

Are you a
CHRISTIAN?



You may *also* be a
HUMANIST!

HUMANISTS
believe in **GOOD.**

THE AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

provides a humanist perspective in strong support of separation of religion from government, preservation and restoration of the environment, protection of civil rights and liberties, and promotion of personal choice regarding introduction of new life, family structure, and death with dignity. Though humanists are not monolithic on every issue—this is a community that encourages tolerance and nurtures diversity—we directly challenge human rights violations and discrimination.



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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.



HUMANISM is a progressive philosophy of life that, without supernatural beliefs, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity.

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

—**Martin Niemöller**, prominent Protestant pastor in Germany during World War II

“Humanism is not...an armchair philosophy; it is a springboard to action. Humanists do not just sit around and talk but are actively involved in attempts to improve society and the long run betterment of humankind.”

—From a “Humanist Ethical Code” of **The Humanist Association of Northern Ireland**

“Interfaith cooperation is based on the conviction that people of different religious and nonreligious backgrounds have shared values that call them to make the world a better place.”

—From “Faith Line Protestants: Living Christian in a Religiously Diverse World”

“But best of all, my brain’s the one
That figures out what must be done
To help me run a better race,
To make the world a better place.”

—From “What Humanism Means To Me” a poem by **Helen Bennett**, author of *Humanism? What’s That? A Book For Curious Kids*

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.
Allow each person the dignity of his or her labor.
Open your home to the wayfarer.
Be ready to receive your deepest dreams; sometimes they are the speech of unblighted conscience.
Always make restitutions to the ones you have harmed.
Never think less of yourself than you are.
Never think that you are more than another.

“You are not only responsible for what you say, but also for what you do not say.”

—**Martin Luther**

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.

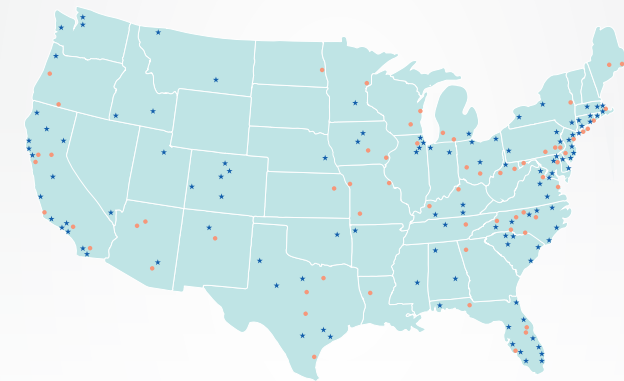
See more at www.americanhumanist.org/paths

Be a part of the *growing* **HUMANIST MOVEMENT!**

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Membership: New members receive a free book about humanism. All members receive voting privileges, the *Humanist* magazine, and discounts on AHA conferences, seminars, books, literature, and more!

Local Communities: Start or join a local AHA Chapter or Affiliate to connect with humanists in your area and build the humanist community.



Local AHA communities: ★ Chapter ● Affiliate

Education: Enjoy our Center for Education’s innovative online and in-person resources designed for individuals, professionals, and groups across the humanist spectrum.

Advocacy: Help us protect the separation of church and state and advocate for social justice and universal human rights.

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