

**CCRL** The Centre for Civic Religious Literacy  
**CLRC** Le centre de litt ratie religieuse civique

## August 2022 Newsletter

### CCRL Updates

Dear friends of CCRL,

It has been a *full* summer. Everyone I speak with have been finding ways to reconnect with family and friends. At the table, we catch up, but we also speak about the local and global affairs that have been shifting around us. [The Pope's visit to Canada](#), seeing the Statistics Canada's 2021 Police-Reported Hate Crimes data discussed in international outlets, and learning that [a Quebec woman was denied a morning-after pill due to the pharmacist's beliefs post Roe v. Wade](#) is a reminder that much has happened and is happening. We see that the affairs inform our lives in one way or another, our national and international borders are porous, and we live in society and we need to engage with it no matter where we stand. The headlines below are clear on all these points.

It has been a hot summer too, and many people are responding in different ways. [Dr. Erin Reid](#), our CCRL cofounder, writes about how eco-anxiety is affecting young and old and how they are responding to it in this month's Thought Corner (below).

In the midst of these local and global changes, we are grateful for new funding from the [Department of Canadian Heritage](#) that enable us to tackle these topics head on:

- [Civic Literacy Youth Network](#): A chance for youth to dialogue with peers across Canada from various backgrounds in order to understand and respond to current issues
- [Preserving Griot Tradition and empowering Black youth](#): An online space that will help document the history and influence of Black communities in Canada

To tackle these discussions yourselves in your community or classroom, consider our free CCRL resources to support you:

- [Anti-Racism Toolkit](#)
- [Educator Toolkit](#)
- [Thought Corner](#)
- More [here](#)



As we all savour the remaining weeks of August, I wish you all the best, especially for your transition back to school and work in September.

Sincerely,

[Alice](#)

CCRL Executive Director & Co-Founder

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## The Pulse



Actua has offered STEM programs in northern Canada for decades. More in the article below: [Drum dancing and science: Tuktoyaktuk summer camp pairs STEM with traditional skills](#)

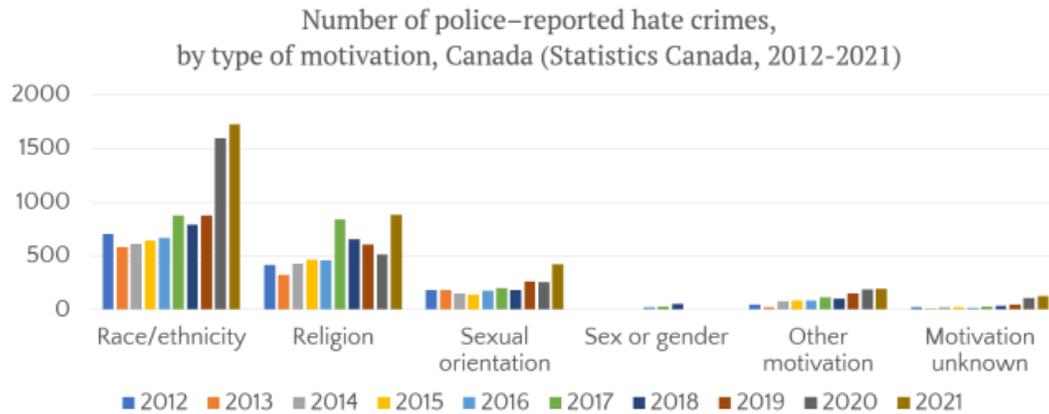
### *How does belief (religious or not) inform life and society in Canada today?*

Here are some headlines that show how religious, spiritual, and non-religious perspectives remain part of our daily lives and society. They show the struggles, virtues, and influence of Canadians in local and global communities. Some are one-on-one interactions while others are systemic, good and bad.

*Follow our Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts for headlines on a regular basis. Note, these headlines do not indicate endorsement but are shared for the purpose of awareness and understanding.*

### Canada:

- [Canada finds Jews were most-targeted religious minority for hate crimes in 2021](#) *The Times of Israel*
- [Canada sees surge in hate crimes during pandemic, new data shows](#) *Al Jazeera*
- [Iranian-Canadians feel like '2nd-class citizens' as many continue to be stopped while travelling to the U.S.](#) *CBC Saskatoon*
- [John Longhurst: A few observations about the papal visit](#) *The Winnipeg Free Press*
- [Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2021](#) *Statistics Canada*



Number of police-reported hate crimes, by type of motivation, Canada (Statistics Canada, 2012-2021), compiled by CCRL

### Territories:

- [Arts centre expansion study among CDF grants](#) *Whitehorse Daily Star*
- [Nunavut leadership weighs in on Pope’s visit and apology to Inuit](#) *Nunavut News*
- [Drum dancing and science: Tuktoyaktuk summer camp pairs STEM with traditional skills](#) *CBC North*

### British Columbia:

- [B.C. court to hear application for class-action lawsuit alleging abuse at Vancouver Catholic schools](#) *Globe & Mail*
- [Carmen Lansdowne is now the 1st Indigenous woman to lead a Canadian church](#) *Broadview*
- [Medicine bundle project for 2-spirit people in B.C. seeks to bring back spiritual aspects of sexuality](#) *CBC British Columbia*

### Alberta:

- [Alberta essay contest winner slammed for discriminatory gender, race views](#) *City News Calgary*
- [Displaced Ukrainians overwhelmed by Alberta town’s generosity](#) *RMOToday.com*
- [‘It was not about religion’: Littlechild defends gifting headdress to Pope Francis](#) *APTN News*

### Prairies:

- [Exorcisms, violent discipline and other abuse alleged by former students of private Sask. Christian school](#) *CBC Saskatoon*
- [Finding the funny in faith: Television series set in Winkler will reflect Christian values](#) *Winnipeg Free Press*
- [Sask. court dismisses appeal of father opposed to vaccinating children against COVID-19](#) *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*

## Ontario:

- [Exorcisms, violent discipline and other abuse alleged by former students of private Sask. Christian school](#) *CBC Saskatoon*
- [Finding the funny in faith: Television series set in Winkler will reflect Christian values](#) *Winnipeg Free Press*
- [Sask. court dismisses appeal of father opposed to vaccinating children against COVID-19](#) *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*

## Quebec:

- [Buddha's lotus blooms deep in the Laurentians](#) *oicanadian*
- [Quebec woman speaks out after pharmacist denies her morning-after pill due to his religious beliefs](#) *CBC Montreal*
- [Emilie Nicolas : Les mythes et réalités de la loi 21](#) *Le Devoir*
- [La Loi 21 – Discours, Perceptions et Impacts](#) par l'Association des études canadiennes et la firme de sondage Léger



## Atlantic Provinces:

- [Charlottetown's 'tent cities' highlight need for more shelter, advocates say](#) *CBC PEI*
- [Nova Scotia Sikh community celebrates opening of new temple](#) *CBC Nova Scotia*
- [N.W.T. tennis players start Canada Summer Games with a win against Newfoundland and Labrador](#) *CBC North*

## International:

- [Biden Is an Uneasy Champion on Abortion. Can He Lead the Fight in Post-Roe America?](#) *New York Times*
  - [From Mecca to the Vatican, exploring sacred sites with VR](#) *AP News*
  - [New Mexico police charge suspect in ambush-style killings of Muslim men](#) *CBC News*
  - [Why coastal Karnataka is southern India's 'Hindutva laboratory'](#) *Al Jazeera*
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## Religious Literacy Thought Corner

Every issue, this section will focus on one specific aspect of society or identity. Using religious literacy skills and framework, our team will briefly prompt how to identify and perceive the influence of religion, spirituality, and non-religious belief in our lives and world. Past Thought Corners are [here](#).

In this issue, [Dr. Erin Reid](#), a CCRL Co-Founder, discusses:



### The role of religious literacy to address eco-anxiety

The other day, my 11-year-old son asked me to stop listening to the news because the stories about climate change make him feel anxious and scared. Although my partner and I do our best to be careful about the media we watch around him, clearly we weren't being careful enough.

#### Eco-anxiety

[Eco-anxiety](#) can be characterized by symptoms such as [depression](#), [anxiety](#), [rumination](#), and [insomnia](#), and as many parents or caregivers can surely confirm, [children](#) are increasingly experiencing these symptoms.

As I searched for resources to combat this eco-anxiety, I began considering how religious or spiritual worldviews may help all of us manage the difficult feelings we experience when faced with almost constant news of the global climate crisis.

Of course, as a researcher whose interests lie at the intersection of [religious literacy](#) and education, and as a founding member of CCRL, I had some idea of [the diverse ways religious or spiritual leaders and communities are responding to climate change](#). I know about interfaith initiatives such as the [Parliament of World's Religions' commitment to climate action](#), and [GreenFaith](#), but in considering the specific question of how to address eco-anxiety in our children, I began to appreciate the profound ways in which religion and spirituality may be mobilized to address this growing problem.

## Coping with eco-anxiety

[Scholars have outlined four techniques](#) to manage or cope with rising eco-anxiety:

1. Validation;
2. Time out;
3. Seek hope;
4. Take action.

While I don't recommend these in the place of working with a mental health expert, I do believe religious or spiritual traditions may address all four of these techniques, because:

First, up to [80% of the global population affiliates with a faith community](#), which means **there is great potential for religious leaders to address problems such as eco-anxiety**. Indeed, it's heartening to see religious leaders such as [Pope Francis' and other Christian leaders'](#) recent strong calls for climate action.

Second, **religious or spiritual communities frequently provide a welcoming space for individuals to find moments of peace and reflection** – something that can help children as much as it helps adults.

Third, a [recent report](#) from the [UN Environment Programme](#) and the Faith for Earth Coalition provides ample evidence of the contributions global faith communities are making to address climate change. Knowledge that **there are many religious communities collaborating to address environmental issues** can provide us all with reasons to feel hopeful, rather than anxious.

Finally, **religious or spiritual communities play a key role in offering youth opportunities to take action on climate change**, whether its through [interfaith initiatives such as Faith & the Common Good](#) or [the Interfaith Rainforest Initiative](#), Indigenous led projects for youth engagement such as the [Keepers of the Water](#), or specific religious community initiatives, such as the [Sikh Environmental Leadership Program](#), [Islamic Society of North America \(ISNA\)](#), [Green initiative](#), [Hazon's Jewish Youth Climate Movement](#), or the [Bhumi Global Young Environmental Changemakers](#) movement, to name but a few.

## An approach towards solutions and hope

My son is not the only child – or person – to struggle with eco-anxiety. As we are faced with this emerging societal problem, the failure to look to religious communities for potential

solutions is a significant omission. The [religious literacy framework](#) clearly shows that religions, spiritual, and non-religious communities are influential players in society, and are impacted by all parts of society too. By including religious identities in conversations about societal problems such as combatting eco-anxiety, [religious literacy](#) provides a framework and a tool for creating solutions – and hope!



By: [Dr. Erin Reid](#), *Director of Learning (for higher education and adult education), Regional Director (Alberta), Co-Founder*

To read other ways to use religious literacy, check out other Thought Corner contributions here: <https://ccrl-clrc.ca/religious-literacy-resources/thought-corner/>

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## Cultural/Holy days (August & September 2022)

This list of dates is generally commemorated or observed by many individuals within a community. Some individuals from each community may not adhere to the cultural/holy days themselves. It is not a comprehensive list of cultural/holy days worldwide but a list of those commonly recognized across parts of Canada. Our team wishes you a rejuvenating time of contemplation and community support this August and September.

### August 2022

- Aug 8 – [Day of Ashura](#) (Muslims)
- Aug 13 – [Obon](#), ends Aug 16 (Japanese Buddhists)
- Aug 15 – [Assumption of Mary](#) (various Christians)
- Aug 19 – [Krishna Janmashtami](#) (Hindus)
- Aug 22 – [International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief](#)
- Aug 31 – [Ganesh Chaturthi](#) (Hindus)

### September 2022

- Sept 14 – [Holy Cross Day/Feast of the Cross](#) (various Christians)
- Sept 17 – [Vishwakarma Puja](#) (Hindus)
- Sept 22 – [Autumn Equinox](#) (Pagans and Wiccans)
- Sept 25 – [Rosh Hashana](#) begins, ends Sept 27 (Jews)
- Sept 26 – [Navaratri](#), ends Oct 4 (Hindus)
- Sept 30 – [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#) (Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples)