

# Charlie Kirk: A martyr for faith and freedom

By Rev. Mark H. Creech  
The assassination of Charlie Kirk has sent shockwaves through the nation, especially among conservative Christians. For many of us, his death is more than a political tragedy; it is the silencing of a voice that spoke boldly for Christ and for the values upon which this nation was founded. By every measure of how Protestant evangelicals understand martyrdom in our age, Charlie Kirk died as a martyr.

In its most historic sense, martyrdom is the sacrifice of one's life for confessing Christ. Yet even in the modern American context, where few are dragged to the stake for refusing to deny their faith, the word martyr still rightly applies to those who are targeted because their Christian convictions drive them to speak publicly, prophetically, and courageously. Charlie Kirk

was such a man.  
He was not merely a political commentator. He was not simply the founder of a student movement. He was not only a conservative firebrand. Charlie Kirk was, at his core, a Christian disciple whose faith shaped everything he said and did. He consistently reminded his audiences that America's future depends on returning to biblical truth. He insisted that freedom itself comes from God, not government. He declared that a culture without Christ cannot endure. For these reasons, he drew not only political opposition but also the hatred of those who despise Christianity's witness in the public square – especially on "Woke" College campuses.

When Charlie was gunned down while speaking at a university campus, doing what he always did, defending the

truth without apology, it was not only his politics that were attacked. It was primarily his Christian worldview. The man's identity was seamless: his political convictions were his Christian convictions. To strike him down was, in a very real sense, to strike at the faithful voice of the church in politics.

History has recorded many martyrs who did not die in a cathedral or while preaching from a pulpit, but who nevertheless laid down their lives because their faith compelled them to engage the culture for Christ's sake. Martin Luther King Jr. is rightly remembered as a Christian martyr because his civil rights work was born of his Christian calling. Likewise, Charlie Kirk should be remembered as a martyr because his activism was nothing less than the overflow of his devotion to Christ and the Scriptures.

His blood bears testimony. It tells us that free speech is under siege, that the culture's enemies despise biblical values, and that following Christ with boldness carries a cost, even in a free America. America's greatest adversaries aren't merely foreign governments but poisonous philosophies – secularism, moral relativism, radical leftism, and anti-Christian cultural elites. Charlie gave his life to expose this evil and save our nation, while too many pastors – those called to be watchmen of the nation's soul, shepherds of God's flock, remain cravenly, even cowardly, silent from their pulpits. We should grieve Charlie's loss but also honor his courage. The mantle now passes to us, that we too might speak as he spoke, live as he lived, and, if necessary, die as he died – faithful, unashamed, and unyielding in

the face of opposition.  
Many years ago, I visited India on three occasions to encourage Christians who were enduring significant bouts of persecution. I was part of a team of ministers led by the late Dr. M.A. Thomas, known for planting churches and Christian schools throughout India. Dr. Thomas and his colleagues had regularly suffered threats, beatings, and sometimes unjust imprisonment from Hindu and Muslim extremists.

While there, I learned an incredible story about Dr. Thomas. One day, a man wielding a knife came to the compound where Thomas served as head of a church, a Christian school, and a college located in Kota of Rajasthan. The man, a radicalized Muslim, cried loudly in the street for Dr. Thomas to come out so that he could kill

him. Against the judgment of his colleagues and family, Dr. Thomas walked out the door of his home and, with unflinching courage, approached the man with the knife in his hand. Then something remarkable happened.

Dr. Thomas ripped open his shirt before the man, baring his naked chest to him. "Here," said Thomas, "thrust your knife right here and take my life. Because I tell you that if you do, with every drop of my blood that falls to the ground, God will raise up a thousand more like me."

The man walked away.  
Augustine said, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." If the death of Charlie Kirk means anything, it means that with his blood spilt, God will raise up thousands more like him. What a tragedy! What a triumph!

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## Join the annual walk to End Intimate Partner Violence

On Saturday, November 1 at 10 am, eight local 'violence against women' organizations will host the Second Annual Community Walk to End Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The walk starts at Durham Region Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby. Recently, Clarington was in shock when a woman suffered life-threatening injuries as a result of IPV. The walk event is organized by Bethesda House, Herizon House, Luke's Place, Safety Network Durham, the Denise House, Victim Services Durham Region, Women's Multicultural Resource Centre of Durham (WMRCC of Durham), and YWCA Durham, in collaboration with the Region of Durham. Every year, thousands of people in our community are impacted by the devastating reality of intimate partner violence (IPV). In Durham Region, rates of IPV remain alarmingly high, leaving lives shattered and futures stolen. Organizers said the Community Walk to End Intimate Partner Violence is an opportunity to: -Honouring survivors. -Remember those we have lost. -Unite for change. "Our goal is to raise awareness, break the silence, and take action toward ending this epidemic once and for all," said the hosting coalition.

This event is free and open to the public. Donations are welcome in support of the participating organizations, with

every dollar helping to provide life-saving services. After the walk, participants are invited to stay for games, activities, and exciting prizes. Mark the 5th National Day for Truth and Reconciliation at an event in Clarington or Durham Region. The Municipality of Clarington is situated within the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas and Chippewas of the Anishinabeg, known today as the Williams Treaties First Nations. September 30 marks the 5th National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR), also recognized as Orange Shirt Day. This day serves as a reminder of the importance of acknowledging and addressing the truths of our past, as well as working towards reconciliation. NDTR honours both the Survivors and the intergenerational Survivors of the Indian Residential School system, while also remembering the children who never returned home. Clarington has an ongoing commitment to reflect on the detrimental legacies of the residential school system, deepen our learning journeys and participate in intentional conversations on truth and reconciliation. **Clarington's Orange Ribbon Memorial** 🍊 September 17 to October 10 | Outside Courtice Community Complex Residents are invited to tie an orange ribbon on a temporary orange fence located at the Courtice Community Complex to honour Survivors of the residential school sys-

tem and remember the children who never returned home. The installation will remain for one month as a space for reflection and an opportunity to foster intentional conversations on truth and reconciliation amongst our community. **Orange Shirt Day is September 30** 🍊 Orange Shirt Day is an Indigenous-led grassroots commemorative day that coincides with the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. It is intended to raise awareness of the individual, family and community inter-generational impacts of residential schools, and to promote the concept of "Every Child Matters." The orange shirt is a symbol of the stripping away of culture, freedom and self-esteem experienced by Indigenous children over generations. On September 30, all Canadians are encouraged to wear orange to honour the thousands of Survivors of residential schools. Support local: Consider ordering an orange shirt from Orange Shirt — A Place to Heal, designed by a Durham Region Indigenous artist. Proceeds support the Bawaajigewin Aboriginal Community Circle, with pickup available in Oshawa on September 23. Learn more: Orange Shirt Day was inspired by the story of Phyllis Webstad from the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation, whose orange shirt was taken from her on her first day at a residential school. Watch Phyllis' story on Orange Shirt Day.

**Community Participation Opportunities** 🍊 CLMA Beading Workshop: September 11 at the Bowmanville Library and September 25 at the Courtice Library -In partnership with Bawaajigewin Aboriginal Circle, these workshops explore the meaning of orange shirt pins through Indigenous beading traditions. All materials provided. Durham Region Walk for Reconciliation, September 26 from 10 a.m. to noon Join us for a walk from the Garden Street entrance of Durham Regional Headquarters. This walk represents our shared commitment to reconciliation. Town of Ajax Event: September 30 from 5:30 to 8

p.m. at Pat Bayly Square Join the Town of Ajax, Durham Community Health Centre, Ajax Indigenous Advisory Circle, and Indigenous Building Relationship Circle (Pickering) for an evening of ceremony and community connection. **Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Calls to Action** 🍊 There were 140 federally run residential schools in Canada that operated between 1867 and 1996. Survivors advocated for recognition and reparations and demanded accountability for the intergenerational impacts of harm caused. Their efforts culminated in: -The Indian Residential Schools Settlement

Agreement -Apologies by the federal government -The establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission -The creation of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation -The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which ran from 2008 to 2015, provided an opportunity for those directly or indirectly affected by the legacy of the residential schools policy to share their stories and experiences. The Commission released its final report detailing 94 calls to action. The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is a direct response to Call to Action 80, which called for a federal statutory day of commemoration.

New name, same heart:  
Children's Services Division gets a new name!

Whitby, Ontario – The Region of Durham Children's Services Division is unveiling a new name, "Child Care and Early Years Division," to better reflect the services and supports offered in the community. The Child Care and Early Years Division supports local families to access affordable, accessible and high-quality child care, early years programs and services. The division is the system manager for child care and early years programs across Durham Region, and is implementing the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system. The division's key priorities are:

- Support expansion and access to child care.
- Enhance supportive and inclusive child care.
- Increase, attract and retain quality Registered Early Childhood Educators.
- Optimize virtual service delivery and technology.

The Child Care and Early Years Division remains committed to supporting Durham Region children and families with reaching their best potential.

"We're proud to announce our new name: the 'Child Care and Early Years Division.' This change reflects our deep commitment to managing a co-ordinated and responsive early learning and child care system that supports Durham Region children and families in reaching their best potential. We believe the new name will encourage more families to connect with us for support– and let them know we are with them every step of the way."