

## Changes needed in Society

The Mid West Humanists seek changes in society and the state. The state and society should -

- (1) be secular;
- (2) treat equally people who have religion and people who have no religion;

CONSTITUTION of Ireland has religious oaths for president, judges, and the Council of State; God as the source of power; blasphemy is an offence; and it prohibits discrimination *between people of different religions*, yet allows discrimination against those *with no religion*. These should be changed.

EDUCATION - To stop people seeing society as divided into groups, which lets people of one group see people in another group as in some way bad - this can lead to serious civil strife - all children (primary and secondary) should be in secular schools, where the mix of children is the same as the mix of people in that district - not in schools divided by religion as they are now.

In most districts, children with no religion have no choice but to attend a school connected to a religion, infringing their rights to education free of religion.

SECULAR SOCIETY - Some state and non-state organisations treat employees and users as if they have a religion - it intrudes when there is no need. Do hospitals need to know your religion? Organisations should allow that a person may or may not have a religion.

### Mid-West Humanists' Leaflets

Let Ireland's Constitution be Secular  
Remove Blasphemy from the Constitution  
Schools should be Secular  
National School Leases are Secular  
A National School Lease (example lease)

## Humanism & Atheism in Ireland

Humanist Association of Ireland  
www.humanism.ie info@humanism.ie  
Atheist Ireland  
www.atheist.ie atheist@atheist.ie  
Humanist Association of Northern Ireland  
www.humanistni.org info@humanistni.org  
Atheism Northern Ireland  
www.atheismnorthernireland.com - (email via website)

### Humanist groups - regional

South-Eastern Humanists (Kilkenny)  
www.facebook.com/clonmelhumanists?ref=stream  
fachtna@fachtna.ie  
Waterford Humanists  
www.facebook.com/WaterfordHAI?fref=ts  
grahamt22@gmail.com  
Cork Humanists  
www.corkhumanists.com corkhumanists@gmail.com  
Mid-West Humanists  
www.midwesthumanists.com  
info@midwesthumanists.com  
Humanists West  
www.humanistswest.weebly.com  
garryol@hotmail.com  
Westport Humanists  
www.facebook.com/WestportHumanists  
shayoc37@gmail.com  
North-West Humanists  
Phone 086 882 0445 isoldecarmody@hotmail.com  
North Coast Humanists (Coleraine)  
humanistni.org/dynamic\_content.php?id=103  
jennifer.sturgeon@btinternet.com  
Belfast Humanist Group  
sites.google.com/site/belfasthumanistgroup/  
les.reid@btinternet.com

### Ceremonies: Funeral, Wedding, Baby

Humanist Association of Ireland  
www.humanism.ie/ceremonies  
ceremonies@humanism.ie  
Humanist Association of Northern Ireland  
www.humanistni.org/dynamic\_content.php?id=106  
rstandmj.ewing@btinternet.com

info@midwesthumanists.com

# Mid-West Humanists

The Mid-West Humanists are a group of people (in Limerick, Clare, and Tipperary) with no religion, or leaning that way (founded in 2008).

We meet in Limerick, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 20:00, now in the Absolute Hotel.

### Meeting details at

[www.midwesthumanists.com](http://www.midwesthumanists.com)



### Inquiries to

[info@midwesthumanists.com](mailto:info@midwesthumanists.com)

You will meet similar people, and there is no rule about what a person thinks or believes in order to attend.

We talk about the positive quality of life in which we make our own values (without supernatural sources). People being able to meet other people who do not have religion, and to exchange views and feelings. People also discuss the difficulties within a society that has many features that are biased towards religion.

Some of the time the meeting has an agenda, about changes needed in society, or may have a person from outside the group to give a talk.

[www.midwesthumanists.com](http://www.midwesthumanists.com)

# Humanism

Humanism is the idea that humans can think, plan, and do all the things that humans need for a good life. The good life that most humanists have in mind is a life with other people, so it means being and doing good for other people as well as for themselves.

## Atheism

Atheism is the view that there are no gods. So atheists say that all ideas and plans come from humans.

### Knowledge and Morals/ Ethics

Humanism means that humans can get the knowledge they need, by reason and science, and that they do not need information about the world that is said to be revealed by a god or gods.

Humanism also means that humans can make good moral rules.

### Morals and Ethics

Particularly humanists know that humans can develop, evaluate, and decide moral rules for themselves. This means that there is no need for an authority figure or a god to give moral rules to humans.

Humanists therefore decide whether any particular moral rule is good or bad based on the consequences of adopting each particular rule. Humanists do not see sense, when they need a new rule for a new situation, in deriving the new rule from commandments that a god or religious leader created several thousand years in the past.

Humanism does not agree that you will have better morals if you have a religion.

Because humans can each make and choose moral rules, not all humanists agree on what are the best moral rules - or the best society.

### Knowledge and Science

Humanists think it right to use human reason to decide about factual matters as well as about moral matters. Humanists therefore generally believe in science and reason, and do not adopt beliefs for which there is no evidence. So, as there is no evidence for a person's mind or spirit lasting beyond death, humanists generally do not believe in an afterlife.

Consequently humanists generally direct their efforts to making this life better. Humanists are positive about life and about humans, and do not see humans as flawed or suffering from original sin. Humanists know that such negative ideas that some people teach to children cause distress and psychologically harm people, sometimes for all of their lives.

### Humanist view of Life and Society

Humanists generally believe in the community of people and set high value on people supporting each other. While humanists do not see people as bad, they do not see people as free of faults, and they benefit from each other for improving their ideas, both in science and in morals. Each other person may see mistakes that a person may not be able to see for himself or herself. Humanists therefore generally value other people's expression of opinions, and are open to others' views and to reconsidering their own ideas. Humanists generally reconsider their views based

on the amount of reason or evidence favouring or against the idea.

To enable the maximum benefit from people learning from the opinions and criticism of other people, nearly all humanists think that an open, democratic society is the best form of society, with no limits on the expression of ideas. This includes no protection for any ideas from public criticism.

As humanists value life (there is no evidence of any life after death) they believe in living life fully, both doing the most for other people and richly enjoying the varieties of experience available in life. Humanists, though each person varies in their taste, value all positive activities, including science and the expansion of knowledge, art, literature, music, and other creative and pleasurable activities.

### How Humanism relates to Religion

Humanism in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance in Europe meant focusing more on humans (still being Christian). At present humanism nearly always means not having a god or a religion.

There are people and groups who call themselves religious humanists, notably in the U.S.A. Some of these use the title "religious" because they meet and organise in the style of a religion.

Humanists generally see religion, with belief in god(s) and an afterlife, as a mistake. In the open, democratic society, people should have freedom to have a religion or no religion.

Humanism disagrees with religion mostly about the source of morals. Humanism has to argue for science when or where religion set(s) revelation higher than science as a source of knowledge.