



## 'I Don't Believe in God': Atheist Minister Resists Effort to Boot Her from United Church of Canada

August 9, 2015 | Filed under: Apostasy, Life & Society, Top Stories, World | By: Heather Clark

**TORONTO** — An ordained minister with the United Church of Canada is resisting efforts to oust her from the pulpit because she is an atheist.

"I don't believe in ... the god called God," Gretta Vosper told the Globe and Mail. "Using the word gets in the way of sharing what I want to share."

She said that she believes the Bible is "mythology," and denies that Jesus is the Son of God.

"We build a faith tradition upon it which shifted to find belief more important than how we lived," Vosper said.



Vosper, 57, and who was ordained in 1993, first came out as an atheist in 2001. However, her congregation still supported her until 2008 when she sought to do away with the use of the Lord's Prayer and lost approximately 100 members of her 150-member congregation.

Earlier this year, Vosper wrote an open letter asserting that a belief in God can compel people to commit evil, referencing the Charlie Hebdo massacre in France.

"That didn't go over well," Vosper, who also founded the Canadian Centre for Progressive Christianity, told reporters. "[But] if we are going to continue to use language that suggests we get our moral authority from a supernatural source, any group that says that can trump any humanistic endeavour."

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She was soon reported to the United Church of Canada, which launched an investigation into her "effectiveness" as a minister. In May, Nora Sanders, general secretary for the UCC General Council, provided the denomination with standards on which to determine whether Vosper should stay or go.

"In my opinion, a person who is not suitable for ministry in the United Church cannot be 'effective' as United Church ministry personnel," she wrote.

"Do you believe in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and do you commit yourself anew to God?" and "Do you believe that God is calling you to the ordained ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care, and do you accept this call?" are expected to be among the questions asked to determine her fitness for service.

Now, Vosper is fighting the motion to review her effectiveness as well as Sander's standards.

"We ... must submit our arguments regarding the appeal by September 18th," she told the Christian Post.

In the meantime, Vosper has refused to repent of her atheism.

"If the cost of that is that we are no longer welcome within that denomination, it will be because that denomination has defined us out of it, not because we have defined ourselves out of it," she said.

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Thomas Collins Jr June · 4 days ago

A perfect example of Atheists Gone Wild! Leave the pulpit to those who have faith and believe in God and the Salvation of Christ.

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The Last Trump · Thomas Collins Jr June · 19 hours ago

Yes, it's kinda a key requirement for the job isn't it. You would think that belief in God should show up somewhere in her resume as a qualification for MINISTERING to her congregation about, you know, GOD!?

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**WorldGoneCrazy** [View last from WorldGoneCrazy](#) • 15 hours ago

(sarcasm on)

Do you really think, Trump, that the belief in God is a core essential doctrine for Christianity? I mean, maybe that's just YOUR interpretation of the Bible, huh?!? Maybe the Bible and you Christians just need to progress into the 21st century where atheists are fully qualified to be pastors? Why the Bible doesn't even have the word "atheist" in it - so there is nothing wrong with a Christian being one!

What are you - some kind of fundie or something? Where is your "tolerance," you "bigot?!?" Why can't you just accept this woman for who she is - just love her, like Jesus does? What a "hater" you are - just like those Pharisees! If they fire her, I hope she sues them and calls down the Human Rights Commission on that church! Separation of church and state! Constitution! Gay rights! Feelings!

(sarcasm off) (Did I miss any talking points? :-))

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**Becky** [WorldGoneCrazy](#) • 13 hours ago

LOL! Spot on!

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**Tyler Mitchell** [WorldGoneCrazy](#) • 15 hours ago

How "judgmental" of you...you must be a "bigot"!;) ;)

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**Harry Oh!** [WorldGoneCrazy](#) • 10 hours ago

That's like a science teacher not believing the law of gravity.

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**charles freeman** [Harry Oh!](#) • 5 hours ago

I once had a college professor who did not believe in Carbon dating...

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**Coach r** • 21 hours ago

Stop the world, I want to get off! Come, Lord Jesus!

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**LadyFreeBird<><In God I Trust** [Coach r](#) • 20 hours ago

Yes Jesus please come!

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**Jane Bowen** • a day ago

she's such a fool. unbelievable.

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**benning** • a day ago

Oh, Honey, yes you DID define yourself out of it. What a silly twit you are!

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**Kevin Jansen** • 10 hours ago

Church leaders that dont believe in God..Go figure



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**mbabbitt** • 10 hours ago

That it is even being discussed is stupid. Where is her integrity? Oh, yes, her morality is



 firmly planted in mid-air, in her feelings.

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**Jean Adams** • 23 hours ago

WE must submit our arguments?? Is her ego so big she is more than one person?

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**Miguel de la Pena** • 24 hours ago

Matthew 24:24



“For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

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**Nidalap** • 18 hours ago

The government must be so proud. Finally, a minister they can approve of...

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**Tree Top** • 20 hours ago

Just one more of God's warning signs that we are living in the very end of times, IMO.

2 Thessalonians 2:3

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first..."

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**LadyFreeBird** ↔ **<>In God I Trust** • Tree Top • 20 hours ago

We are in that time. So many are falling away.

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**Shelli** • 17 hours ago

Oh dear, this woman is purposely leading her congregation astray, she is a wolf in sheep's clothing. I pray that GOD reveals to her the error of her ways. She will have to answer to the Lord for her stewardship.

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**Emmanuel** → Shelli • 17 hours ago

More like; "depart from me, I never knew you."

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**Emmanuel** • 18 hours ago



She and her 50 members can continue with their Godless services and I hope the denomination justs walks away. Let them be. she obviously is not fit.

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**bowie1** • 20 hours ago


Her atheism is more in line with the Unitarians who also don't believe in God - necessarily.

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**Dave\_L** • 21 hours ago



The General Council of the United Church of Canada in 1988-AUG decided to stop barring openly gay or lesbian people from the ministry.

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**Sam Thompson** → Dave\_L • 20 hours ago

That's different. I believe that gays can minister so long as they are repentant followers of Jesus christ. Atheists do no such thing so should not be allowed in ministry.

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**Susan Sennett** → Sam Thompson • 18 hours ago



What part of REPENTANT don't they understand??!!

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**Secular1Humanist** · 11 hours ago

I never understood this type of atheist. As one myself, I want to stay far away from churches, and find the idea of preaching from pulpits rather obnoxious and a little conceited. So why bother if you're an atheist? I can understand the frustration of Christians on this issue. I get similarly frustrated when some Christians claim to be "humanists". They're not.

The Sunday Assembly (atheist church) is another example. It's a ludicrous thing for atheists to be doing. Leave that sort of thing to religious preachers.

Perhaps it's an American, cultural thing. Ex-theists in the US still feel the need for a "community" based around this sort of thing, even when they no longer believe in religious claims.

Being born in a secular, post religious nation, and never being religious, I can't relate to such a need.

My advice is, if you're an atheist, leave all the church business behind, move on, look for other ways to get involved with your community. And don't set up faux churches.

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**DNelson** · 5 hours ago

It seems she would be better off attempting to start her own church. The United Church of Canada is certainly free to set whatever criteria they care to regarding their pastors.

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**Jenny Murray** · 11 hours ago

What saddens me the most....is 50 people stayed. :(

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**Truthhurts24** · 14 hours ago

Each day another idiot shows up in the pulpits of America

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**WorldGoneCrazy** → [Truthhurts24](#) · 13 hours ago

That is so true, but this one is in Canada. We are quick on their heels, however, in sliding into the moral sewer.

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**Truthhurts24** → [WorldGoneCrazy](#) · 11 hours ago

It doesn't matter if its Canada or America anywhere in the west I should have said is full of apostasy and mental cases in the pulpits. And your right about that the west is on a flat line morally.

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**Tina Taylor** · 12 hours ago

did she not agree to live in accordance and teach the gospel in accordance to the values of the church and God? if you no longer agree with church doctrine, your views have changed, you are supposed to notify the church as a matter of discernment- it is not just a Presbyterian value but I would expect all churches to have this.

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**Kent** · 12 hours ago

Like the president of a tennis association telling its members they no longer play tennis. Well done.

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**webshade** · 12 hours ago

An AntiChrist leading a church of God, and resisting removal no less!? What's next? Ordained practicing Homosexuals? (Sarc)

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**FoJC\_Forever** · 10 hours ago

2 Timothy 3:1-5 explains that people can appear to be "godly" - good, kind, patient, caring, compassionate, people who seek Truth, people who trust in the power of God to save and heal them and not natural things - but actually be walking and living in the flesh. This woman is just one of millions who pretend to be a minister of God, but is only following her own way.

Falsehood has many shades, but is not the true color of Truth.

Like many people who were so shocked at baby parts being sold by abortionists, but have always been complacent about abortion being murder, so fake Christians will speak out about things like this, but sit in their "churches" listening to false doctrines from "ministers" passed down for centuries. This type of thing isn't isolated to this woman, since there are millions of others only pretending to be serving God.

False doctrines always grow worse, and those who trust in the natural will fall for the Sin which is ever present in the natural. Only those who know Jesus (the) Christ will stay on the Righteous Path of Truth. Those who trust in their own understanding will always have their own form of apostasy and denial of the Truth, replacing with their own interpretations of Scripture. This has been going on for centuries and will continue until Judgement Comes.

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**Kachina** · 8 hours ago

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

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**Moira Maighread Welch** · 9 hours ago

This woman has some very serious issues, not the least of which is that she should NOT be allowed to be the minister of any Christian church. The Bible has had so many prophecies already fulfilled and it certainly isn't a book of myths. How she ever was ordained is a mystery to me because true Christians do NOT turn their back on God and renounce their faith - thus she is influenced by a demonic entity. And she fails to understand sin nature as being the reason people do things that are wrong. She is really to be pitied in some aspects because she is very, very deluded. I would not want to be her on Judgment Day.

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**Psygn** · 10 hours ago

Freedom of religion.

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