its 2016 “Statement on Religious Freedom,” the Council affirmed that “[i]n the Canadian context, to be secular means to remain pluralistic. Secularism includes freedom of belief, both in one’s private and public life. Thus, there should be no official religion in this country, but neither should there be any form of official atheism.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has painfully disrupted every aspect of life including religious practices, worship, funerals, and acts of service for vulnerable persons. While some activities have necessarily been suspended in the name of public health, faith communities have adapted in various ways to find ways to care for those in need and encourage everyone during anxious times. Some faith communities have collaborated with public health initiatives in sharing accurate information, providing language translation, and promoting trust in public health practices.

In service to a variety of vulnerable communities, faith communities continue to operate as one expression of the charitable sector. As we prepare for the “new normal” in a post-pandemic world, faith communities feel called to promote human rights and to contribute to public policy dialogue as we seek to develop a more just and caring Canada.

### Questions for candidates

How will you and your party work to respect and protect the fundamental right to freedom of expression and freedom of religion across Canada?

During the pandemic, what have you learned about the role of faith communities and the charitable sector in Canadian society?

How will you and your party promote the freedom of belief in both private and public life?

How will you and your party act against intolerance and expressions of hate?

### Resources

In 2016, responding to the Charter of Values debate in Quebec, the Governing Board of The Canadian Council of Churches adopted a [Statement on Religious Freedom](#).

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### I CORINTHIANS 13:8:

*Love never ends.*

## PUBLIC HEALTHCARE

Churches have been involved in the provision of health care services in Canada since the mid-seventeenth century. The *Augustines Hospitalières* founded the *Hôtel-Dieu de Québec* in 1639. Many other religious groups comprised especially of religious women and Christian laypersons have been in the forefront of every effort against disease that this country has known.

Led by the Baptist Minister Tommy Douglas, churches played an important role in advocating for public health care for all through the adoption of the Medical Care Act in 1966.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has increased the importance of universal access to health care and simultaneously placed unprecedented strain on those systems. Gaps and barriers to access have been highlighted as Canada continues to adapt to this virus.

The pandemic has also seen a significant increase in the number of fatal overdoses due to opioid use, worsening the ongoing public health crisis. From April to December 2020, suspected overdose-related deaths increased by 89% over the same period in 2019.

Concern for mental health has also grown in response to the pandemic. Individuals, families, and communities have experienced increased stress and uncertainty as they navigate changes to their routines and relationships, however many Canadians do not have access to appropriate mental health services.

### Questions for candidates

How will you and your party work to preserve and expand the universal access, comprehensiveness, and portability of our public health care system across Canada?

How will you and your party incorporate the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic into the public health care system going forward?

How will you and your party address the opioid crisis in Canada?

How will you and your party ensure equitable access to mental health care across Canada?

### Resources

In March 2020 Canadian church leaders joined leaders from other religious traditions to issue a common message to all who call Canada home about the need for [Hope, Gratitude and Solidarity](#) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Ecumenical Health Care Network of The Canadian Council of Churches contributed an ethical voice to the ongoing dialogue and debate about the future of health care in Canada. From 2001 to 2006, the Network engaged churches in ongoing support for the common good through education and advocacy—within the churches, in the broader community, and by engagement with government as appropriate. In 2014 some key resources [were republished](#).

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### I CORINTHIANS 12:21–22; 26:

*The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable... If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.*

## WHO WE ARE

**The Canadian Council of Churches** responds to Christ's call for unity and peace, seeks Christ's truth with an affection for diversity, and acts in love through prayer, dialogue, and witness to the gospel.

The Canadian Council of Churches is a broad and inclusive ecumenical body, now representing 26 member churches including Anglican; Eastern and Roman Catholic; Evangelical; Free Church; Eastern and Oriental Orthodox; and Historic Protestant traditions. Together these member churches comprise 85% of the Christians in Canada.\* The Canadian Council of Churches was founded in 1944.

## TRADITIONAL TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that The Canadian Council of Churches and its members live on the historic territory of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples of this land.

*"As Christian communities we take seriously the challenge of reconciliation, to deepen bonds of friendship and solidarity, to strive to "walk together" in the present and future, and to consult with you about how we can take that journey together." (Expression of Reconciliation, 2014)*

Website: [www.councilofchurches.ca](http://www.councilofchurches.ca)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CCC.CCE](https://www.facebook.com/CCC.CCE)

Twitter: [@CCC\\_CCE](https://twitter.com/CCC_CCE)

Instagram: [@cdncouncilofchurches](https://www.instagram.com/cdncouncilofchurches)

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## To carry out its mission, The Council hosts and coordinates the following:

- [Commission on Faith and Witness](#)
- [Commission on Justice and Peace](#)
- [Project Ploughshares](#)
- [Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning \(FILL\)](#)
- [Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racism Network \(CEARN\)](#)
- [Sexual Exploitation in Canada Working Group](#)
- [Faith and Life Sciences Reference Group \(FLSRG\)](#)
- [Christian Interfaith Reference Group](#)
- [Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#)

Project Ploughshares is the peace research institute of The Canadian Council of Churches and works with churches, governments and civil society, in Canada and abroad, to advance policies and actions to prevent war and armed violence and build peace.

Website: [www.ploughshares.ca](http://www.ploughshares.ca)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/pages/Project-Ploughshares/206928856016444](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Project-Ploughshares/206928856016444)

Twitter: [@ploughshares\\_ca](https://twitter.com/ploughshares_ca)

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\*drawn from data provided by the Statistics Canada 2011 survey.

*The title of this resource comes from Philipians 2:4.*