



# HUMANIST CANADA

This report provides reports from Humanist  
Canada's committees and programs from  
January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025

2025 Annual  
Report

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# President's Report

## A Year of Growth and Transformation

It is my privilege to present the President's Report for Humanist Canada for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2025. This past year has been one of steady progress and meaningful transformation. Our work continues to be expressed through the ways we accompany people in their lives, through ceremony, community, and connection.



## World Humanist Congress 2026

One of our most significant initiatives in 2025 was the unexpected relocation of the World Humanist Congress 2026 to Ottawa. Humanist Canada partnered with Humanists International to host this global gathering, and our Board enthusiastically endorsed the decision.

Planning began under an accelerated timeline and continues into 2026. The Congress theme, *Humanism as Resistance*, reflects a global moment in which the values of reason, human rights, and dignity are increasingly being tested.

We anticipate welcoming over 500 Humanists from around the world. This Congress represents both a milestone event and a defining opportunity to elevate Humanist Canada's voice on the national and global stage.

## Leadership Transitions

Humanist Canada experienced important leadership changes in 2025. We both welcomed and bade farewell to Melissa Gutierrez, our first General Manager, who stepped down for personal reasons. Melissa helped strengthen our operational foundation, and we remain grateful for her contributions. We were also pleased to welcome Janalee Morris as our new Executive Director. Janalee quickly assumed her role with clarity and confidence, earning the respect of colleagues and stakeholders while helping to shape the organization's next phase of growth.

## Expanding Our Voice: Podcasts and Public Engagement

Humanist Canada continues to extend our public voice and invite broader participation in Humanist conversations.

- *The Voice of Canadian Humanism*, with over 30 episodes, amplifying Humanist perspectives and reaching a growing national audience

- *Choice Chat*, launched by the Morgentaler Committee on June 18, 2025, engages critical discussions on autonomy and reproductive rights

## **Ceremonies and Life Celebrations**

Our officiant program remains a cornerstone of Humanist Canada’s public presence. Across the country, officiants provide meaningful, personalized ceremonies that mark life’s most important transitions.

These ceremonies reflect the values at the heart of Humanism—authenticity, dignity, and care—and continue to deepen our impact in communities nationwide as one of our most visible expressions of Humanism.

## **Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care**

Humanist Canada’s Chaplaincy Program continues to evolve. We now have our second Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain in training and have expanded our network of civilian chaplains across a range of settings. Increasingly, chaplains are also available to support members through life transitions—offering compassionate, non-religious care grounded in meaning and presence.

## **Community, Education, and Engagement**

Throughout 2025, we fostered spaces for dialogue, learning, and connection through local initiatives, online gatherings, and collaborative programming.

We have also seen a significant and encouraging increase in student membership. In response, we are developing programming that reflects their needs and aspirations, recognizing the importance of engaging the next generation of Humanists.

## **Board of Directors**

The leadership of Humanist Canada is entrusted to a dedicated Board of Directors. I extend my sincere appreciation to: Alex Howard, Anne Marie Tapp, Daniel McPhee, David Fraser, Jackie Nemni, Karamjeet Dhillon, Louis O’Reilly, Paul Sparks, and Sassan Sanei. Their insight and commitment continue to guide the organization with integrity and care.

Finally, to our members, volunteers, partners, and supporters: thank you. Your commitment brings this work to life and continues to shape Humanism's growth and presence across Canada. It’s work for which we can all be proud.

I am truly honoured to serve as your President, and I'm excited about the future of Humanist Canada. Your feedback, ideas, and support are invaluable to us, so please don't hesitate to reach out.

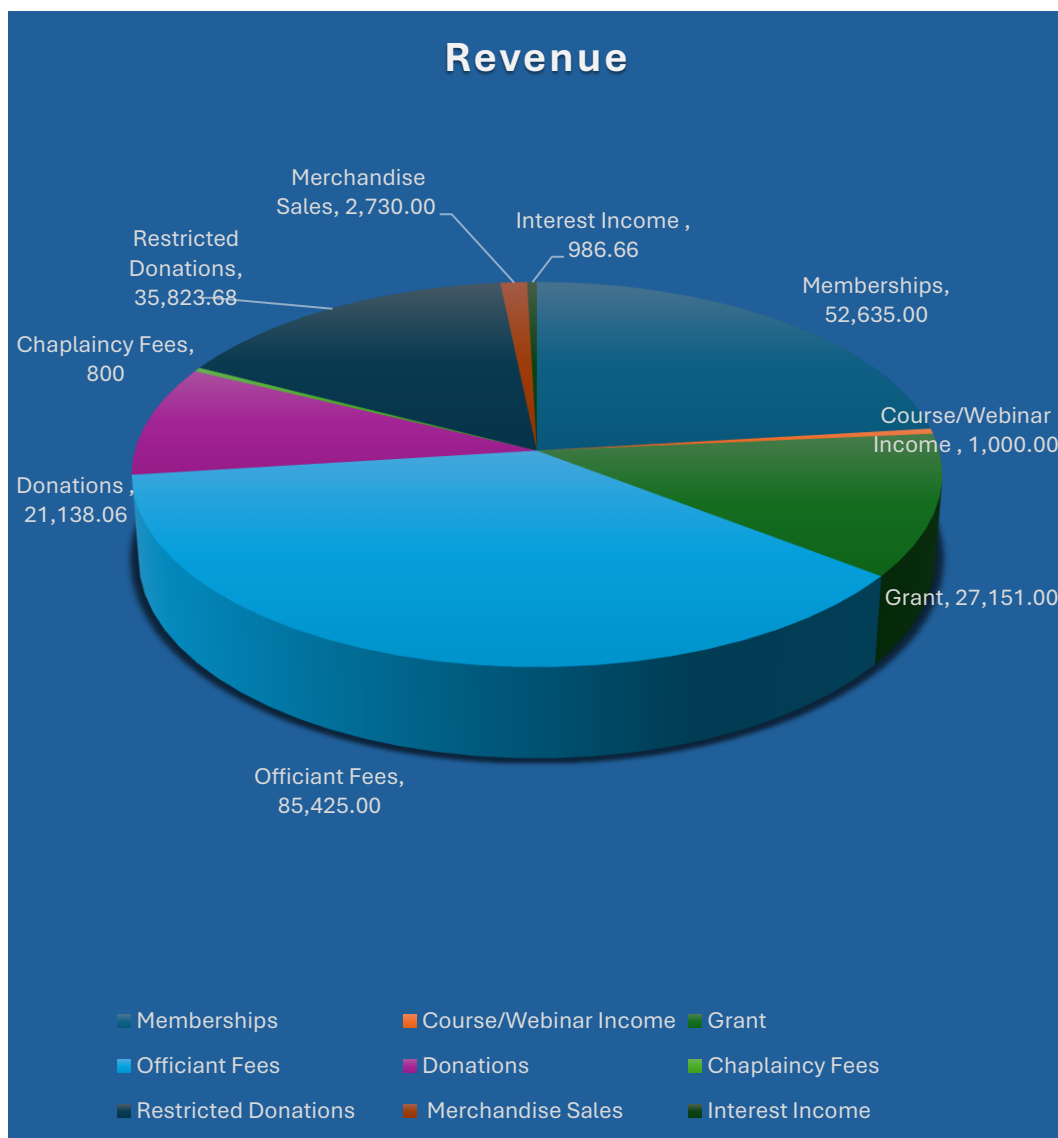
# Treasurer's Report

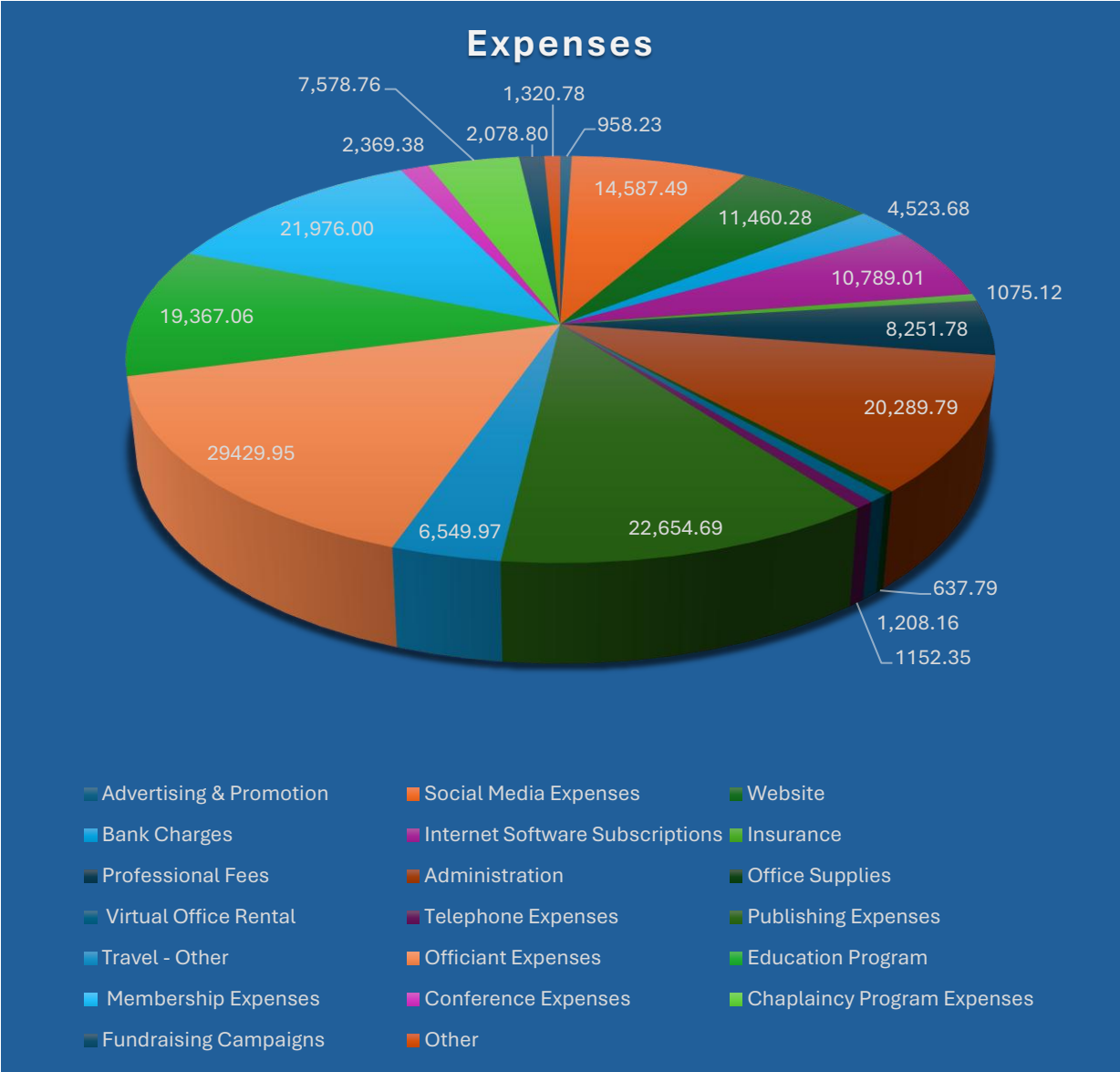
Prepared by Martin Frith and Janalee Morris

\*Please note: complete details are in the Financial Report in the AGM Package

We were pleased to work with Kriens-LaRose, LLP Chartered Professional Accountants to prepare our 2025 Financial Statements.

This year, we continued to build our financial stability, resulting in a surplus that we will reinvest as we continue to create a sustainable future for Humanist Canada.





Excess of Revenue over Expense in 2025 is \$41,512.06

# Fundraising Report

*Prepared by Lee Burton*



## **A Year That Moved Us Forward**

The 2025 year-end campaign was the strongest in Humanist Canada's history. Our "Why Humanism Now?" campaign surpassed its \$20,000 goal and reflected something more than financial success. It reflected a community that believes deeply in what we are building together. Donors didn't just give more; they gave with greater intention, and many took the time to tell us why. The themes they shared, reason, ethics, community, social justice, secularism, are the same values that drive everything we do. That alignment between our mission and our donors' motivations is something to build on.

## **Planting the Seeds of a Lasting Legacy**

One of the most meaningful developments of 2025 was the launch of Humanist Canada's first formal Legacy Giving Program, in partnership with Epilogue Wills. This program represents an important initial step toward something we have long aspired to: a lasting Humanist legacy that outlives any single campaign or fiscal year.

Within months of launch, multiple members pledged estate gifts totaling \$800,000 to support Humanist Canada's future. These donors gave quietly and anonymously, asking for nothing in return. They simply want this work to continue. That kind of commitment, the decision to include Humanist Canada in your Will, is among the most profound expressions of trust a supporter can offer, and it sets a powerful precedent for the years ahead.

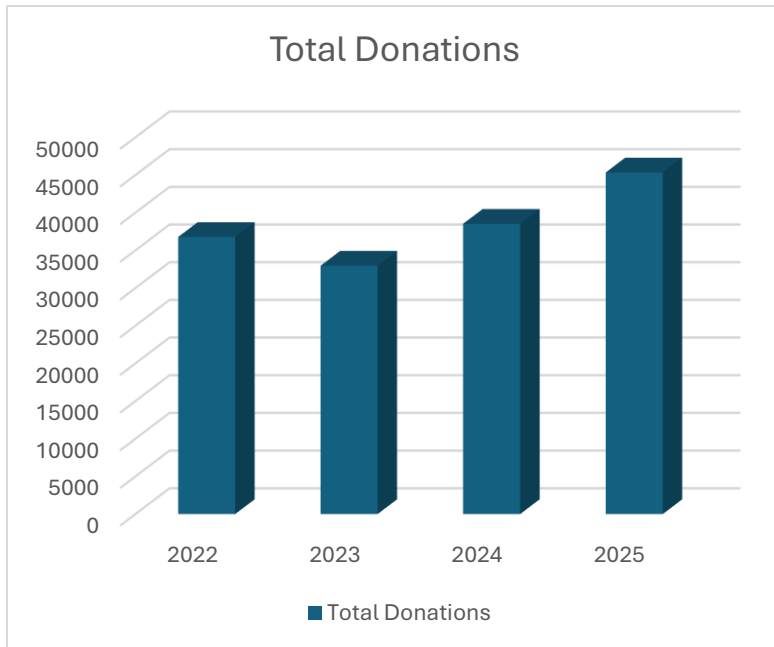
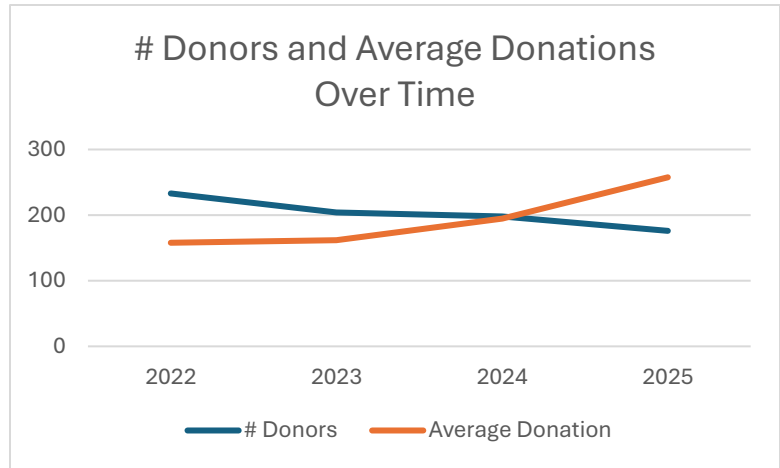
## **Laying the Foundation for Strategic Growth**

With Board approval, Humanist Canada also launched a disciplined, restricted grant fundraising pilot in 2025, establishing three mission-aligned program streams: Living Humanism, focused on public education and ethical dialogue; Humanist Voices, advancing human rights and secular freedoms; and Organizational Capacity, building the internal infrastructure to sustain our growth. A rigorous qualification framework is now in place to guide funder research and ensure we only pursue opportunities where there is genuine alignment and organizational readiness.

The foundation has been carefully built. What comes next is focused, strategic execution.

We will pursue all three restricted program streams concurrently in the year ahead. At the same time, we know that donors, relationships, and the external landscape will inevitably surface one stream as the priority. We are paying attention to those signals and will move decisively when the moment calls for it.

To take this work to the next level, we are actively seeking major donors willing to make gifts of \$20,000 or more in support of these programs. Gifts at this level have the power to meaningfully expand Humanist Canada's reach, strengthen our voice in public life, and secure the kind of sustained impact our mission demands. If that conversation interests you, we would welcome it.



### Thank You

None of this belongs to any one person. The results of 2025 are a collective achievement, the product of dedicated Board members, committed volunteers, staff, and donors who contributed their time, expertise, and financial resources to this organization. Every contribution, at every level, made a difference.

This is a success we share. And it is the foundation from which we move forward, together.

# Membership Report

Prepared by Paul Belyea

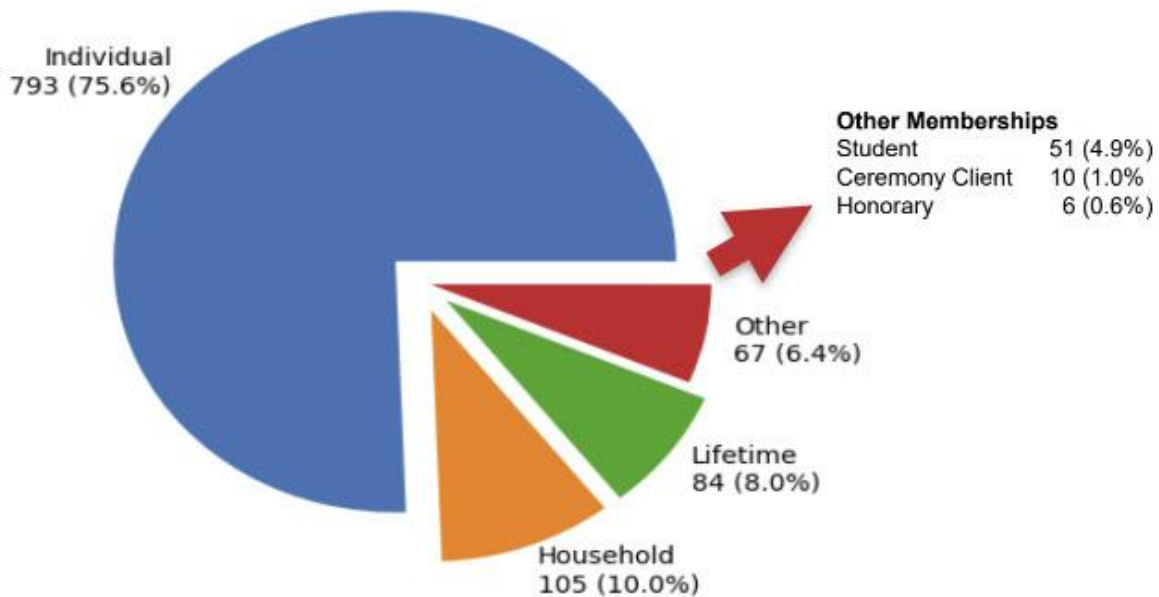


## Humanist Canada Membership: From Plateau to Possibility

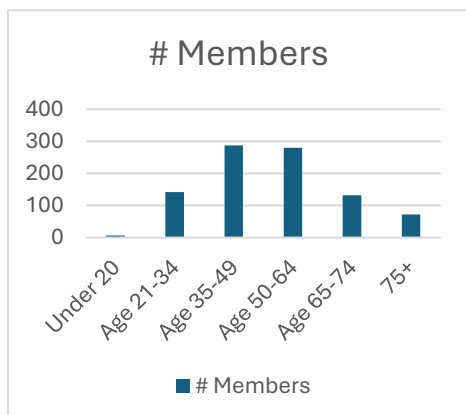
Humanist Canada has surpassed 1,050 members, breaking through a long-standing plateau. This milestone signals a transition from stability to intentional growth and movement-building.

Humanist Canada currently has members from every province and territory in Canada. This includes Individual, Household (and Household Sub-Member), Student, Ceremony Client, Affiliate Groups (and Sub-members), Honorary, International, Administrative, Lifetime Household and Lifetime Individual memberships.

**Membership Distribution by Type**  
Current Membership = 1050



## Age Ranges



Under 20	21-34	35-49	50-64	65-74	75+
6	142	287	280	132	72

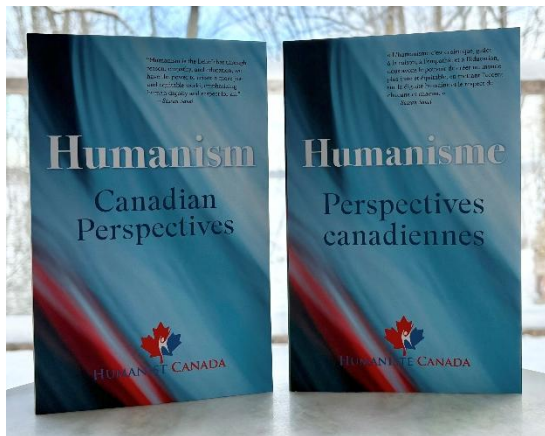
# Chaplaincy Committee Report

Prepared by Nicolas Bruzzone

Established in November 2020, the Humanist Chaplain Accreditation Program (HCAP) was created for the accreditation, governance, and oversight of Humanist Chaplains in Canada, so that they will be enabled to provide professionally relevant, legitimate, and trustworthy spiritual support to Canadians in various institutions and organizations.

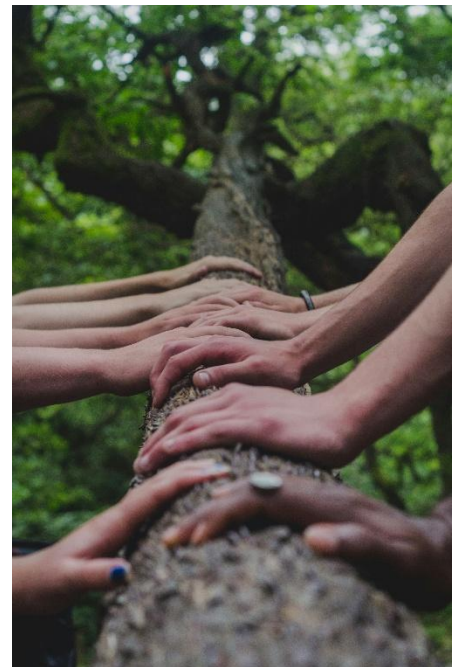


## Highlights



### Publication of Humanism: Canadian Perspectives with outstanding contributions by Marie-Claire Khadij.

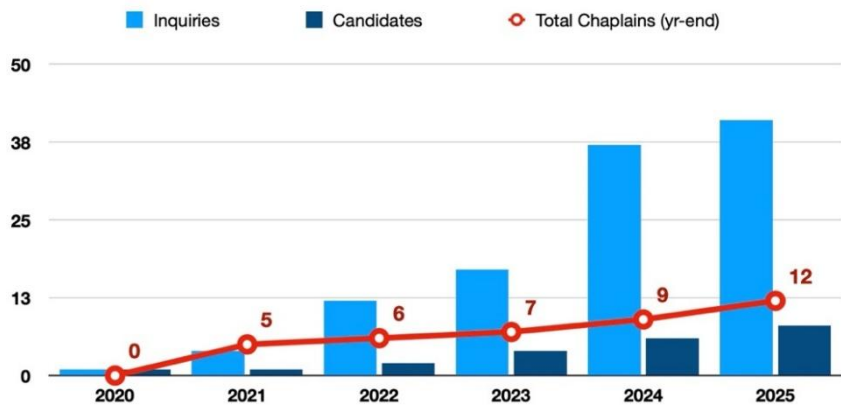
- Honed the intake process to use a Monday.com questionnaire that encourages membership and reduces engagement with unsuitable candidates.
- Transitioned HCCC meetings from Boardable to BoardPro.
- Adopted Circle community platform for Chaplain coordination and engagement.
- Planning event for chaplains in Ottawa 6-7 August, to coincide with World Humanist Congress.
- Chaplain Training Coordinator (Devin Mahnke) continues to provide essential support to Chaplain intake and training, workload increasing beyond 15 hrs/month some months.
- Minor updates to Humanist Chaplain Accreditation Program, published side-by-side bilingual version.



- Martin Frith attended events hosted by the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy (ICCMC), representing humanism in the CAF and engaging with leadership, including submission of a policy document advocating for more inclusive competency-based military chaplain recruiting.
- Monthly mentorship sessions continue to enable regular uptake of new potential candidates, with intake and training established on an annual cycle.

### Intake

Interest in humanist chaplaincy continues to build, although growth of chaplains remains small year-over-year due to slow enrolment process in CAF and unclear (or obstructed) path in other domains.



# Ceremonies and Officiant Program Committee Report

*Prepared by Ruth McGregor*



HCCOP committee members: Ric Glowienka, Nancy Kay, Christina Charles, Nancy Fretter, Catherine Knights, Kat Dimou and Chair, Ruth McGregor

- The Officiant Program continues to thrive and grow as an important part of Humanist Canada. Our officiants performed a total of 1719 ceremonies in 2025, including 1650 weddings, 57 end-of-life ceremonies, as well as child namings, vow renewals, Remembrance Day celebrations and Transgender Day of Remembrance ceremonies. The increasing demand for non-religious ceremonies reflects the growing acceptance and need for secular celebrations in Canadian society. We are both proud and honoured to meet this need by providing meaningful and personalized services.



- We are excited to welcome 22 new provincially licensed officiants in Ontario to the Humanist Canada team, even as we bid a fond farewell to three of our colleagues who recently retired. In 2025, we said goodbye to Melissa Gutierrez, who served as our General Manager, and we thank her for her dedication. We welcomed Janalee Morris in the beginning of 2026 as our new Executive Director. Janalee will take a more active role in the HCCOP, ensuring better integration and coordination of our services.
- Serving as Governing Official in 2025, Sassan Sanei manages the critical interface between the HCCOP and the Ontario Registrar General. Sassan ensures our program remains aligned with provincial licensing requirements, executing these responsibilities with a high degree of professionalism and technical capability.
- Nancy Kay continues to lead the Intake Subcommittee as Chair, overseeing a function that is vital to the recruitment and evaluation of new officiants. Her team's diligent approach to reviewing applications, assessing essays, and conducting interviews ensures that every prospective officiant aligns with our organization's values, and commitment to the growth of the officiant programme.

- Dan McLean Jr. continues to lead our Mentor Program, which supports new officiants during their first year of practice. Dan is responsible for matching mentors with new officiants, providing them with the guidance and support they need as they navigate their first year of practice.
- As Training Coordinator, Paul Belyea serves as the vital link between the HCCOP and our instructional team. Beyond overseeing candidate assessments and tracking progress, Paul is instrumental in the recruitment and development of new trainers, ensuring a high caliber of instruction across the board. His leadership provides essential continuity between training cycles, while his commitment to the refinement of our curriculum ensures the program remains robust, relevant, and aligned with evolving professional standards.
- The HCCOP committee continues to provide professional development of our members. We continue to host monthly Best Practice Chats, offering a platform for collaboration and fostering a sense of community. These discussions, along with interactions on our Facebook page, provide an avenue for questions, sharing of insights, and the exchange of ideas among officiants.
- Our conference in October of 2025 was held virtually, and the theme was Framework – Building and Strengthening Our Practice. We are very excited to be holding our annual conference this year in person, as 2026 marks the 30th anniversary of the Humanist Canada officiant programme in Ontario.
- The HCCOP committee meets monthly to review our policies, evaluate procedures and ensure the integrity and continued growth of the Officiant Program. The Officiant Program remains a vital part of Humanist Canada, and we are committed to its ongoing development to better serve our growing and diverse community.



# Morgentaler Committee Report

*Prepared by Ruth Henrich*



Over the past year, the Morgentaler Committee has continued its work in support of reproductive freedom, abortion access, and public education in Canada. The committee's activities have focused on creating accurate, accessible, and compassionate resources that help inform the public and reduce stigma around abortion and reproductive health care.

This year has been especially important for the committee because several long-developing ideas moved into more active stages of planning, production, and public engagement. The committee has worked to strengthen its role within Humanist Canada by building projects that combine advocacy, education, and practical information.

## Committee Mandate

The Morgentaler Committee exists to support reproductive rights and to promote informed, human-centred discussion about abortion and reproductive health. The committee's work is grounded in the view that abortion is health care, that access must be protected, and that public understanding matters.

The committee aims to:

- support abortion rights and reproductive justice in Canada;
- provide evidence-based public education;
- challenge stigma and misinformation;
- develop practical resources that help people understand access to care; and
- contribute to Humanist Canada's public voice on these issues.

## Major Activities and Accomplishments

### 1. Development and Launch of Choice Chat

The committee's most significant project this year has been the development of **Choice Chat**, a podcast that explores abortion, reproductive health, and rights in Canada. Choice Chat has been designed as an accessible and evidence-based platform that brings together information, lived experience, expert knowledge, and advocacy.

Over the past year, the committee has worked on many parts of this project, including:

- defining the purpose and tone of the podcast,
- building the brand and visual identity,
- planning episode series and topics,
- researching guests and developing interview questions,
- preparing host materials and episode maps,
- organizing production workflows, and
- supporting the technical side of recording, editing, and distribution.



This work has required sustained effort and collaboration. It represents a major step forward in the committee's capacity to create public-facing educational content.

## **2. Building Public Education Content**

A key part of the committee's efforts this year has been developing content that explains abortion in Canada clearly, accurately, and accessibly. Through Choice Chat and related planning, the committee has focused on topics such as:

- abortion access in Canada,
- the difference between legal rights and real-world access,
- provider experiences and barriers to care,
- abortion stigma,
- the impact of law and decriminalization,
- cultural and social influences on abortion attitudes, and
- reproductive justice more broadly.

This content is meant to support public understanding and to make complex issues easier to discuss without losing accuracy.

## **3. Strengthening the Morgentaler Committee's Public Presence**

The committee has also worked on improving its public-facing presence within Humanist Canada. This has included planning and drafting the committee's webpage to better reflect current priorities, projects, and values.

The goal of this work has been to make the committee's presence more active, more useful, and easier for the public to understand. It has also helped connect the committee's advocacy work with practical educational tools such as podcast episodes and public information materials.

## **4. Outreach and Communications Planning**

The committee has devoted substantial effort to communications and outreach. This has included:

- social media planning for Choice Chat,
- newsletter and promotional content,
- visual branding and design direction,
- ideas for campus and community outreach, and
- materials to help engage both general audiences and allied organizations.

This area of work reflects the committee's understanding that good information must be made visible and accessible. Public education is not only about producing content, but also about ensuring that people can find it, understand it, and use it.

## **Key Themes in the Committee's Work**

Several themes have shaped the committee's work over the past year. First, the committee has remained committed to an evidence-based approach. Across its projects, it has aimed to ensure that information is accurate, responsible, and rooted in the Canadian context.

Second, the committee has focused on accessibility. This means using language and formats that can reach a broad audience, including people who may not already be familiar with abortion policy, reproductive rights, or access issues.

Third, the committee has worked to challenge stigma. Many of its projects are based on the understanding that abortion is often surrounded by silence, shame, and misinformation. The committee has tried to respond to this by supporting open, respectful, and informed discussion.

Finally, the committee has placed value on practical usefulness. Rather than remaining at the level of general advocacy, it has worked to develop concrete tools and platforms to support learning, outreach, and access.

### **Challenges and Ongoing Work**

As with many committee-led initiatives, progress this year has required balancing ambition with available time and capacity. Building a podcast and strengthening outreach all take sustained effort. These projects also require coordination across writing, editing, design, research, and communications work.

The committee has made strong progress, but some work remains ongoing. Several initiatives are still in development and will continue into the coming year. This is not a sign of limited progress. Rather, it reflects the scale of the work and the care being taken to build these projects well.

### **Priorities for the Coming Year**

Looking ahead, the Morgentaler Committee plans to continue building on the foundation created this year. Priorities include:

- continuing the development and promotion of Choice Chat,
- expanding the committee's public education content,
- expanded marketing and social media presence,
- strengthening the Morgentaler Committee's web presence within Humanist Canada, and
- increasing outreach to broader audiences and aligned communities.

The committee also hopes to deepen its contribution to Humanist Canada by continuing to provide a strong, informed, and compassionate voice on reproductive rights and abortion access.

### **Conclusion**

This has been a year of meaningful development for the Morgentaler Committee. The committee has made significant progress in turning ideas into real projects, especially through the creation and advancement of Choice Chat. It has also worked to strengthen public education and improve the visibility of reproductive rights advocacy within Humanist Canada.

Taken together, this work has laid a strong foundation for future growth. The committee enters the coming year with clearer tools, stronger direction, and an expanding capacity to support informed public conversation about reproductive justice in Canada.

# Social Media Report

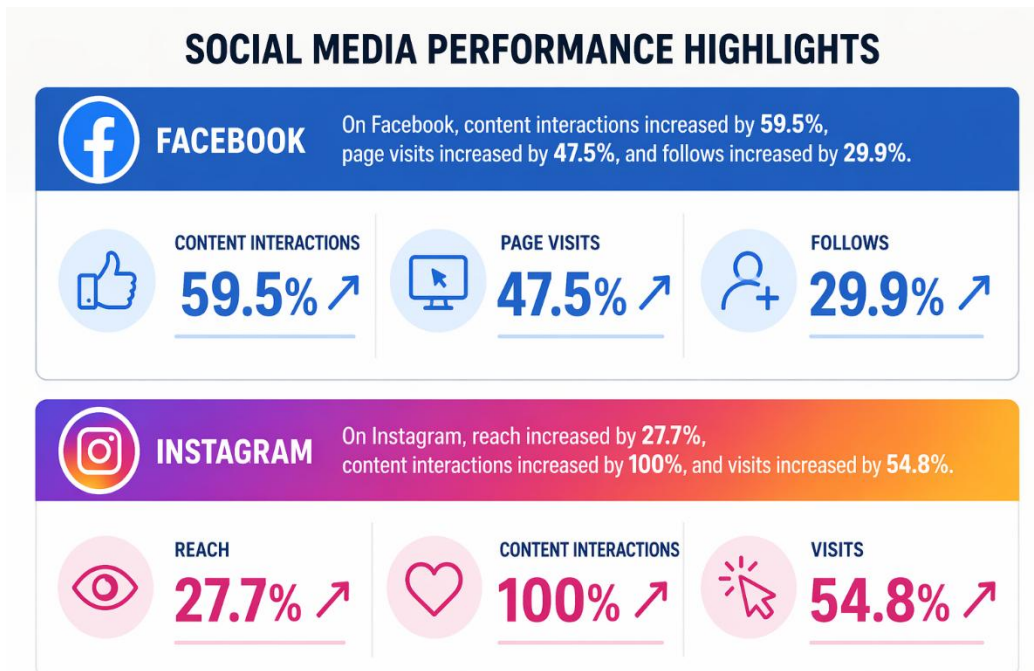
Prepared by Luis-Enrique Arrazola

Humanist Canada’s social media presence across Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn aims to engage existing officiants, chaplains, and members, while also raising awareness of the organization’s activities, programs, and events among new audiences and prospective members.



## Growth

- Our Facebook and Instagram platforms experienced a sizeable increase in performance compared to 2024.



- Facebook remains our largest and most impactful social media platform, with a total following of 6,680 followers and 438,963 content views through 2025.
- Our Instagram following reached 4,000 followers, marking a steady but substantial growth from our initial following of approximately 300 followers in the summer of 2022.

## Posts that Performed Well

- Quotes by world-renowned thinkers and humanists do particularly well as they speak to a more global humanist audience, expanding our social media reach beyond our core following. Using reach and views as barometers for post success, quotes by the likes of Kurt Vonnegut (which reached 36,855 users and garnered 47,182 views across

Facebook), Paul Kurtz (which reached 14,381 users and garnered 22,7726 views across Facebook), and Stephen Fry (which reached 4,445 users and garnered 7,273 views across Facebook) were some of our most successful.

- Social media audiences wanted to learn more about Steve Ghikadis’ inspiring and heartwarming book *Humanism from the Heart*. A multimedia post sharing rave reviews of Steve’s book reached 15,381 users and garnered 22,726 views across Facebook.
- Posts that place a general emphasis on humanist philosophy, such as our *Why Do People Become Humanists?* and *Why Does Religious Neutrality Matter?* Multimedia posts are also among our top-performing posts.

## Challenges

- A growing emphasis on paid content, ads, and video has made reaching and engaging with our audiences more difficult across Facebook and Instagram through organic content.
- Targeting and identifying individuals who are interested in humanism or are in need of a secular community through organic content alone is very difficult. Organic content seldom reaches new audiences and is more easily accessed through paid advertising.

## The Year Ahead

We’ll be looking at ways to improve reach and engagement across our social media platforms by expanding onto new platforms such as BlueSky, placing more of an emphasis on producing and publishing reels, and launching paid social media marketing campaigns to raise national awareness around humanism and increase membership enrollment.



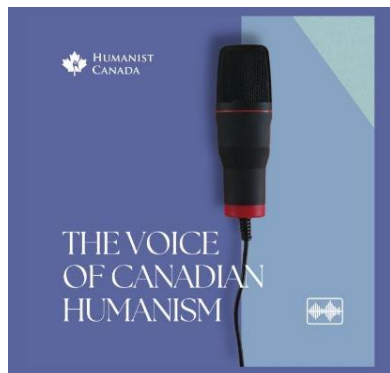
# Voice of Humanist Canada Podcast Report

Prepared by Daniel Dacombe & Jarrod Cleg

## Voice of Humanist Canada released 8 episodes in 2025.

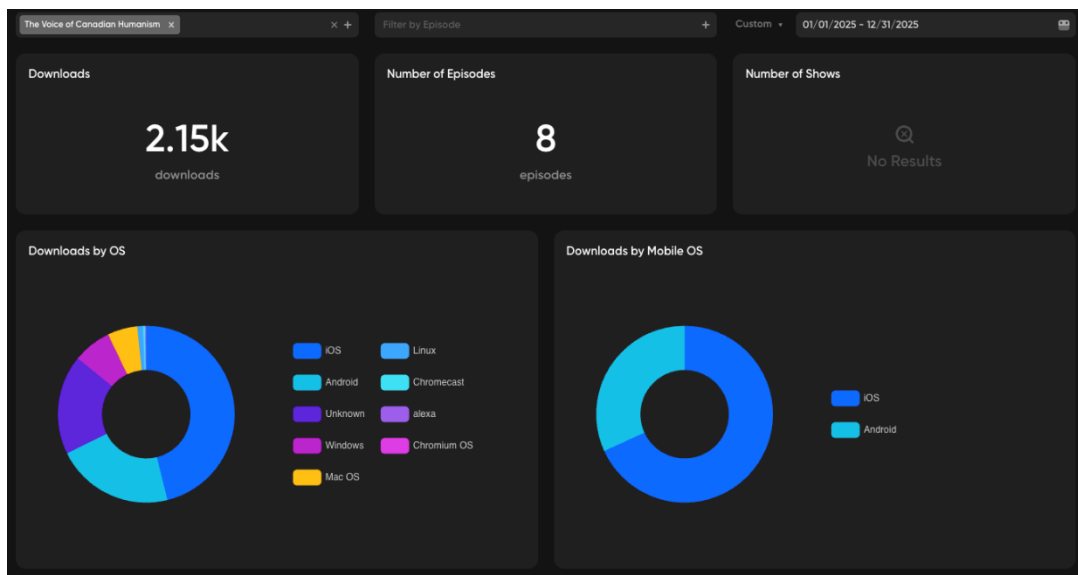


For the podcast, 2025 was a landmark year. Our hosts interviewed guests like author and activist Cory Doctorow, sociologist Dr. Ryan Cragun, social psychologist and Humanist Canada contributor Dr. David Speed, and founder of Pitzer College's Department of Secular Studies, Dr. Phil Zuckerman.

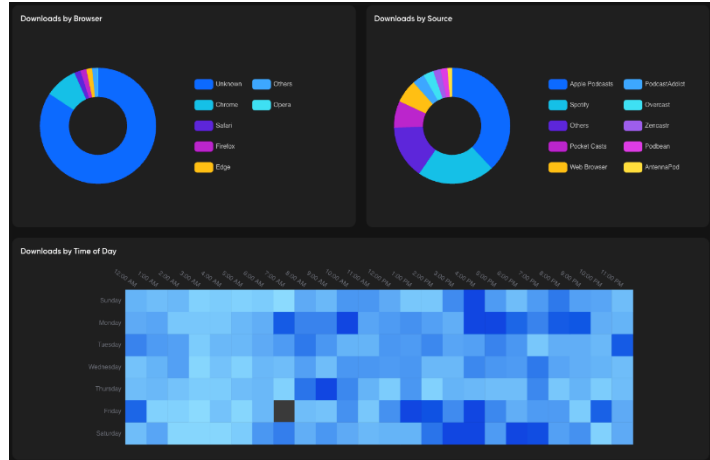


We also took a deep dive over a 2-episode series into the psychology of religious deidentification with author and professor Dr. Daryl Van Tongeren in discussing his book *Done: How to Flourish after Leaving Religion*. Our 2026 season is already off to a great start, so please check it out and share our episodes with your networks!

In 2025, the total number of downloads was 2.15K:



- Downloads by:**
- **Browser**
  - **Source**
  - **Time of Day**

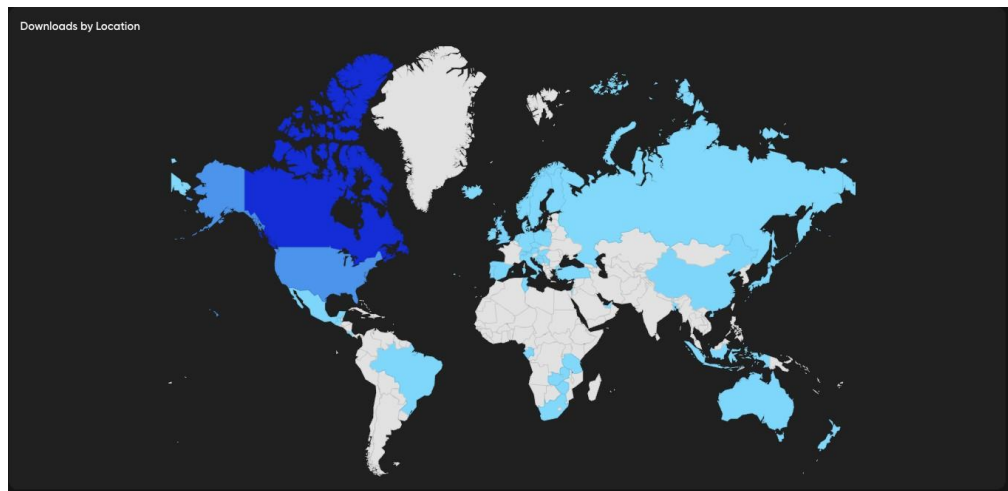


Episode	Downloads
20	153
21	134
22	207
23	175
24	194
25	135
26	143
27	136
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,277</b>

**Total Downloads in 2025:**

These numbers don't add up to 2.15K downloads, which means other previous episodes got downloaded as well. This implies that people are discovering us and our back catalogue! It's not always about per-episode downloads. Some episodes are our introduction to listeners.

**Downloads by Location:**



# Here are some ways you can get involved and support Humanist Canada!

## Donate

Humanist Canada relies on the support of our members and friends. Donations to Humanist Canada are directly used to promote humanist issues, work towards social justice, support local humanist communities, and increase humanism's visibility to the public. [Click here](#) or go to [www.humanistcanada.ca](http://www.humanistcanada.ca) to make a gift today.

## Become a Monthly Giver

Become a monthly donor. This special group of members gives generously every month to Humanist Canada, helping to sustain our programs.

## Other Ways to Donate

There are many additional ways to donate to Humanist Canada, such as employer matching gifts, the United Way and designating Humanist Canada, gifts of stock, and gift memberships. Check with your employer to see if they offer a matching gift program.

## Planned Giving

With your planned gift, you can leave a legacy for Humanist Canada and the generations ahead. Various options are available, including bequests or naming Humanist Canada as your insurance beneficiary. You can find more information about Humanist Canada's Legacy Giving program [here](#).

## Join or Start a Local Chapter

Humanist Canada is expanding its local chapters across the country. If there is no local chapter or affiliate group near you, consider starting one. Humanist Canada can help you find local members and provide helpful resources for starting a local chapter.

## Volunteer

Give your time. By working with others in our community, either within a committee or using your specific skills on a project, we can develop and strengthen our Humanist Canada community together. To volunteer with us, fill out [this form](#).

## Follow Humanist Canada on Social Media

Humanist Canada is active on social media. Follow us to get news and updates from Humanist Canada.

