You may also be a HUMANIST!

Composed of hundreds of denominations with a variety of doctrines and practices, CHRISTIANITY has its roots at the dawn of the current era and experienced key splits along the way that account for Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, and the myriad of Protestant traditions.

Protestantism was led first by Martin Luther, and reformers who broke from the Roman Catholic Church due to differences regarding the theology, constitution and functions of a church. Consistent with that beginning it is particularly Protestantism that encouraged people to think for themselves, to draw their own conclusions from scripture rather than blindly accepting the official interpretation of the Catholic Church. This process of thinking independently inexorably led to the worldview we call humanism today.

Christians share core beliefs regarding the doctrines of the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, the necessity of grace to save humans from the consequences of sin, and the centrality of Jesus’ death and resurrection. Another dimension is “Christian humanism” which Webster defines as a philosophy advocating self-fulfillment within the framework of Christian principles. Christian humanism, a philosophical union of Christian and humanist principles, holds that universal human dignity and individual freedom are essential and principal components of Christian doctrine and practice.

Protestantism is the largest group of religions in the United States with its combined denominations accounting for almost half the country’s population. Adding Catholics, which represent 25% of the country; Christians make up 7 of every 10 Americans.
But how can I be a CHRISTIAN and a HUMANIST?

While humanists do not have a creed on which everyone must agree, we do have a Humanist Code of Ethics. The following was written by Arthur Dobrin, Professor Emeritus at Hofstra University and Leader Emeritus of the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island:

Do no harm to the earth, she is your mother.
Being is more important than having.
Never promote yourself at another’s expense.
Hold life sacred; treat it with reverence.
Never think less of yourself than you are.
Never think that you are more than another.

If a person follows this code, they surely can be called a practicing humanist or a practicing Christian.

Progressive and most mainline Protestants are natural allies of humanism in our common quest for human rights and a democratic society. Indeed, the following statement could come from any of the American Humanist Association’s member organizations.

“We recognize the equality of all people in our offering of services and the opportunity for services, advocating justice and seeking to develop and balance all resources at our disposal to serve vulnerable persons with more intense needs.”

This statement of a basic humanist principle is from the Genacross Lutheran Services, which provides support to those in need in many ways, including donations of time and talent.