

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

8:00–9:00am
MORNING OBSERVANCES

Whole Self - Whole Earth

Gede Parma

Room 102

Religious or Spiritual Observance

In the diverse and plentiful Pagan traditions, we experience the Earth as a Mother-force who nourishes, sustains and guides us on our journeys of spiritual discovery. Through our rituals and observances we align and attune with the natural rhythm of the cycles of Life. Inherent in this worldview of Whole Earth is Whole Self. We too must be whole if we are to fully experience and open to the wonder that is the Great Mystery of our Mother Earth and the Cosmos which is the dark womb that holds Her. This ritual observance will embody this principle of Whole Self - Whole Earth. This observance teaches that we are each intrinsically connected to Nature and to each other within it. If we seek wholeness of the Self through connection to our Earth we discover that personal transformation is at the heart of every choice we make and every hope that is kindled.

Gede Parma is a modern-day Witch and Pagan priest of the WildWood Tradition of Witchcraft. He is the author of 'Spirited: Taking Paganism Beyond the Circle' (Llewellyn Publications) and is a feature writer for Spellcraft Magazine. Gede weaves Mediterranean, Celtic, Faerie and Balinese traditions into his personalised path of ecstasy and magic.

Jewish Reform Morning Observance – Wednesday

Rabbi John Levi

Kim Gottlieb

Room 103

Religious or Spiritual Observance

An opportunity for people from a variety of religious, spiritual, or curious perspectives to engage in a Jewish morning prayer service. Informed by both Progressive Judaism and the Jewish Renewal movement (founded by Rabbi Zalman Shachter-Shalomi), which both embrace a commitment to strengthening Interfaith relationships. No Hebrew knowledge is required. The service will include some simple chants which follow the structure of all Jewish prayer services, while distilling many of the prayers to their essence, to highlight their intention in ways which are likely to resonate with the deepest humanity in us all. Led by Kim Gottlieb and Rabbi John Levi.

Rabbi John Levi is Australia's first ordained rabbi. He was rabbi of Temple Beth Israel 1960 to 1997. He has a PhD from Monash University. He is an Adjunct Professor at the Australian Catholic University. He has published five books on Australian Jewish history, a study of the music of the Berlin Reform Synagogue and a Haggadah for Passover Eve. He is a Life Member of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and a founder of the Australian Council of Christians and Jews. He is a Member of the Order of Australia. He is the founder of progressive Jewish congregations in Hong Kong, Wellington (NZ) and Adelaide.

Kim Gottlieb is a lay leader involved in Jewish Renewal services at Emanuel Synagogue in Sydney. He also teaches 12-year-old boys and girls in the preparation for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah (confirmation). He has studied at Elat Chaayim in America, as well as a variety of Jewish teachings, both in Australia and abroad. He is a psychotherapist and group facilitator, drawing from Narrative Therapy and Process Oriented Psychology.

Ancient Jain Mantra: Sound and Spirituality

H H Amrender Muniji

Room 105

Religious or Spiritual Observance

Mantras use the power of sound to bring about purification, protection, healing and the awakening of divine powers. Mantras are also positive affirmations, bringing the practitioner to a state of oneness with God. This observance will include the chanting of mantras as well as an explanation of the philosophy behind them.

His Holiness Amrender Muniji is one of the few Jain monks who travel outside of India to preach nonviolence. He was initiated at the age of fourteen. He holds a Master's degree in Philosophy and Sanskrit, and is a scholar of Hindu, Jain and Buddhist Scriptures. He has undertaken intensive study, practice and teaching of Hatha Yoga and Kundalini Yoga. His dedicated service to humankind has been recognised by several organisations.

Meditation for Better Life

H H Swami Avdhesahanand Ji Maharaj

Room 106

Religious or Spiritual Observance

To get rid of sorrows and to attain the permanent happiness is the only goal of every human being. All other goals are determined to attain this state of happiness. Even the most wonderful achievements in the world are nothing but the result of this one desire. Many people mistake the true nature of their yearnings and give them worldly direction, whereas in reality no human yearning can ever find satisfaction in anything that is not permanent and unchanging, however much people may try to deceive themselves on this point. People seek happiness in external objects, in the physical aspects of men and women. But true happiness lies within ourselves; it is our inalienable heritage. External things can never bring true happiness to us, and what little we get disappears in no time. Temporary happiness there is, no doubt, in worldly relations, in human love and human affection. But temporary happiness can never mean real happiness; rather it is the opposite of it. True happiness is the intrinsic nature of the inner Self.

Meditation is the way to achieve this True happiness. In this session Pujya Swami Avdhesahanand Ji Maharaj will teach us the art of Meditation, by which we can make our life wonderful.

H H Swami Avdhesahanand Ji Maharaj is head of the Juna Peeth, the largest group of spiritual leaders in India, and Trustee of the Acharya Sabha, the highest council of authorities on Hindu Dharma. He is also the founder of several humanitarian organisations, author, speaker and recipient of the 2008 Hindu of the Year award.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

8:00–9:00am
MORNING OBSERVANCES

Sunrise Morning Sadhana

Gurukirn Khalsa

Room 108

Religious or Spiritual Observance

Sadhana means daily discipline. By practicing morning sadhana each day, we dedicate our souls to attuning to God within, which manifests in our thoughts and actions throughout each day and our life as a whole. Morning sadhana allows us to cleanse ourselves at the very start of the day, when the energy is most conducive to meditation, so that the rest of the day shines with clarity and radiance. Morning sadhana is a self-sustaining process. It allows us to be more effective and aware. It builds our intuition, which enables us to be more in tune with the world around us. Morning sadhana is also called group sadhana. The energy of the group magnifies our own experience and we come to share a common dedication to nurture others and ourselves. This observance will feature a shortened version of the Aquarian Sadhana observed throughout the world. It will include the first five stanzas of Japji Sahib, an invigorating Kundalini Yoga, mantra chanting, and Gurbani Kirtan, the traditional music of the Sikhs. It provides participants with a refreshing and meditative start to their day.

Gurukirn Kaur Khalsa was ordained a Sikh minister in 1974. She is a past chair of the International Khalsa Council. She is also an artist and a poet. She is the author of the book 'Pure Longing Fulfilled' which combines poetry and art in praise of One God. She and her family attend Gurdwara Sahib Guru Nanak Dwara in Phoenix, Arizona, USA.

Sikh Observance by Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha

Room 109

Religious or Spiritual Observance

Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha will host a morning observance that will focus on Naam and Simran, the Sikh form of prayer and meditation. This interactive observance will allow participants to embrace forms of meditation that inculcate a deep sense of inner peace. It will also include an exposition of the Sikh scripture.

Chan Meditation to Ease the Body and Mind at All Times and on All Occasions

Ven Chang Wu Shi

Ven Chang Shen Shi

Room 110

Religious or Spiritual Observance

Chan Meditation is the essential practice in Chinese Buddhism. Prominent Chan Masters have attained supreme wisdom and compassion through their cultivation of Chan meditation. Application of the method is not limited to sitting only, but walking, standing, lying down, eating and exercising as well. In this one-hour spiritual

observance, we will begin with the Eight-form Moving Meditation, so participants can experience Chan in motion while relaxing their body and mind. This will be followed by guided meditation and a sitting meditation. Throughout this observance, participants will have a glimpse of Chan spirit and experience the ensuing calm and ease. This program will give participants a gift to bring home to raise efficiency at work and to fill their lives with happiness.

Chang Wu Shi is a Buddhist nun in the Mahayana tradition, practising since 1995 under the guidance of the late Chan Master Sheng Yen in the Dharma Drum Mountain lineage of Chinese Chan Buddhism. She has participated in and been a panellist on international conferences on peace making, spirituality and sangha education. Currently she oversees the operation of the Special Project Department and the International Translation Department at the Dharma Drum Mountain Cultural Center in Taiwan.

Chang Shen Shi, a Buddhist nun in the Mahayana tradition, has practised since 2001 under the guidance of the late Chan Master Sheng Yen in the Dharma Drum Mountain (DDM) lineage of Chinese Chan Buddhism. Prior to becoming a bhikshuni, she studied in New York City and earned a PhD in sociology in 2004. Upon returning to Taiwan she attended Sangha University of DDM for monastic training, including the philosophy of Buddhism and Chan practice.

Viswamitra in Union with the Universe

H H Swami Sandeep Chaitanya

Room 204

Religious or Spiritual Observance

This morning observance is a string of simple prayers and chants that subtly yet consciously make one aware of one's bonding with all the elements of the universe, living and non-living. From the waking moment until the end of the day, these prayers lead one to absorption, introspection, contemplation and self-evaluation. The 'Pratha Smaranam' points inwards to Awareness of the Self, moving on to the Gayatri mantra that draws inspiration and energy from the Sun, to salutation to Mother Earth, other elements, flora and fauna, and to meditations while going through the activities of daily routine. Swami Sandeep Chaitanya guides this session with chanting supported by musical renditions and printed material providing explanations. The prayers, hymns and mantras composed by the ancient sages of India are a sincere commitment of Man's consideration, care and love towards everything else in this Universe. Such a Man is the Viswamitra, after whom this program is named, one of the most revered of sages and 'the Universal Friend', the mitra (friend and well-wisher) of the entire viswa (universe).

H H Swami Sandeep Chaitanya is the founder and Chairman of The School of Bhagavad Gita, with centers in India, USA, UK, UAE and Canada. For over fourteen years he has conducted discourses on the Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads and other sacred texts, in India and abroad. He is a founder of the Salagramam Ashram and has spearheaded the National Awareness Programs for the protection of rivers. He is a disciple of Swami Chinmayananda of blessed memory.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

8:00–9:00am
MORNING OBSERVANCES

The Way of Balance

Eugene Imai
Chisato Morita
Tomokazu Yamamoto
Keita Karasaki
Atsuya Imoto
Kanami Hino
Kazuo Takizawa
 Room 207
 Lecture

One of Shumei's main teachings, the 'way of balance' is a key to successfully navigating through the world and one's life. It describes a particular pattern of thinking and acting centred around balance and timing. It is a non-judgmental and holistic approach to life, which accepts everything for what it is. By applying the teachings of Mokichi Okada, known to Shumei's members as Meishusama, the way of balance embraces living with kindness and compassion. By sharing the principles of the way of balance, this observance presents a path to finding true peace and happiness.

Eugene Imai is the National Director of Shumei America and the Director of the International Department of Shumei. Shumei is a Japanese spiritual organisation committed to furthering an ideal state of health, happiness and harmony for all mankind. As the Director of Shumei America, he provides spiritual guidance and support to Shumei ministers and members in America, including farmers practising Natural Agriculture. He has also participated in interfaith activities, locally and internationally.

Chisato Morita is a staff member of Shinji Shumeikai.

Tomokazu Yamamoto, Keita Karasaki and **Atsuya Imoto** are university students.

Kanami Hino and **Kazuo Takizawa** are workers.

A Celebration of Urantia, Our Planet

Gard Jamison
Francyl Gawryn
 Room 208
 Religious or Spiritual Observance

The Urantia Book teaches that our world is just a small part of a much larger system of superuniverses, all inhabited by trillions of sentient beings who also worship and celebrate the same God that humans do. The Urantia Book presents us with an invitation to expand our cosmic consciousness, to enhance our spiritual perception of these universal values, and to honour and sustain God's creative diversity. This observance will be a Celebration of the Family of God and will be hosted by members of the Urantia Community from Australia and the United States. There will be song and silence, word and image honouring the Universal Father of all creation. Participants from all faith traditions are welcome to join us as we celebrate the diversity represented at the Parliament, seek a deeper compassion, and achieve a heightened quality of wisdom.

Gard Jamison is chair of the Southern Nevada Interfaith Council, board member of the North American Interfaith Network, and member of the

United Religions Initiative. He teaches Asian Philosophy at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and is the author of 'Phaethon: A Story for our Mythic Moment'.

Francyl Gawryn is a musical recording artist and director of Youth Education at Grace Community Church, Boulder City, Nevada, USA.

Master Class in Raja Yoga: A Pathway to Healing and Transformation

Dadi Janki
 Room 212
 Lecture

Raja Yoga is the art and science of mastering the mind and developing a lasting and profound connection with the Supreme. Dadi Janki will explore the depth of Raja Yoga practice and its contribution to healing on all levels: physical, emotional and spiritual. Dadi will also explain how to apply our inner wisdom in everyday life to gain inner strength, which will enable participants to maintain their own inner happiness in the face of challenges and help others to do the same. In the words of Alfredo Sfeir Younis, 'Dadi Janki is so important to the world. This goes beyond her material existence. She is such a soul that no matter what state she is in physically, she will continue to thread the human quilt so as to awaken us to a better future for humanity.'

Dadi Janki is a master Raja Yogini. Now 94 years of age, she has studied and practised meditation since childhood. She first came to London in 1974 and has since overseen the expansion of the Brahma Kumaris into over a hundred countries. She is also Patron of the World Congress of Faiths and a member of the Global Peace Initiative of Women. She is now based in India.

Sanctuaries for Healing the Earth: Sharing Collective Wisdom and Ceremony

Leslie Meehan
 Room 214
 Interactive Workshop

How can people of all beliefs gather together to create a sacred space to honour and heal the earth? This program will answer this question by asking participants to co-create an altar and hold an earth celebration ceremony, during which participants will send blessings to the UN Climate Change Conference delegates meeting in Copenhagen. During this gathering, we will share our experiences of physical and virtual earth sanctuaries around the world. Participants will share stories and collective wisdom regarding sacred spaces consecrated to healing the earth. All are invited to bring objects representing their love for the earth to add to the altar. The program will also include a demonstration of an on-line sanctuary developed for the Gaiafield Project, a Wise Climate 2009 subtle activism initiative. Subtle activism is spiritual or conscious activity intended to support collective healing and social change. By linking the healing intentions of

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

participants at the Parliament with those at the conference in Copenhagen, our 'Heal the Earth' Sanctuary will clearly express our support for sustainable living and our commitment to a better world.

Leslie Meehan is an interspiritual minister and co-founder of the Gaiafield Center for Subtle Activism at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) in San Francisco, California, USA. She received her MSEE from Stanford University and is a PhD candidate at CIIS finishing her dissertation, 'Our Birth as Halo Sapiens: Navigating our Passage Through Climate Change'. She is committed to helping to create a world where the great-great-grandchildren of all species can thrive.

Catholic Mass, Coptic Rite

Fr Matta Ayoub

Room 215

Religious or Spiritual Observance

In this observance the Eucharist will be celebrated in the Coptic rite. Coptic Catholics belong to a small Eastern Catholic Church with its headquarters in Cairo. They are led by the Catholic Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria. The ceremony will be explained for those not acquainted with a Coptic Mass and will also be supplemented by an explanation concerning the Catholic Copts.

The celebrant will be **Fr Matta Ayoub**, who is the Melbourne migrant chaplain for the Coptic Catholic community.

Contemplative Shacharit (Jewish Morning) Service

Rabbi Or N Rose

Room 216

Religious or Spiritual Observance

Using the traditional rubrics of the weekday Shacharit ('morning') service, participants will explore several key prayers through song, chant, and guided meditation. Our service will include Hebrew and English. Translations and transliterations will be provided. All are welcome.

Rabbi Or N Rose is an associate dean at the Rabbinical School of Hebrew College in Boston, Massachusetts, and co-director of the Center for Interreligious & Communal Leadership Education (CIRCLE), a joint venture of Hebrew College and Andover Newton Theological School. Rabbi Rose is the author or editor of three books and numerous articles on Jewish spirituality, interfaith cooperation, and social justice. He was recently selected as a member of the inaugural Shalom Hartman Institute North American Scholar's Circle.

Observance on Tlingit (Indigenous Alaskan Native) Spirituality

Clarence Jackson, USA: Tlingit

Room 217

Religious or Spiritual Observance

The Tlingit culture is multifaceted and complex. In Tlingit culture, a heavy emphasis is placed upon family and kinship. Art and spirituality are incorporated in nearly all areas of Tlingit culture. A Tlingit Clan Elder from the village

of Kake in Southeast Alaska, Mr Clarence Jackson will offer a Tlingit observance. He is a fluent Tlingit speaker who frequently assists in efforts to document the Tlingit language and oral histories. Historically, Tlingit thought and beliefs were a fairly well organised philosophical and religious system whose basic axioms shaped the way Tlingit people viewed and interacted with the world around them.

Clarence Jackson is a Tlingit Clan Elder from the village of Kake, Alaska. He is of the Ch'aak' (Eagle) moiety, Tsaagweidi (Killer Whale) Clan. He is on the board of directors for Sealaska Corporation, a regional, Native for-profit corporation founded by the US Congress for the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people. He also serves on the board of trustees for Sealaska Heritage Institute and its Council of Traditional Scholars.

Melbourne Buddhist Leaders Observance

Ven Thich Phuoc Tan

Other Melbourne Buddhist Sangha

Room 218

Religious or Spiritual Observance

This Buddhist observance will involve some of the most senior ordained and lay leaders of Melbourne's Buddhist temples and centres. Convened by the Melbourne Parliament of the World's Religions patron Ven Thich Phuoc Tan, this observance will begin with chanting from the three main streams of Buddhism and will conclude with guided meditation.

Ven Thich Phuoc Tan is the Abbot of Quang Minh Buddhist Temple in Braybrook.

A Qur'anic Moral Imperative: Building Peace in the Pursuit of Justice

Dr Tariq Ramadan

Room 220

Religious or Spiritual Observance

In this session, Tariq Ramadan, a renowned Islamic scholar and President of the European Muslim Network, will discuss the Qur'anic approach to the moral imperative of building peace in pursuit of justice. This session is one of six in a series of Muslim observances on the Qur'an scheduled across the six days of the Parliament. Each session will include inspirational recitations of the Qur'an, clear translation, and illuminating exegesis around a different Parliament subtheme each day. This series will show how the subthemes of the Melbourne Parliament are all issues of shared concern to Muslims, as they are at the heart of Islam's social conscience.

Tariq Ramadan (www.tariqramadan.com) is Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University. He is currently Senior Research Fellow at Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan. He is active both at the academic and grassroots levels and lectures extensively throughout the world on theology, ethics, social justice, ecology and interfaith as well as intercultural dialogue. Through his writings and lectures, he has contributed substantially to the debate on the issues of Muslims in the West and Islamic revival in the Muslim world. Professor Ramadan is currently president of the European think tank, European Muslim Network (EMN), in Brussels.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

9:30–11:00am
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSION

INTRARELIGIOUS 9:30–11:00am

Plant Perspectives

John Grim

Matthew Hall

Deborah Bird Rose

Room 103

Panel Discussion

In a time of environmental crisis, who are the Earth others that we need to listen to, who do we need to heal? Engaging with the Parliament theme of *Hearing Each Other: Healing the Earth from an Earth-centered perspective*, it will explore the possibilities of hearing and opening up dialogue with the most prominent group of living beings on Earth: plants. As plants underpin all the ecosystems on Earth, one of the principal aims of this panel is to highlight the importance of plants in questions of Earth ethics and environmental justice.

John Grim is currently a Senior Lecturer and Scholar at Yale University. He is Coordinator of the Forum on Religion and Ecology with Mary Evelyn Tucker, and series editor of *World Religions and Ecology*, from Harvard Divinity School's Center for the Study of World Religions. He has taught at Bucknell University and Sarah Lawrence College and is widely published on the subjects of religion and ecology.

Matthew Hall is a postdoctoral researcher at the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh's Centre for Middle Eastern plants. Matt's research includes ecological surveying and developing botanical field guides, as well as philosophical work on conservation theory, interspecies ethics and attitudes to plants in religious traditions. He is a founding member of the ecological humanities research group.

Deborah Bird Rose is Professor of Social Inclusion at Macquarie University. Her work focuses on entwined social and ecological justice in this time of anthropogenic climate change, and is based on her long-term research with Aboriginal people in Australia. Her books include: *Dingo Makes Us Human* (Cambridge UP, 1992, 2000) and *Reports from a Wild Country: Ethics for Decolonisation* (UNSW Press, 2004). Recent work concerns extinctions and the moral imagination: *Wild Dog Dreaming: Love and Extinction*.

Interreligious Dialogue and the Catholic Church in Australia and Melbourne

Bishop Christopher Prowse

Bishop Michael Putney

Room 104

Lecture

Bishop Michael Putney, the Chair of the Bishops Committee for Ecumenism and Inter-religious Relations, will speak on the Catholic Church in Australia and inter-religious dialogue. Bishop Christopher Prowse will present the Catholic Church of Melbourne as an example of interreligious dialogue and speak about the Archdiocese's official guidelines, *Promoting Interfaith Relations*. Together, both speakers will address the broad range of interfaith activities that the Catholic Church in Melbourne and Australia has either initiated or in which it has been directly involved.

Most Rev Christopher Prowse, recently appointed as Bishop of Sale in Victoria, was formerly the auxiliary bishop of Melbourne (Western Region of Melbourne; Episcopal Vicar for Justice and Social Services), a member of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and an alumnus of the Gregorian University and the Lateran University in Rome.

Most Rev Michael E Putney is the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville in North Queensland. A student of the Gregorian University in Rome and the Catholic University of Louvain, Bishop Putney has taught theology in Pius XII Seminary, Australian Catholic University, University of Queensland, and Gregorian University. Bishop Putney has represented the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity at numerous international consultations, dialogues and events. He has been the Chair of Australian Catholic Bishops' Commission for Ecumenism and Inter-religious Relations since 2006.

Poverty Symposium Closing Session

Katherine Marshall

Room 105

This final session will take stock of what has been learned over the course of the poverty symposium and pose the question, 'Where do we go from here?' Katherine Marshall will lead an open discussion with participants in the poverty symposium about the possibilities and challenges around translating the messages of the symposium into concrete action.

Katherine Marshall is a Senior Fellow at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs and Visiting Professor in the Government Department and the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. She leads the Berkley Center's work on faith-inspired institutions working in development, involving a series of regional background papers and consultations with academics and practitioners, and a series of reviews of development topics.

The Black GST (Genocide, Sovereignty, Treaty)

Robert Thorpe

Dennis Walker

Room 106

In this session, activist Robert Thorpe will present an honest, thought-provoking presentation on the truth of how Australia was established. According to Thorpe, 'the Government would have you think that they are trying to do the right thing by Aboriginal people. A conversation with Aboriginal people almost anywhere in Australia will reveal that the [Government's] divide and conquer policy—and its outcome of despair—are familiar to people almost everywhere in Australia.' This will be followed by a presentation about treaties with Aboriginal people in Australia by Aboriginal activist Dennis Walker.

Robert Thorpe is an Aboriginal activist and founder of The Black GST (Genocide, Sovereignty, Treaty).

Dennis Walker is also known as Bejam Kunmunara Jarlow Nunukel Kabool. His political life began with the formation, in 1969, of the Brisbane Tribal Council. When the federal movement in Aboriginal affairs split at the 1970 Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders meeting, Dennis was a central figure in the development of the National Tribal Council, which came into existence that year.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

9:30–11:00am
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSION

The Soul of Kalaupapa

Fred E Woods

Room 107

Film

From 1866 to 1969, the Kalaupapa peninsula on the Hawaiian island of Molokai was home to over 8,000 patients isolated there due to the fear of spreading Hansen's disease. From a mixture of cultures and religions, the patients at Kalaupapa enjoyed a degree of cooperation touching not only the residents but also those who visited and served at the settlement. 'The Soul of Kalaupapa' is a film that captures the powerful spirit of intercultural collaboration at this unusual settlement. The film was directed by Ethan Vincent.

Fred E Woods is a professor at Brigham Young University in the department of Church History and Doctrine. Since 2005, Dr Woods has held a chair for religious understanding. He has lectured at numerous universities in the United States and internationally, and is the author of several books and many articles. His primary areas of research are Mormon migration and interfaith studies.

Introducing Quakers: What Canst Thou Say?

Catherine Heywood

Susan Ennis

Beverley Polzin

Sieneke Martin

Room 108

Panel Discussion

Christ saith this, and the apostles say this; but what canst thou say?... and what thou sayest is it inwardly from God? asked George Fox, founder of the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers. This session will be part panel presentation, part discussion, and part sharing of worship. First, a panel of three Australian Quakers will each present an aspect of Quaker faith in practice, covering topics such as Quaker worship, Quaker testimonies (peace, integrity, simplicity and equality), and Quaker service. They will speak from their own lived spiritual experience rather than presenting information about Quakers. Attendees will then have an opportunity to discuss their responses to what they have heard with other participants, followed by questions to the panel. Finally, all will be invited to share in Quaker worship.

Catherine Heywood joined the Quakers after working in a Quaker aid program in Cambodia in the early 1990s. She is currently a member of the Victorian Quaker Outreach committee, which over recent years has presented many sessions like this to the broader community. She works in education, delivering programs for migrants and refugees.

Susan Ennis has a long personal interest in religion, spirituality, refugees and asylum seekers. She has taught English as a second language to adult refugees in Australia for over 25 years. She has also taught English as a second language in Turkey, China, and Cambodia and worked in Israel. She is a member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). She has combined these interests in her PhD on religion, spirituality and the refugee experience.

Beverley Polzin has been a Quaker since 1981, joining the Religious Society of Friends in the town of Redruth in the west of England. She has

been very active in the Society and has served in various capacities in Victoria. She was also the Yearly Meeting Secretary (the equivalent of a CEO) for six years. She has a strong interest in interfaith activities and has been a participant in the Jewish Christian Muslim Women's conference.

Sieneke Martin has a particular interest in overseas aid and development programs and in recent years has spent time in East Timor. She is currently the Clerk of Victoria Regional Meeting.

Interreligious Dialogue Making a World of Difference to Establish Peace: Sikh Perspective

Jathedar Singh Sahib Gurbachan Singh

Devinder Singh Chahal

Balwant Singh Hansra

Avtar Singh Dhaliwal

Jessi (Jasjit) Kaur

Kuldip Singh

Dr Kulbir Singh Thind

Room 110

Seminar

In today's increasingly polarised world, some have pointed to religion as a primary cause of social division, conflict, and war. Others have argued that blaming religion distorts its true significance, because, when properly followed, religion promotes peace, harmony, goodwill, and social cohesion. Parvez Hoodbhoy has said that in an examination of global conflicts, blame will fall on religions because so many religions claim a superiority of belief and a divine right to impose their beliefs on others. The modern world is looking for peace and the survival of humanity and it would make a world of difference if all the major religions of the world could sit together and present their philosophy for establishing peace on this Earth. Inculcating the idea of peace in the mind is better than building an army to establish peace. As Einstein said, 'The idea of achieving security through national armament is, at the present state of military technique, a disastrous illusion'. This session will present the Sikh perspective and the philosophy of Guru Nanak as a basis for making a world of difference in establishing world peace.

Jathedar Singh Sahib Gurbachan Singh, aged 60, is the current religious head of Sri Akaal Takhat Sahib, the supreme religious authority of the Sikhs, based in Amritsar, Punjab, India. He was appointed as Jathedar on 6 August 2008, after serving 37 years as a Sikh religious preacher. His last appointment was as Head Granthi of Sri Harmandir Sahib, also known as the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

Professor Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD is president of the Institute for Understanding Sikhism and Editor-in-Chief of the research journal 'Understanding Sikhism'. He has written many articles on scientific and logical interpretations of Gurbani and the representation of Sikhism in various journals. He has also contributed many chapters in multi-authored books. He has written several critical analyses of works on Sikhism and Gurbani and has authored four books on the philosophy of Guru Nanak.

Dr Balwant Singh Hansra has been an at-large executive committee member of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, and chair and professor of the Natural Science Department at Daley College in Chicago. He has also been chair of the Sikh Host Committee and appointed chair of the Administration and Finance Committee.

Dr Avtar Singh Dhaliwal is on the editorial board of the research journal 'Understanding Sikhism' and is a member of the Institute for Understanding Sikhism.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

9:30–11:00am
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSION

Jessi Kaur, a frequent speaker at interfaith conferences, has travelled extensively, sharing the spiritual values taught by the Sikh Gurus. She believes that harmony is possible in a diverse world when barriers of ignorance are brought down. She is co-founder of the International Institute of Gurmat Studies and author of 'Dear Takuya', a children's book promoting acceptance of diversity among young children. She is also Fine Arts Commissioner for Cupertino, California.

Kuldip Singh is the President of UNITED SIKHS - USA, a UN affiliated NGO, aimed at empowering underprivileged and minority communities. He is a project management consultant working for Fortune 500 companies in the USA. He has participated in a number of interfaith forums and delivered lectures on the Sikh perspective. He actively promotes peace and harmony through multifaith, humanitarian relief and civil rights advocacy programs.

Dr Kulbir Singh Thind, MD has been distributing for free his Gurbani CD since 1984. He has developed databases relating to Sri Guru Granth Sahib and then developed many other specialised files of Sri Guru Granth Sahib text for the help of Sikh scholars and novices.

Indigenous Food Insecurity

Norma Kassi, Canada: Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation, Moderator

Anna Pinto, India: Meitei

Robert Houndohome Hounon, Benin: Vodun Hwendo

Room 111

Panel Discussion

Today's economically driven multinational corporations and uncontrolled climate change are leading to the destruction or erosion of the traditional subsistence lifestyle of many Indigenous communities. This destruction not only creates food insecurity but also has a negative effect on other natural resources. Panelists in this session will discuss various aspects of this food insecurity and its impact on the well-being and survival of their respective communities.

Norma Kassi, raised in Old Crow, Yukon, is Vuntut Gwich'in (People of the Lakes). From 1985 until 1992 she was a member of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. She has been a spokesperson in the effort to preserve the Porcupine Caribou Herd and serves on the International Gwich'in Steering Committee for the Preservation of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. She is co-director of the Arctic Health Research Network: Yukon, engaged in health research.

Anna Pinto is Executive Director of the Centre for Organisation, Research and Education (CORE), an Indigenous peoples' policy research and advocacy organisation based in the North East of India. An active member of the Indian Women's Movement for over two decades, she is also a prolific writer whose work addresses and critiques such issues as policy initiatives by the government of India and international agencies such as the World Bank.

Also known as His Majesty Daagbo Hounion Houna II, **Robert Houndohome Hounon** is the supreme spiritual leader of the great council of the Vodun Hwendo tradition. A veteran of numerous technical and spiritual positions, he is President of the association ELOSE, which has as its major aims a reconciliation between tradition and modernity, the promotion of literacy, and the acquisition and transmission of written knowledge. He is also an adviser on interreligious action for peace in Africa.

Michael Leuning

Michael Leuning

Room 201

Artistic Performance

Join Michael Leuning, cartoonist, philosopher, poet and artist, as he works with music to create artistic expressions. Michael's commentary on political, cultural and emotional life spans thirty-five years and has explored the idea of an innocent and sacred personal world. In 1999 he was declared a national living treasure by the National Trust and awarded honorary degrees from La Trobe and Griffith Universities for his unique contribution to Australian culture. His work appears regularly in the Melbourne Age and The Sydney Morning Herald.

A Review on Shi'ism from the Islamic Republic of Iran

Dr Shahriar Shojaeipour

Dr Mohammad Jafar Elmi

Najafali Mirzai

Room 203

Panel Discussion

In this session, Islamic scholars from the Islamic Republic of Iran will discuss the view of Shi'ism on several critical issues. Panellists will explore the basis of the Shiite-Christian dialogue, the characteristics and high flexibility of Shi'ism in comparison to other Islamic schools, and the Shi'a view of tasawwuf (Sufism) and 'irfan (mystical knowledge) as two different paths.

Dr Shahriar Shojaeipour is a faculty member and associate professor of History and Civilisation at the Islamic Research Institute for Culture & Thought. He holds a PhD degree in Islamic Studies and has taught subjects like 'Political Jurisprudence in Islam and Islamic Political Thoughts' in countries like Romania. He has written several books on different topics and has also contributed a number of papers to different international conferences and seminars.

Dr Mohammad Jafar Elmi is the Deputy (Research) of the Al-Mustafa International University, Qum and the Managing Editor of the Encyclopedia of the World of Islam. He was formerly the Principal of the Islamic College of Advanced Studies, London. Dr Elmi is also a visiting lecturer of the Baqir al-Olum University, Qum. He has presented a number of papers in international seminars and conferences and has written nine books.

Najafali Mirzai is Director, Planning Commission for Religious Higher Education and Cultural Counselor of Iran in Lebanon and faculty member and Advisor to the President of the Al-Mustafa International University. He has an MA in Philosophy from Islamic Azad University. His publications are 'Dictionary of Contemporary Idioms and Phrases', 'An Introduction to Higher Education in Religious Studies', 'The Biography of Sheikh Uthman bin Fawdi', and a number of published papers and treatises.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

9:30–11:00am
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSION**Melbourne: An Interfaith Experience****Rev Mark Dunn****Helen Heath****Scott Phillips****Rev Ian Smith****Monsignor James Murray****Mornington Interfaith Network, Respondent****Banyule Interfaith Network, Respondent****Sue (Denise) Talbot, Respondent****Hans Christiansen****Room 204**

Interactive Workshop

A panel of speakers from various interfaith initiatives from around Melbourne will present their experience of local interfaith work. They will highlight the role that local government can and does play in supporting local interfaith work. This program will look at four case studies of interfaith groups that are to varying degrees supported by local governments. The panel will consist of members of both the oldest interfaith network in Australia and more recent initiatives. At the end of the program, there will be time for discussion and questions from the floor followed by responses from members of newly emerging interfaith networks.

Rev Mark James Dunn is Minister of the Word at St John's Uniting Church, Essendon. He has chaired the Uniting Care/Share Committee of the Victorian Synod and has served on the Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Synod Nominations Panel. He has also served as a delegate to The Victorian Council of Churches. Mark is a keen supporter of the Moonee Valley Ecumenical Clergy Network and, in recent years, led the establishment of the Manningham Interfaith Network as its inaugural president.

Helen Heath has been actively involved in the Interfaith Network of the City of Greater Dandenong since 2000, serving as its President since 2004. She coordinates the very popular 'Tours to Places of Worship' for the Network. Helen has been a representative on the Victorian Council of Churches and has also served on its Commission of Living Faiths, Dialogue and Community. Helen works as a Community Organiser for the Parliament of the World's Religions, Melbourne.

Dr Scott Phillips trained in social anthropology and works in applied social research. He has conducted policy research for community organisations and governments as well as mining, manufacturing and banking companies. His work is focused on advancing social justice through inter-cultural dialogue, participatory governance and program evaluation. Scott is a Lay Minister in the Anglican Church and has been the Co-Convenor of the Hobsons Bay Interfaith Network since 2001.

Rev Ian Smith is Co-Chair of Darebin Interfaith Council. With 27 years of multicultural and multifaith experience working in Melbourne's North Western suburbs, Ian has been Vice President of the Victorian Council of Churches (VCC) and Past Chair of the VCC's Social Justice Commission. Currently, he is Chair of the Churches of Christ Social Justice Network. He edited 'Earth Matters', the VCC's study booklet on faith and the environment. Ian is minister of the Thornbury Church of Christ.

Monsignor James Murray is the inaugural Chairman of Geelong Interfaith Network, which began in 2003. In the early 1970s, James was one of the founders of the Christian ecumenical movement in Geelong. After 31 years as the Catholic Priest of St Mary's Geelong, he retired in 2001. He is still involved in ecumenical work and is now also working for peace among all the faiths and religions of Geelong.

Reverend Hans Christiansen is the Associate Priest at the Anglican Parish of Sorrento and Rye.

Diversity, Unity and Community: Charting a Course for the Jews under the Southern Cross**Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence****Grahame Leonard****Dvir Abramovich****Room 207**

Panel Discussion

This program will put Australia's progress towards realising the full implementation of its unique vision of a multicultural society into historical context from a Jewish perspective. It will demonstrate that this vision is far from fully accepted by all Australians. For many, a multicultural society is dismissed as an ethnic issue and a useful means of effective assimilation. However, to succeed, our model must extend to, and be embraced by, all Australians, including our first people, Indigenous Australians. While this model remains a narrowly defined work in progress, success is far from guaranteed. Indeed, history elsewhere in the world, be it the new or old world, suggests that Australia needs to be united, determined and strong to succeed and resist outbreaks of anti-Semitism and other forms of antireligious hostility. Jews arrived in Australia in 1788 with the First Fleet and have made and continue to make a distinguished contribution to Australia and its growth. The presenters in this program will reflect on this past and present contribution, including the impact of the Shoah, and reflect on future scenarios for the Jewish community in Australia, its various traditions and internal dynamics, its relationship with other religious and ethnic communities and the impact of international events.

Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence is Chief Minister of the Great Synagogue, Sydney. He serves as registrar on the Sydney Beth Din and the rabbinical board of the Kashrut Authority. Rabbi Lawrence is a founding member and director of the Jewish Arbitration and Mediation Service. Rabbi Lawrence has an MA (hons) in Jurisprudence from St Catherine's College, Oxford University. He qualified as a rabbi in Jerusalem. He also graduated the Shaal & the Rothschild Foundation training courses for Diaspora rabbis.

Grahame Leonard is immediate past president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, prior to which he was the President of the Jewish Community Council of Victoria for two years. He has held leadership positions in B'nai Brith and the Anti Defamation Commission.

Dr Dvir Abramovich is the Jan Randa Senior Lecturer in Hebrew and Jewish Studies and Director of the University of Melbourne Centre for Jewish History and Culture. He has published opinion pages in the Age and Herald Sun newspapers and is the editor of the Australian Journal of Jewish Studies. He has chaired sessions at the Melbourne Writers and Melbourne International Film Festivals.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

9:30–11:00am
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSION

Sacred Activism: Cooperative Partnerships Advocating for Global Peace, Human Rights and the Millennium Development Goals

James J Hurtak
Desiree Hurtak
Audrey Kitagawa
Roger Ross
 Room 208
 Panel Discussion

NGOs, parliamentarians, religious leaders, and community groups have key roles to play in carrying out the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Increasingly, governments and global institutions are recognising the importance of engaging communities of faith in the dissemination and implementation of MDG programs, and the delivery of needed services to remote populations. Expanding the level and variety of committed human resources and better managing their use is an urgent priority for social problem solving. With their broad outreach, communities of faith can be effective, positive agents of change. In the current global socioeconomic disarray and destabilisation, communities of faith must join hands to provide the inspired leadership that is needed to create just and equitable solutions to planetary crises. The decisions taken in the next decade by altruistic and compassionate leaders will determine how quickly the world can respond to the issues of survival faced by millions born into poverty and deprivation. This presentation will discuss how partnerships in and between faith communities and other stakeholders can create strategic alliances between compassionate service groups that will critically aid the achievement of the UN's MDGs.

James J Hurtak, PhD, is the founder and president of the Academy for Future Science. He has worked in the fields of education, science and spiritual philosophy, applying each to the task of cross-cultural understanding. He is the author of more than 12 books in 15 languages, including his most recent work, *End of Suffering*, and his films include *The Voice of Africa: A Study of a Zulu Shaman* and *The Light Body*.

Desiree Hurtak is an author and activist for global consciousness and a sustainable future. Director of the Academy for Future Science, she works with Indigenous people in Africa and South America towards sustainable development solutions. Desiree has been involved in promoting solutions to our environmental crisis which include establishing cross-cultural dialogue on issues of science and religion.

Audrey Kitagawa is Co-Vice Chair of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, president of the Light of Awareness International Spiritual Family, adviser to the World Federation of United Nations Association and chair of the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, New York. A member of the advisory council for the Toda Institute for Peace and Global Policy Research, she also co-facilitates the United Religions Initiative United Nations Cooperation Circle.

Rabbi Roger Ross is the Executive Director of the New Seminary for Interfaith Studies, the Executive Director of the Rabbinical Seminary International, and the Treasurer of the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, New York. He received his Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Philosophy from New York University, and his ordination as Interfaith Minister from The New Seminary. Rabbi Ross received Rabbinical Ordination from the Rabbinical Seminary International.

Interpreting the Text: Creationism, Intelligent Design and Evolution

Phil Batterham
Rabbi Shimon Cowen
John Buckeridge
 Room 209
 Panel Discussion

This year, the scientific world is celebrating 200 years since the birth of Charles Darwin and 150 years since the publication of 'On the Origin of Species'. The theory of evolution through natural selection caught the religious world, Christian and Muslim, by surprise. It led to the development of creationism and intelligent design as alternative hypotheses based on literal interpretations of scripture. This panel of scientific and scriptural scholars will discuss the issues and the remaining challenges.

Phil Batterham is an Associate Dean in the Faculty of Science at the University of Melbourne. He is the executive of the International Genetics Federation and vice-president of the Genetics Society of AustralAsia. Phil is a member of the Ministerial Advisory Council for Science and Mathematics Education. He is a co-author of the VCE Biology text, *Biology 2*, and a regular speaker on science in both primary and secondary schools.

Rabbi Dr Shimon Cowen has a dual background in secular and religious studies. He received a PhD in social philosophy from Monash University, Melbourne and rabbinic ordination (s'micha) both in the Kollel Menachem Lubavitch, Melbourne, of which he was Program Director, and from the Chief Rabbi of Haifa, Rabbi S Y Cohen. He founded the Institute for Judaism and Civilization in 1998, with the purpose of helping to bring together the two worlds of religious tradition and secular society in discussion and, ultimately, harmony.

John Buckeridge is the president of the International Society of Zoological Sciences. He also chairs the International Union of Biological Sciences Bioethics Committee and has worked as an advisor to the UNESCO Commission for Ethics in Science and Technology. John is based in Melbourne, Australia, where he holds a chair in Natural Resources Engineering at RMIT University. His current research interests involve ethics, sustainability engineering, marine biology and palaeobiology. He has published widely on environmental issues, ethics, natural systems and education.

The Future of Religion in Australia? Melbourne's Religious Leaders in Dialogue with Young People (Seminar 2)

Archbishop Dr Philip Freier
Rabbi John Levi
Sheikh Isse A Musse
Mathew Crane
Alana Bruce
Azmeena Hussain
 Room 210
 Seminar

This second of two parallel seminars, which will have the participation of the Parliament's senior and youth patrons, will discuss the future of religion in Australia and across the world. Recent decades have seen a very significant decline in mainstream Christianity together with a huge rise in those without a religion. In addition, new religious movements have emerged, adding to the diversity of Australia's multifaith society. This will be a discussion

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

9:30–11:00am
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSION

session in which young people, both Christian and non-Christian, will direct questions to some of Melbourne's most important religious leaders.

Dr Philip Freier became the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne in December 2006, following seven and a half years as Bishop of the Northern Territory. Dr Freier has been working towards engaging the Church with the wider community, particularly through his 'Prayer4Melbourne' quest, in which he has visited a range of public spaces, welfare centres and shopping malls. He is deeply involved in social justice issues affecting Indigenous peoples.

Rabbi John Levi is a former Deputy President of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and is a Patron of the Council of Christians and Jews (Australia). He was awarded the degree of Doctor of Laws in 2006 for his contribution to the community and to Australian Jewish History. Rabbi Levi is an adjunct professor to the Australian Catholic University's Asia-Pacific Centre for Inter-religious Dialogue, based in Melbourne, and has published several books.

Sheikh Isse A Musse, Imam of the newly built Virgin Mary Mosque and spiritual leader of Melbourne's Horn of Africa Muslim community, was born in 1946 in Somalia where he completed his primary and secondary education. He undertook his higher education at Ummul - Qurah University in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, where he gained a Bachelor of Arts in the faculty of Shariah in 1983. The imam arrived in Australia in 1993. He has also taken a 2 year course in Vocational Education Training (VET) at Melbourne University where he received an undergraduate diploma in 2000. Shiekh Isse is a father of three and speaks fluent English, Arabic, Italian and Somali. His community service includes being Imam at the Islamic Council of Victoria Jeffcott Mosque in Melbourne for a period of 13 years between 1993 and 2005. He is also member of the the recently instituted National Council of Fatwa, the Dispute Settlement Centre in the Department of Justice, and an appointed marriage celebrant and a marriage counsellor.

Mathew Crane is Administrative Assistant at the Jim-baa-yer Indigenous Unit (Victoria) of the Centre for Indigenous Education and Research of Australian Catholic University (Ltd) at St Patrick's Campus in Melbourne.

Alana Bruce is a 25 year old woman who is a member of the Jewish community. She completed a bachelor of arts, majoring in philosophy and social theory, before commencing a medical degree in 2007. Alana has spent time in Israel studying Jewish texts and belongs to a modern orthodox synagogue that has made moves to be more egalitarian and inclusive of women. Alana is also a part time professional jazz musician.

Azmeena Hussain is the personal assistant to the Executive Director at the Australian Multicultural Foundation. While working part-time, she is also in her fourth year of studying Arts/Law at Deakin University. Azmeena is actively involved in the Muslim community and is the Current Co-President of the Deakin University Islamic Society and Board Member of the Muslim Students Association. She is also a teacher at two Islamic weekend Arabic Schools.

The Common Enterprise of Peace-building: A New Model for Spiritually Motivated Social Action Within, Among & Beyond Communities of Faith

Rev Carol Carnes, Moderator

Rev Abigail Albert

Rev Jacqueline Triche Atkins

Dr Heather Dawn Clark

Rev Julie J Montague

Rev Mary Omwake

Rev Dr Joan Steadman

Room 211

Seminar

The Gandhi King Season for Nonviolence (SNV) takes place annually from January 30th to April 4th. Now celebrating its twelfth year, SNV is a 64-day, spiritually-

motivated educational, media and grassroots awareness campaign. This interactive seminar will focus on the campaign's famous 'omni-local multi-faith' model. Inspired by the 50th and 30th memorial anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr Martin Luther King Jr, SNV was co-founded in 1998 by the Association for Global New Thought (AGNT) and Arun and Sunanda Gandhi. With the support of AGNT, New Thought denominations banded together and invited other local faith leaders into dialogue to explore shared leadership of this annual campaign and to identify and activate demonstrations of local practices in nonviolence education and service. More than a decade later, a multifaith worldwide network stewards hundreds of ongoing programs in peace and nonviolence involving thousands of local participants annually. The Gandhi King Peace Train and YOUTH PEACEPORT program are just two of SNV's newest initiatives. Join leaders to discuss the spiritual and social value of bringing this inclusive model to your faith community.

Reverend Carol Carnes is the senior minister of the Center for Positive Living in Calgary, Alberta, where she carries on the tradition of New Thought to 'liberate religious thinking from superstition and dogma'. A member of the leadership council of the Association for Global New Thought, she was inducted into the Board of Preachers of Martin Luther King International Chapel at Morehouse College in 2000. She has participated in the Synthesis Dialogues with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in India and Italy.

Rev Abigail Albert has been a religious science/new thought minister with the Affiliated New Thought Network since 2002 and is currently co-chairperson of its membership committee. She and her husband, Steve Albert, are founding members of the All Faith Center, where Rev Abigail coordinates the annual Interfaith Summer Nights Program for the Poway Interfaith Team. Rev Abigail is a member of the All Faith Dialogue, the San Diego Interfaith Ministers Association and the Association for Global New Thought.

Rev Jacqueline Atkins is a licensed and ordained minister serving as executive minister and administrator at Power Circle Congregation in Chicago. She is responsible for board and leadership development as well as developing policies and procedures for the church's 23 ministries. She was inducted into the Morehouse Board of Preachers in the King Chapel in Atlanta in 2006 and received her Masters of Divinity degree from Chicago Theological Seminary in May 2008.

Dr Heather Dawn Clark has been the senior minister of Capistrano Valley Church of Religious Science in San Juan Capistrano, California since 1999. She serves as task force leader for the Gandhi King Season for Nonviolence in her community. Dr Clark has also served for several years on the Religious Science International Board of Directors and the Association for Global New Thought Advisory Council.

Rev Julie Montague is the chair of the Board of Association of Unity Churches International and serves as Minister to Unity of the Valley Church in White Rock, British Columbia. Raised in Unity churches, she has studied and explored many faith traditions and honours the beauty and truth in each one.

Reverend Mary Omwake is a spiritual teacher, writer, radio host and retreat leader serving Unity ministries in Overland Park, Kansas and Maui, Hawaii. Mary has spoken at the United Nations for the Season for Peace and Nonviolence and was inducted into the Martin Luther King Board of Preachers in 1998. She has served on the International Association of Unity Churches and the Association for Global New Thought. She leads retreats and sacred tours to Assisi, Dharamsala, Africa and Hawaii.

Rev Joan Steadman is a community spiritual leader at the Oakland Center for Spiritual Living in Oakland, California. Under her leadership, the Oakland Season for Nonviolence was formed. In 2001, she was inducted into the Morehouse College Board of Preachers, and in 2002, she was granted the Gandhi King Ikeda award. Rev Joan was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity in 2008 by the United Centers for Spiritual Living.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

9:30–11:00am
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSION

East and West: Spirituality and Women's Leadership in Different Religious Perspectives

Wendy Sargent
Susan Brennan
Arini Beaumaris
Councillor Jennifer Kanis
Room 212
Lecture

Throughout history, women have exercised religious leadership, inspired by their particular spiritual tradition. Powerful religious figures such as Madonnas and goddesses have promoted a more powerful approach to women's spirituality and women's leadership. This panel of women leaders will explore these issues from religious traditions and secular perspectives.

Over the past 25 years, **Dr Wendy Sargent** has coordinated spiritual multifaith projects with the Brahma Kumaris in South and East Asia, India, Australia and the Middle East. In the 1990s she returned to Australia where she published a book outlining methods of Eastern yogic transformation, 'Creative Raj Yoga Study Book'. Sargent is the coordinator of the UN Dialogue among Civilisations Forums in Australia.

Susan Brennan is the YWCA World President. Susan is a barrister in administrative, town planning and environmental law. Former co-president of the YWCA of Australia, Susan Brennan began her life in the YWCA as a young woman leader on the board of her local association in Melbourne, Australia. She was recruited to the National Executive Committee at age 24 and was active in the development of a national policy framework to guide the advocacy of the YWCA of Australia.

Arini Beaumaris is the National Secretary, Australian Bahá'í Community. As a member of the Bahá'í community, peace is a cause Arini has been involved in for 45 years. She was the first of two women to become a Director of a TAFE College in South Australia and has been in educational leadership for 20 years. She is currently completing her Doctoral Studies in the Gap between Moral Judgment and Moral Action at the University of Newcastle.

Jennifer Kanis is an Employment and Industrial Relations lawyer and is the Convenor of Victorian Women Lawyers. Prior to becoming a lawyer, Jennifer was a secondary school teacher and communications consultant. Jennifer sits on all City of Melbourne council committees, is the Chair of the monthly People and Creative City Committee and Deputy Chair of the monthly Planning Committee.

The Haudenosaunee Prophecy

Doug George-Kanentiio, USA: Mohawk/Iroquois,
Moderator

Chief Oren Lyons, USA: Onondaga
Jacob Andrew Swamp, USA: Mohawk
Room 213
Special Panel

The Haudenosaunee comprise a confederation of six eastern tribal nations in the United States, including the nations of the Seneca, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Mohawk, and Tuscarora. Like a number of other Indigenous cultures throughout the world that have prophecies, the Six Nations are well known for their message of peace, a central part of their prophecy, a prophecy that foretells of what or how changes will come to be and what impact they will have on the well-being of the people. Panellists from the Six Nations will discuss various aspects of the Haudenosaunee prophecy.

Mr Doug George-Kanentiio, Akwesasne Mohawk, is an editor, columnist and author. He has attended the last two Parliament events where he spoke on aboriginal issues of North America. He is a former member of the Board of Trustees for the National Museum of the American Indian. Kanentiio is the author of three books including, 'Iroquois on Fire', recently published by the University of Nebraska. He is the husband of the singer Joanne Shenandoah.

Chief Oren Lyons, Faithkeeper of the Onondaga Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy, is a powerful and passionate spokesperson for Indigenous human rights and spiritual perspectives. An environmental champion, he speaks around the world, is active at the United Nations, and is widely known through his writings. He is a Professor Emeritus, in American Studies, SUNY Buffalo and the co-author of 'Exiled in the Land of the Free: Democracy, Indian Nations and the U.S. Constitution'.

Jake Swamp is employed with the Men for Change Program, part of the Iethini'sten:ha Family Violence Shelter. He is a former leader of the Akwesasne Mohawk Nation and was involved directly in the creation of the Akwesasne Freedom School—an acclaimed Mohawk language immersion school that has been an inspiration to many First Nation peoples in the United States and Canada.

Jain Perspective on Nonviolence and Self-Control: a Model for Education

Sanchay Jain
Vinod Kapashi
Room 214
Panel Discussion

This panel discussion addresses the following questions: Would the religion of nonviolence and self-control heal the world? What is the Jain perspective on the question of nonviolence and self-control? Does this perspective provide a new educational model for a culture of peace and nonviolence?

Sanchay Jain has been associated with the Anuvrat movement for twenty years. Currently he is General Secretary of the Anuvrat Global Organization. He has been closely involved in developing the Children's Peace Palace at Rajsamand, India—a laboratory for the moral and spiritual transformation and all around development of children. He is also associated with the Balsambal orphanage.

Vinod Kapashi is the president of Mahavir Foundation in London. He lectures on Jainism in schools and colleges and has lectured at past Parliaments for the World's Religions held in Chicago, Cape Town and Barcelona. He has done extensive research in the Nine Sacred Recitations of Jainism and on the life of Jain Acharya Hemachandra. Mr Kapashi is an active Committee Member of the World Congress of Faiths in the UK. He has written sixteen books on Jain and non-Jain subjects.

Strengthening Families with Weekly Family Night

Lindsay Sanders
Andrew and Helen O'Riordan and Family
Room 215
Interactive Workshop

Family Night is a practical weekly program aimed at strengthening families. It includes lessons on topics such as ways to strengthen family unity and cooperation, learning to use loving language and actions at home, community service, increasing family members' understanding of money management, and becoming prepared for challenges and emergencies. By sharing ideas, training and activities as a family on an organised and regular

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

9:30–11:00am
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSION

basis, family members help each other improve and build love and respect for self and others. In a family, children learn about love, trust, loyalty, cooperation and service. They learn how to behave in a community and develop the attributes of good citizenship. Underpinning Family Night is the belief that in spite of challenges, regardless of differences, family relationships are the most satisfying part of life. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believes that the family is the fundamental unit of society and that the health of any society lies in the strength of its families. Thus, strengthening families will strengthen communities and nations.

Dr Sanders has a PhD in Education and leads the religious education program of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints locally. He also serves as one of the Church's senior local leaders in Victoria, Australia.

The O'Riordan family belongs to the Melbourne Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Courage to Care: Listening to the Messages of the Holocaust Survivors

Anthony Weldon

Kitia Altman

Victoria Myers

Room 216

Interactive Workshop

Melbourne has one of the largest populations of Holocaust survivors in the world. Drawing on their experience and the examples of non-Jews who stood up against the Nazi genocide, this unique educational program challenges individuals to reflect on their own stance to prejudice and discrimination. The program aims to show how one person can make a difference even in the most extreme circumstance and the potential consequences of choosing to be a bystander. Kitia Altman, who survived Auschwitz, enriches the program with her perceptions.

Anthony Weldon is the chairman of Courage to Care in Victoria, which reflects a wide spectrum of Jewish opinion and practice.

Kitia Altman, born in Poland, a survivor of Auschwitz, arrived in Australia in 1946. She later joined the Holocaust Museum, where she still works as a volunteer guide. She debated the Holocaust denier, David Irving, on national television, and in 2003 she wrote the book 'Memories of Ordinary People'. She nominated a Polish Christian woman and a German killed by the Gestapo for the award bestowed by Israel on non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews.

Vicki Myers has worked in Catholic education for over 25 years, recently joining the Catholic Education Office Melbourne after thirteen years as a Principal at Clonard College, Geelong. In 2008, she heard about Courage to Care and offered to host the exhibition. It proved to be a powerful learning experience for the school and broader community in Geelong. Vicki has a long involvement in social justice initiatives related to peace, dialogue, reconciliation and the environment.

Leadership Among Muslim Males in the Post-9/11 Era

Yasser Maghami

Ahmed Rehab

Hussein Rashid

Mohammed El-leissy

Fiyaz Mughal

Amir Al-Islam

Imam Khalid Griggs

Amjad-Mohammed Saleem

Room 217

Panel Discussion

This distinguished panel of diverse and engaging Muslim men will examine the need for Muslim males to reflect upon what being a Muslim means, taking into account multifaceted roles of being fathers, husbands and leaders in the post-9/11 era. Panellists will talk about bridging the cross-generational gap between today's young Muslim males and older generations. They will reflect upon efforts to guide the next generation of Muslim men away from violence, extremism and political turmoil, towards tolerance, mutual respect, understanding and knowledge-based learning.

Yasser Maghami is an Australian Muslim who emigrated from Iran at the age of three. He has a Master's degree from the Australian National University's Center for Arab and Islamic Studies and has extensive experience in the analysis of Islamic and Iranian affairs. Having recently returned from Iran, Mr Maghami's research focuses on leadership trends amongst Muslim males in a post-9/11 world, comparing revivalist and reformist Islamic viewpoints.

Ahmed Rehab is an American Muslim activist, writer, and Executive Director of CAIR-Chicago, a Muslim civil rights and advocacy office. He is a regular contributor to the Chicago Tribune, the Huffington Post and CNN.com and is a frequent guest on network and cable television news. Rehab serves on the boards of the Illinois Coalition of Immigrant and Refugee Rights, the Immigration and Refugee Interfaith Ministries, the Chicago Human Relations Advisory Committee, and the Egyptian American Society.

Hussein Rashid is a PhD candidate at Harvard University and has an MTS from Harvard Divinity School and a BA from Columbia College. In 2006, he became one of the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow. He is a frequent speaker and television and radio guest and is currently a visiting faculty member at Hofstra University. Rashid is the author of the blog *islamicate* (www.islamicate.com). His current research interests include the representation of Muslims in graphic novels.

Mohammed El-leissy is a community worker with the Islamic Council of Victoria. He hosts the 'World Peace' program on Melbourne's SYN FM, which deals with issues of cultural and religious identity in Australia. He has served on numerous interfaith panels and recently returned from a tour of Southeast Asia, where he represented Australian Muslims to faith groups in the region.

Fiyaz Mughal is the Director of Faith Matters, which works on developing platforms for interaction between Muslim, Sikh and Jewish communities across the UK. He is the founder and director of two micro-finance projects in Palestine and Israel and has been appointed as the advisor to Nick Clegg MP on interfaith issues and prevention of extremism. Mughal was awarded the Officer of the Order of the British Empire.

Amir Al-Islam is a Distinguished Lecturer of African American History, Islam and World Civilization at Medgar Evers College (CUNY) in Brooklyn. He is the former Secretary General of the World Council of Muslims for Interfaith Relations, USA. He is chairman of the Board of the Inner-City Muslim Action Network in Chicago, and Vice-Chair of the Malcolm X and Dr Betty Shabazz Memorial Education Center, and the Muslim Women's Institute for Research and Development.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

9:30–11:00am
INTRARELIGIOUS SESSION

Imam Khalid Fattah Griggs has been the imam of The Community Mosque of Winston-Salem in North Carolina since 1984. He is co-chairman of the North Carolina-based Black Leadership Roundtable of Winston-Salem-Forsyth County. Griggs holds a degree in political science and English from Howard University in Washington, DC. He was part of the anti-Vietnam war movement in the late 1960s and was involved with the Islamic Party of North America in the 1970s after his conversion.

Amjad-Mohammed Saleem is the head of media and public relations for The Cordoba Foundation. He was the architect of a global partnership between Muslim Aid and the United Methodist Committee on Relief, which was hailed by the British Prime Minister as a landmark example of Muslims collaborating with Christians during times of conflict in South Asia.

Analyse This!: Views of Young Saudi, Australian and American Muslim Women on Their Faith and Evolving Roles

Shaima'a Al-Hajj
Ndidi Amatullah Okakpu
Norah Ziad Elmagraby
Room 218
Panel Discussion

In this session, four young Muslim women from very different parts of the world shatter the stereotype that they are passive participants in their faith and evolving roles in society. To the contrary, they are actively engaged in their own Muslim communities and in the greater world community. Panellists will include an environmental activist who tells the truth about women's rights and Islam, a young civic leader fully engaged in inter- and intrafaith learning and activism on a global level, and two additional speakers whose names were not available at time of publication.

Shaima'a Al-Hajj is a senior Management Information Systems Student at Dar-Al Hekma College, Saudi Arabia. She is an enthusiastic business student with a particular interest in marketing and has been involved in many business projects with major global enterprises such as Procter & Gamble. She is an active member of international clubs such as the Toastmasters and the Model United Nations. She is very involved in global issues and has conducted many seminars regarding the financial crisis and urgent political problems. She is also an active member of the social community and an environmental activist.

Ndidi Amatullah Okakpu is currently an assistant at the Muslim Journal. She worked directly for world leader Imam W Deen Mohammed as Coordinator of his Islamic training program and joined the first delegation from his community to study at Abu Nour University in Damascus, Syria under the late Sheikh Ahmad Kufaro. Ndidi works closely in interfaith efforts with the Catholic organisation Focolare Movement and was a Muslim American delegate at their conference in Castelgandolfo, Italy.

Norah Ziad Elmagraby is a Junior Nursing student at Dar Al-Hekma College, where she is founder of the Dar Al-Hekma Recycling club and Student Government President. She is also on the Dean's list for academic excellence. She participated in Zaid University's Youth Delegation to Dubai in 2008 for the Women as Global Leaders conference and led many community service projects.

Compassion as a Common Value / The Global Food Crisis as a Spiritual Challenge

Solomon Katz, Moderator
Anindita Balslev
Rev Dirk Evers
Rabbi Dr Alon Goshen-Gottstein
Nomanul Haq
Samdhong Rinpoche
Room 219
Panel Discussion

Compassion, recognised and recommended by all world religions as well as in secular moral traditions, must be implemented in all levels of our collective life. Today, we need to address a series of problems, among which food and water crises are in the forefront. We must examine these issues within today's political and scientific scenarios while also looking to the resources of religious traditions. We intend to explore the resources of different religious traditions and relate these to projects that seek to remove various sorts of inequalities. Earlier, in two conferences in Germany and India, we discussed religious concepts of compassion and their relationships to political and social behaviour with religious scholars, scientists and diplomats. This program will present our results to a wider public.

Dr Solomon Katz is director of the Krogman Center for Childhood Growth and Development at the University of Pennsylvania and is a professor of anthropology and a senior fellow at the Wharton School Leonard Davis Institute for Health Economics. He was founder and Chairman of the Task Force on the African Famine for the American Anthropological Association (AAA) and is currently Chair of the AAA Task Force on World Food Problems.

Dr Anindita N Balslev works in areas of Indian and Western philosophy. She was formerly Associate Research Professor at the Department of Philosophy at the University of Copenhagen and has been a visiting professor at Aarhus University and various other universities in India and the US. Dr Balslev has published many papers in professional journals and is the author of 'A Study of Time in Indian Philosophy'. She is also the editor of 'Cross-Cultural Conversation'.

Rev Dirk Evers is Associate Professor for Systematic Theology at Tuebingen University. He studied Protestant theology at the Universities of Muenster and Tuebingen and at the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary in Madurai and is an ordained minister of the Lutheran Church. His Christian theology of creation in dialogue with scientific cosmology won the ESSSAT prize from the European Society for the Study of Science and Theology in 2002. He has published numerous articles on systematic theology and science and religion.

Rabbi Alon Goshen-Gottstein has been director of the Elijah Interfaith Institute and lecturer and director of the Center for the Study of Rabbinic Thought, Beit Morasha College, both in Jerusalem, since 1997. Ordained a rabbi in 1977, he holds a PhD and BA from Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His nearly three dozen articles have appeared in edited collections and in such scholarly journals as Harvard Theological Review, Journal for the Study of Judaism, and Studies in Interreligious Dialog.

Syed Nomanul Haq is a senior faculty member in the School of Humanities and the Social Sciences at the Lahore University of Management Sciences. A leading authority on religion and ecology and environmental ethics, Haq has published widely and contributed to several encyclopaedias. Haq received his PhD from Harvard University and has held positions at the University of Pennsylvania and Tufts University.

Samdhong Rinpoche is currently serving his second term as Prime Minister of Tibet in exile. He was born in Tibet and started his religious training at Drepung Monastery in Lhasa, completing his middle school of the Madhyamika School of Buddhism at the age of twelve. He

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

11:30am–1:00pm INTERRELIGIOUS SESSION

began teaching in 1961 and continued until appointed by the 14th Dalai Lama as one of the deputies of the Parliament of the Central Tibetan Administration. He was later unanimously elected as its chairman.

The Revival of the European Pagan Religions

Rev Andras Corban-Arthen, Europe: Anamanta,
Moderator

Jonas Trinkunas, Lithuania: Romuva

Room 220

Panel Discussion

The beliefs and practices of the Indigenous pagan religions of Europe were in many ways similar to those of Indigenous cultures from other continents. Some of the European traditions can still be found today, surviving mostly underground in remote rural locations, though a few are practised openly and have even achieved State recognition. They retain their original focus on experiencing the Great Mystery through spiritual communion with Nature, the veneration of ancestral beings, the honouring of sacred sites, and the observance of seasonal ceremonies and rites of passage. The panellists will discuss their experiences as keepers of traditional practices from Lithuania and from the Gaelic-speaking Highlands of Scotland and will also speak about the survival of other Indigenous spiritual traditions in both Eastern and Western Europe.

Rev Andras Corban-Arthen is the spiritual director of the EarthSpirit Community, a religious and educational organisation dedicated to the preservation of Earth-centred spirituality, particularly the Indigenous European traditions. He has been a presenter at many interfaith events, including the 1993 and 2004 Parliaments, and the 2007 World Interreligious Encounter. Of Hispanic descent, Rev Arthen teaches and lectures on the Indigenous European pagan religions throughout the US and abroad.

Jonas Trinkunas is Krivis (highest priest) of Romuva, the Indigenous pagan religion of Lithuania, and teaches ethics at the Vilnius Pedagogical University. In 1997, he was awarded the National Prize for his work and contributions in the field of Lithuanian culture. The main area of Trinkunas's activity is the revival and popularisation of the ancient Baltic faith of the Lithuanians.

INTERRELIGIOUS 11:30am–1:00pm

World Subud Association

Alexandra Asseily

Sharifin Gardiner

Room 101

In this program, Subud members will speak about personal inspiration in the context of the World Subud Association (WSA). Subud is an association of people from various religions, beliefs, nationalities, and cultures, united by a spiritual practice called the latihan. The name Subud comes from the words Susila, Budhi, and Dharma, symbolising surrender to the experience of

the divine life force within each person, which can effect inner transformation. Through the latihan, individuals may discover their own human potential, inner nature, talent and unique guidance. The WSA encourages the expression of true talent in daily life, inspiring a variety of social, cultural, entrepreneurial, and educational activities. Subud members have established the Guerrand-Hermes Foundation for Peace, which is built on the view that teachers' spirituality is fundamental to the flowering and unfolding of children. Alexandra Asseily will speak about the Garden of Forgiveness, a place for gentleness and peace that she situated in the centre of Beirut. Sharifin Gardiner will share about supporting members' work in the caring and social fields, in which the focus is on facilitating people to develop and take responsibility for their own lives. Through this presentation, the WSA hopes to expand its scope of interaction with like-minded associations and bring an all-encompassing spirituality into worldly initiatives and action for the benefit of the whole human community.

Alexandra Asseily is a governor and founder of the Centre for Lebanese Studies, Oxford and is on the Board of the Guerrand-Hermes Peace Foundation, Balamand University. She is a former member of the Advisory Board of the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University. In 1978, she was co-ordinator of International Aid Organizations. She is a psychotherapist specialising in conflict resolution—whether in the individual, family, tribe or nation.

Sharifin Gardiner is Chairman of the Board of Susila Dharma International (SDI), an affiliate organisation of the World Subud Association. The mission of SDI is to relieve human suffering and promote just and sustainable development through the following: partnerships and support for grassroots, participatory development and humanitarian initiatives; empowering individuals and communities to engage in positive human, social and economic change; and raising awareness of global issues and inter-dependence. Gardiner has been involved in Susila Dharma work for over thirty years.

Beyond the Dreamtime: Aboriginal Belief Systems and Their Deeper Philosophic Construct

Dienen Karna

Room 102

Lecture

Australian Aboriginal religions are the oldest continuously practised beliefs in the world today. Unfortunately, most people—if they know anything about Aboriginal religion at all—know only about the dreamtime stories for children. During this session, Dienen Karna will provide insight into the deep spiritual philosophies and complex, diverse traditional religious practices taught to her by her elders and passed on from the ancestors from time immemorial.

Dienen Karna is a Yai-idt' midtung Elder from North Eastern Victoria.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

11:30am–1:00pm INTERRELIGIOUS SESSION

Reviving and Maintaining Indigenous Languages: Saving Indigenous Languages in the Face of Globalisation

Dr Darlene St Clair, USA: Dakota, Moderator

Jacob Andrew Swamp, USA: Mohawk

Clarence Jackson, USA: Tlingit

Room 103

Panel Discussion

The right of Indigenous communities to maintain or strengthen the continuation of their languages is an important part of Indigenous self-determination. Some communities focus on the classroom in their efforts to maintain languages, while other communities use innovative strategies such as language immersion. Panellists will discuss the importance of Indigenous language to the survival of future generations as well as its necessity in sacred ceremonial practices.

Iyekiyapiwin (Darlene St Clair) is an assistant professor of American Indian Studies at St Cloud State University and the director of the Multicultural Resource Center. Her career has focused on the education of Native peoples from early childhood to college, the integration of Native cultures, histories and languages into curricula, and the arts and cultural expressions of Native peoples. She is Bdewakantunwan Dakota and an enrolled member of the Lower Sioux Indian Community in Minnesota.

Jake Swamp is employed with the Men for Change Program, part of the Iethini'sten:ha Family Violence Shelter. He is a former leader of the Akwesasne Mohawk Nation and was directly involved in the creation of the Akwesasne Freedom School, an acclaimed Mohawk language immersion school that has been an inspiration to many First Nation peoples in the United States and Canada.

Clarence Jackson is a Tlingit Clan Elder from the village of Kake, Alaska. He is of the Ch'aak' (Eagle) moiety, Tsaagweidi (Killer Whale) Clan. He is on the board of directors for Sealaska Corporation, a regional, Native, for-profit corporation founded by the US Congress for the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people. He also serves on the board of trustees for Sealaska Heritage Institute and its Council of Traditional Scholars.

Engagement for Justice: Meeting the Needs of Refugees

Marie Joyce

Ann Lidgren

Susan Ennis

Room 104

Interactive Workshop

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that there are more than 15 million international refugees in the world today. Significant numbers of refugees have recently settled in Australia and Sweden. This session will focus on several aspects of the refugee experience, beginning with the importance of religion and religious rituals in the time of crisis in the home country, the flight into refugee camps, and settlement in Australia. The first part will focus on refugees from Ethiopia, Iraq, Somalia and the Sudan and their healing process. The second part will focus on an innovative program in the camps to bring tertiary education to refugees through a combination of online and distance mode courses. The third part of the session will explain a pedagogical play

method (the BIV method) used in Sweden to address the identity problems experienced by young refugee children during the asylum-seeking process when they are especially vulnerable.

Marie Joyce is an academic and clinical psychologist and Visiting Senior Research Fellow at Australian Catholic University. She is a founding member of the Refugee Tertiary Education Committee (RTEC).

Ann Lidgren is Minister for Interreligious Issues within the Church of Sweden. She has a background in psychotherapy.

Susan Ennis is an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher who works with adult refugees in Australia and abroad. She is a member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

Perspectives on Sustainability: Buddhist and Jewish Perspectives

Ross Moore

Venerable Michael Lobsang Yeshe

Adele Hulse

Allyson Bader

Helen Gardner

Room 106

Panel Discussion

This program consists of two parts. The first presentation offers a prayer for peace, two short talks by two very different Buddhists, and a short awareness meditation. It concludes with the dedication of the positive energy generated from the session toward achieving Parliament goals, sustaining individuals working for positive change, and healing the earth. In the second part, members of the Jewish Ecological Coalition provide a brief introduction to the Jewish perspective on environmental issues and then present on activities undertaken by the B'nai B'rith Environment Group and the Jewish Ecological Coalition towards creating a more sustainable world.

Dr Ross Moore lectures on art and design at the Australian Catholic University. He has been a student of Tibetan Buddhism since meeting teachers in 1983. Since then he has worked intimately with Tara Institute, where he has been centre director and spiritual program co-ordinator. He regularly teaches Buddhist philosophy and meditation and is particularly interested in exploring relationships between Western and Eastern cultural traditions. Currently he is writing a book on meditation for international publication.

Venerable Michael Lobsang Yeshe was born in London in 1966 to a Greek father and a Belgian mother. He was raised in Kopan Monastery in Nepal and has been a Tibetan Buddhist monk since he was seven. At age thirteen, he entered the Sera Jhe Monastic University in South India, where he spent eighteen years studying Buddhist Philosophy. Since then he has taught and translated in Buddhist centres around the world. He is currently translator for Venerable Geshe Doga at Tara Institute in Melbourne.

Adele Hulse has written a column for The Age for 22 years, under the pseudonym Sharon Gray. Three collections of her columns have been published. She is the author of 'Big Love', the biography of Lama Thubten Yeshe. Hulse has worked for the Makor Jewish Community Library in Melbourne since 2000. The Library has published 82 memoirs and six anthologies, mostly Holocaust related. Hulse has been President of the Centre for Grief Education at Monash Medical Centre since 2002.

Allyson Bader has worked in Defence, telecommunications, procurement, knowledge management and consulting and has lived in Australia, Singapore and the US. She is a public servant who develops and delivers communications programs that support strategic financial initiatives. She

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

11:30am–1:00pm INTERRELIGIOUS SESSION

enjoys using knowledge and technology to make work more productive and life more interesting. She also enjoys motivating herself and others to rethink, refuse, reuse, reduce and recycle. Bader has been active in the Jewish Ecological Coalition since 2007.

Dr Helen Gardner began her career as a research biochemist and moved into computer programming and systems analysis. In 1989, she became a Community Development Officer and then trained as a counseling psychologist, completing a PhD in family psychology in 1996. Gardner chaired the committee for the 2007 Jewish Christian Muslim Association winter conference and has been chair of the B'nai B'rith Environment Group. She has been active in the Jewish Ecological Coalition and is an active member of a modern orthodox synagogue.

Soldiers of Peace

Room 107

Film

Contrary to popular belief, there are fewer armed conflicts in the world today than ever before. However, the world is faced with new challenges, from climate change to a lack of fresh drinking water, to ever decreasing biodiversity, to diminishing oil reserves and an ever-growing population. This documentary film examines the different ways in which governments and individuals can face these problems—through war or peace. The film was directed by Tim Wise.

Shared Security for the Earth Community

Bishop Geoffrey Davies

Tu Weiming

Additional speakers to be confirmed

Room 109

This session will address diverse aspects of security, including concerns ranging from the ecological, economic, and development perspectives, informed by religious understandings. What does it mean to frame security in its broadest sense, including all people, and acknowledging the entire web of life? Security in a globalizing world is dependent on global relations among peoples, and mutual understandings and actions about preserving the environment. What does security mean for the individual and the many, in the light of global warming? What resources can be brought to bear to conceptualize a future that offers security for all? And how may religious resources support the steps towards such a future?

Bishop Geoffrey Davies is Coordinator and founder member of the Southern African Faith Communities' Environmental Institute, which works to raise awareness of environmental issues such as climate change among different faith communities. He participated in Christian Aid's Cut the Carbon march around the UK, which aimed to draw attention to global warming and the urgent issue of reducing our carbon footprint.

Dr Tu Weiming has been a Professor of Chinese History and Philosophy and Confucian Studies in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University since 1981. He is former Director of the Harvard-Yenching Institute (1996-2008) and is currently interpreting Confucian Ethics as a spiritual resource for the emerging global community. As a renowned international scholar and thinker, he is committed to the study of Confucian teachings in the modern age.

Renewal: Religious Grassroots Environmentalism (Premier Film Series Selection)

Mary Evelyn Tucker

John Grim

Room 110

Film

Across the United States, people of faith are standing up for the environment—from Evangelical Christians fighting mountaintop removal, to Muslims supporting sustainable farming, to Jews helping children experience the bond between nature and spirituality. This documentary portrays the growing movement of religious communities united in their efforts to protect the precious life on our planet. Marty Ostrow and Terry Kay Rockefeller directed the film. A question and answer period will follow the film. Leading Scholar on Ecology and Religion, Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies.

Mary Evelyn Tucker is a Senior Lecturer in Religion and the Environment at Yale University, holding joint appointments as a Research Scholar in the Divinity School, the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, and the Department of Religious Studies. With John Grim, she cofounded the Forum on Religion and Ecology (FORE). Tucker and Grim also coordinated a ten-conference series on World Religions and Ecology at Harvard's Center for the Study of World Religions. Tucker has been a committee member of the Interfaith Partnership for the Environment at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) since 1986 and is vice president of the American Teilhard Association. Author of many books on religion and ecology, she has recently published *Worldly Wonder: Religions Enter Their Ecological Phase* (Open Court Press, 2003). She is the co-editor of books on ecological views of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Hinduism. She has published the volume *Confucian Spirituality* co-edited with Tu Weiming, and, *The Record of Great Doubts: The Philosophy of Ch'i*. (<http://www.religionandecology.org/About/founders.php>)

John Grim is currently a Senior Lecturer and Scholar at Yale University teaching courses that draw students from the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Yale Divinity School, the Department of Religious Studies, the Institution for Social and Policy Studies, and the Yale Colleges. He is Coordinator of the Forum on Religion and Ecology with Mary Evelyn Tucker, and series editor of 'World Religions and Ecology', from Harvard Divinity School's Center for the Study of World Religions.)

Health and Healing: Healing the Person, Healing the Family

Omie Baldwin, USA: Dine', Moderator

Clarence Jackson, USA: Tlingit

Oki Kano, Japan: Ainu

Room 111

Panel Discussion

Mental and spiritual illness manifests itself in a wide array of human difficulties, exhibiting symptoms such as substance abuse, destruction of families, child abuse and neglect and more. During this panel discussion we will explore the need for healing these ills, particularly within Indigenous communities—only by healing ourselves and healing our families and communities can we hope to heal the planet. Topics will include the use of traditional healing, the forced adoption of Indigenous children, and problems experienced by this lost generation.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

11:30am–1:00pm INTERRELIGIOUS SESSION

Omie Baldwin is a member of the Dine' (Navajo) Nation. A clinical social worker at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Ms Baldwin is also co-chair of the 'American Indian into Science' group on campus. She has served for several years as a board member of the Fund of the Sacred Circle, Headwaters Foundation for Peace & Social Justice, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Clarence Jackson is a Tlingit Clan Elder from the village of Kake, Alaska. He is of the Ch'aak' (Eagle) moiety, Tsaagweidi (Killer Whale) Clan. He is on the board of directors for Sealaska Corporation, a regional, Native for-profit corporation founded by the US Congress for the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people. He also serves on the board of trustees for Sealaska Heritage Institute and its Council of Traditional Scholars.

Oki Kano was born near Tokyo, Japan, in Kanagawa Prefecture. He shares his Ainu heritage through his music by playing the ancient Ainu stringed instrument, the tonkori. He has been involved with the United Nations Committee for Human Rights on the subject of land rights and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, particularly the way those issues have affected his Ainu community.

A New Conscience: Making a World of Difference

Alon Goshen-Gottstein

Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh

Bibiji Inderjit Kaur

Swami Atmapryananda

Mike Ghose

Alexis Yancey Jaami

Room 203

Panel Discussion

Repeated war, crippling poverty and pestilence have left humanity feeling numb and helpless in the 21st century. At this juncture of the third millennium, humanity is at a crossroads and desperately craving hope. The repository of this elusive hope is the Divine power and it is necessary to harness and mobilise this in order to attain sustainable peace. The mind is an immensely powerful tool with the capacity to be either one's best friend or indeed one's worst enemy. It is both the nucleus of divine power with infinite capability as well as the site of the hidden enemy that can propel one towards greed, cruelty, lies, selfishness, arrogance, hate and condemnation. It is the cultivation and empowerment of the spiritual mind that creates an inner peace which when collectively marshalled can lead to peace within the nation-state and throughout the world. The panellists will explore how a new conscience can be discovered to make a world of difference through sharing wisdom.

Australia's Diverse Cultures and Multifaith Communities: Fethullah Gulen's Vision and Building Bridges Projects

Orhan Cicek

Ahmet Polat

Mehmet Saral

Dr Salih Yucel

Sureyya Cicek

Cemen Polat

Room 204

Panel Discussion

Australia's unique multicultural and multifaith structures can foster relationships between the immigrant and faith communities. Fethullah Gulen, the Turkish Muslim scholar and educational interfaith leader, has developed a worldwide vision together with practical conflict resolution ideas. In Australia, his vision is being implemented by Melbourne-based Australian Intercultural Society (AIS) and Sydney-based Affinity Intercultural Foundation (Affinity) in many projects and programs for the wider society. These organisations and their flagship projects bring many different communities together around common ground based on mutual respect. AIS and Affinity provide educational and interfaith services such as international Abrahamic conferences between Muslims, Christians and Jews; series of social cohesion conferences; Ramadan iftars dinners and gatherings; and educational seminars and workshops. This program will outline and discuss Gulen's vision as well as his activities in Turkey, Australia, and across the world.

Orhan Cicek is the executive adviser to the Australian Intercultural Society and the Affinity Intercultural Foundation.

Ahmet Orhan Polat has been a dedicated educator since 1992. He has been a teacher and administrator in private Turkish schools in locations such as Turkmenistan and Crimea in Central Asia, and Melbourne and Sydney in Australia. He is currently General Coordinator of the Australian Intercultural Society in Melbourne and is a PhD candidate at the University of Western Sydney in New South Wales. His doctoral research is about the 'School Choice of Parents as the private Turkish schools in Australia'.

Mehmet Saral is the President and one of the founding members of Affinity Intercultural Foundation, Sydney.

Dr Salih Yucel completed the Bachelor of Islamic Theology at the University of Ankara in 1982 and Master of Theology at the University of Sydney in 1996. He worked as a pastoral care consultant for Muslim patients in Harvard Medical School's hospitals for six years. He attained his doctorate from Boston University in 2007. His doctoral research was about Medicine of the Prophet from the earliest to the modern period. Currently, he is a lecturer in Islamic Studies at Monash University.

Sureyya Cicek is a PhD candidate at Monash University and works with the Australian Intercultural Society.

Cemen Polat has studied Bachelor of Economics and Business Administration between 1992 and 1996. In 2002 she extended her study and completed Master of Teaching in Social Sciences at the University of Sydney. Since 2003 Cemen Polat has been teaching Senior Economics and Business Studies and has been appointed as HSC Economics marker by NSW Board of Studies for the past three years. She has delivered papers on the international conferences in Melbourne and Los Angeles. Currently, Cemen Polat is undertaking a research project on The Worldwide Turkish School Movement: Educational Philosophy and Funding'.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

11:30am–1:00pm INTERRELIGIOUS SESSION

Peace-Building in Mindanao: A Strategy to Promote Social Cohesion Among Diverse Communities of Faith in a Situation of Armed Conflict

Charlito S Ayco

Room 207

Lecture

This program will present how Habitat for Humanity affiliates on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines have sought to contribute to the cause of peace by building houses for both Muslim and Christian victims of armed conflict, including former combatants. Dubbed 'Peace Builds', these projects help contribute to the improvement of Christian-Muslim relations, with Filipinos of both faiths—including government soldiers and ex-combatants—rebuilding houses and communities together. The first Peace Build was on land donated by a former rebel commander who envisioned a community for both Muslims and Christians. Various government and non-government organisations partnered with Habitat for Humanity in building houses for the poor and in developing the community. Habitat also mobilised volunteers from the greater community, including formerly antagonistic communities made up of a largely Christian Indigenous people known as the B'laan. A typical Peace Build initiative consists of building decent, durable, and affordable shelter for ex-combatants and internally displaced peoples with the help of volunteers; implementing livelihood projects; improving access to water, environmental sanitation facilities, and services such as health and electricity; and strengthening existing structures for peace and development, including the mainstreaming of peace and development community plans.

Charlito S Ayco is a member of Habitat for Humanity Australia.

Health and Healing: Indigenous Healing in the Modern Allopathic Medical World

Dr Jennie R Joe, USA: Dine, Moderator

Mandaza Augustine Kandemwa, Zimbabwe: Shona/Ndebele

Constantino Pinto, East Timor: Timorese

Room 208

Panel Discussion

The health status of many Indigenous communities is substandard and many communities around the world are faced with escalating new health challenges or diseases that are not easily cured with modern medicine. In addressing some of these problems, Indigenous communities are utilising many resources, including that of their Indigenous healers. This panel will discuss some of these culturally-based interventions.

Dr Jennie R Joe is a member of the Navajo Nation. She is on faculty in the Department of Family and Community Medicine (DFCM), in the College of Medicine at the University of Arizona. Since 1987, Dr Joe has

also been the Director of the Native American Research and Training Center in the DFCM. A medical anthropologist, Dr Joe has been engaged in a number of community-based research projects with American Indian/Alaska Native communities.

Mandaza Augustine Kandemwa was born a Svikiro (in Shona, his native tongue)—a carrier of many earth and water spirits, and a Mhondoro—one who is in constant prayer on behalf of others. As a vessel of the Spirits, Mandaza receives visions and dreams, makes offerings, performs healing rituals, and serves as messenger for the Ancient Ones. Mandaza teaches us to become 'living prayers' in service of the One Spirit.

Constantino Pinto is co-founder and current director of Fundacao Lafaek Diak (FLD - The Good Crocodile Foundation), an Indigenous Timorese nonprofit, non-government community development organisation. He and his family lived through the Indonesian military invasion and occupation of East Timor.

Milestones and Signposts in Interfaith Relations: the View from Christianity, Islam and Hinduism

Ismail Albayrak

Raymond Canning

Fr John Dupuche

Mehmet Seker

Dr Anita Ray

Room 209

Panel Discussion

People of diverse ethnic, religious and political backgrounds now live together in all cities of the world. This situation poses a substantial civic and theological challenge, as recent events in New York, Madrid, London, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East reveal. We can no longer take harmony for granted. During this session, five panellists from the Asia-Pacific Centre for Inter-religious Dialogue at Australian Catholic University will discuss the challenge of a pluralistic society from the perspective of practical theology. Drawing on case studies from within the world's three largest religious traditions—Christianity, Islam and Hinduism—the panel will investigate the efforts of visionaries like Pope John XXIII, Francis of Assisi, the Prophet Muhammad and the Hindu poet-saints. The participants will examine the different historical contexts of these remarkable visionaries and explain how they built bridges of understanding to other faith communities. The intention of the session is not merely to pinpoint defining moments on the long trajectory of interfaith relations. Rather, the panellists will seek to establish that the milestones are actually signposts, beckoning each of us to take courageous and imaginative steps in the service of human rights, justice and peace.

Ismail Albayrak received his PhD from Leeds University in 2000. He taught Qur'anic Studies, classical exegesis, contemporary approaches to the Qur'an and orientalism at Sakarya University in Turkey. In November 2008 he was appointed to the newly established Fethullah Gulen Chair in the Study of Islam and Muslim-Catholic Relations at Australian Catholic University.

A graduate of the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, **Raymond Canning** teaches theology at Australian Catholic University, Canberra campus. His major work is on the unity of love for God and neighbour in St Augustine. Since 2006, Prof Canning has been a coordinator of the Graduate Certificate in Interfaith Relations, and director of the Asia-Pacific Centre for Inter-religious Dialogue.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

11:30am–1:00pm INTERRELIGIOUS SESSION

Rev Dr John Dupuche is a Parish Priest in the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. His book, 'Abhinavagupta: The Kula Ritual', was published in 2003; 'Jesus, the Mantra of God', in 2005; and 'Vers un Tantra Chretien' in 2009. He is chair of the Catholic Interfaith Committee and research officer at Australian Catholic University. He has established an inter-faith household together with Swami Sannyasanand and the Venerable Lobsang Tendar.

Mehmet Yavuz Seker received his MA degree from Sakarya University in Turkey. He is currently a PhD candidate at Australian Catholic University and is working on the topic, 'The Qur'anic Origin of Sufism'. He has authored several books and is a regular columnist for Zaman Australia. He has written several articles in the Turkish magazine Yeni Umit (New Hope) and he is a special advisor to Turkish schools in Melbourne.

Anita Ray holds a Science degree from the University of Sydney, a Licentiate in Theology from the Melbourne College of Divinity, an Arts degree from Murdoch University and a PhD in Sanskrit literature from La Trobe University. She has lived for two decades in Pakistan and India and has lectured for fifteen years in Australian Universities. She is presently a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Catholic University, Melbourne.

Monastic Interreligious Dialogue: Dialogue at the Level of Spiritual Practice and Experience

William Skudlarek

Rev Heng Sure

Venerable Jian Zong

Room 210

Seminar

The Benedictine Confederation established Monastic Interreligious Dialogue (MID) in 1978 in direct response to a request of the Vatican that Catholic monks and nuns dedicate themselves to an ongoing dialogue with the great religions of the East. In this program, an American Catholic monk and Secretary General of MID, the Ven Jian Zong is the Abbot of the Houston branch of Chung Tai Chan Monastery and two additional two Buddhist monks, who have participated in MID-sponsored activities, will describe monastic experience and practice. They will show how the similarity of monastic renunciation, vows, daily lifestyles and spiritual practices means that monks have a unique relationship to institutional structures. Monastics share much across religious boundaries that they might not share with other members of their own faith tradition. Monastic interreligious dialogue will be presented as a special form of interreligious dialogue that emphasises listening and hospitality and focuses on spiritual practice and experience.

William Skudlarek has been a Benedictine monk at Saint John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota for fifty years. After serving as President and then Executive Director of the North American branch of Monastic Interreligious Dialogue, he was appointed Secretary General in 2008. From 1994 to 2001, he lived at a Benedictine monastery in Japan, where he regularly participated in zazen and sesshin offered by the San'un Zendo in Kamakura.

Rev Heng Sure is the Director of the Berkeley Buddhist Monastery and a former Global Councilor of the United Religions Initiative. He has been a Buddhist monk for 33 years, and holds a PhD from the Graduate Theological Union, in Berkeley, California (USA) and an MA from the University of California, Berkeley. An author and musician, Rev Sure recently released the CD 'Paramita: American Buddhist Folk Songs'.

Ven Jian Zong is the Abbot of the Houston branch of Chung Tai Chan Monastery, founded by the Grand Master Wei Chueh, a spiritual leader

instrumental in revitalising Chan (Zen) Buddhism in Taiwan. Since joining monastic orders in 1998 and prior to his current position, Master Jian Zong served as Vice Abbot of Chung Tai Chan Monastery; Abbot of Great Enlightened Monastery in Keelung, Taiwan; and administrator and instructor at the Chung Tai Buddhist Institute.

The Stolen Generation and The Apology

Melissa Brickell

**Representatives of Stolen Generation Victoria (SGV)
Room 212**

This presentation will focus on the ways in which people and organisations can support and address the needs of those people affected by practices and policies of removing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from family, community, country and culture. It will also highlight a personal journey that contributed to The Apology by the Prime Minister of Australia to the Stolen Generation.

Melissa Brickell, a descendant of the Yorta Yorta and Wiradjeri people, resides in Melbourne. Her work and active community involvement over the last eighteen years have focused on cross-cultural awareness and reconciliation among Australians. Brickell received a Reconciliation Award from Maribyrnong City Council for advancing the rights and community life of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. She is also actively involved in the Stolen Generations movement in Victoria and nationally.

The primary purpose of **Stolen Generation Victoria (SGV)** is to support and address the needs of people affected by practices and policies of removing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from family, community, country and culture.

The Hazards of Writing About Religion

Barney Zwartz

James Jupp

Hanifa Deen

Rabbi Aviva Kipen

Room 213

Panel Discussion

Writing about religion is fraught with potential hazards. How does one deal with sensitive themes like religious vilification, conversions, persecuted religious minorities, conflicting beliefs, claims of supremacy and the interface between religion and politics? How can one deal with difference without falling into a crusading spirit or becoming a bland harmonist 'papering over' conflicts? Sometimes writers who articulate their own personal traumas provide fuel to polemics. How then does one explore religious differences and possible tensions in a way that keeps dialogue open? As a writer how do you bridge the distance between your own religious background and a religion not your own? On the other hand an author may want to harness subjectivity to create a colourful, page-turning narrative without distorting the truth. And often it's the journalist's role to write about complex issues within a 350-word limit while coping with an impatient editor. How do you stay true to yourself as a writer without censoring yourself and how do you avoid being sued? Finally, how do you engage a wider readership not necessarily interested in 'religious topics'? During this session, a panel of

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

11:30am–1:00pm INTERRELIGIOUS SESSION

writers of narrative non-fiction, journalists, reporters and academic authors will address these questions.

Barney Zwartz is religion editor of 'The Age', where he has worked for 28 years. He has covered religion since 2002. Mr Zwartz has a degree in theology.

Professor James Jupp is an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute at the Australian National University.

Hanifa Deen is an award-winning Australian author of narrative non-fiction. She is of Pakistani ancestry; both her grandfathers came to Australia in the 19th century. Her books include: 'Caravanserai: Journey Among Australian Muslims'; 'Broken Bangles'; 'The Crescent and the Pen' and 'The Jihad Seminar'.

Rabbi Aviva Kipen, (Session Facilitator), the first Australian woman ordained a rabbi, is experienced in international interreligious dialogue, education and innovative programming. Former Executive Secretary for the World Conference of Religions for Peace in Australia and a 2008 Australian Association of Southeast Asian Nations interfaith dialogue participant, she designed and delivered Victoria's Multi-faith Celebration of the Australian Centenary. Her core ministries have been as congregational rabbi, funeral and loss specialist, and researcher into the work of clergy in Human Research Ethics Committees.

Furthering Global Human Thriving through Interreligious and Interdisciplinary Discourse

James F Moore
Barbara Strassberg
Christoffer Grundmann
Joseph Edelheit
Rebecca Burroway
Fatima Sattar
Meg Bero
Room 214

Panel Discussion

This interdisciplinary program will focus on the critical issues of providing health care, especially to those in impoverished areas. Providing effective and sustainable health care requires attention to a complex interplay of factors that reach far beyond the building of clinics, training of health care professionals and dispensing of medications. Good health care stems from effective partnerships among a variety of people and institutions. Panel members will provide data on basic conditions of sanitation, safe water supply and child nutrition as well as the role that interethnic conflict and interreligious differences play in supporting or impeding an environment conducive to healthy living. This session will run for three hours, into the lunch hour.

James F Moore is Professor of Theology at Valparaiso University. He has authored numerous books and articles, including the Templeton award-winning 'Cosmology and Theology: The Re-Emergence of Patriarchy'. He is co-director of the HIV Symposium project at the Zygon Center for Religion and Science and is on the boards of the Wyman Institute, the Center for Advanced Study in Religion and Science, and the Studies in the Shoah series of the University Press of America.

Barbara Strassberg is Professor and Chair of the Aurora University sociology program. Her academic interests include the sociology of culture, ethics, human rights, social justice, science and religion, and interdisciplinary scholarship. Strassberg earned her Master's and PhD from the Jagiellonian University and has studied at Ecole Supérieure des Hautes Etudes and the University of Chicago. She is the author of two books and

more than one hundred articles, chapters, book reviews and conference papers.

Christoffer Grundmann, MTh, has been a Lutheran minister for over thirty years. He has taught at the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, the University of Hamburg, and Valparaiso University, where he holds the John R Eckrich University Chair in Religion and the Healing Arts. He has also worked as theological consultant and chaplain at the German Institute for Medical Missions and with the Center for Health-Care Ethics of the Lutheran Church of Lower Saxony.

Dr Joseph Edelheit, Director of Religious and Jewish Studies and Professor of Philosophy at St Cloud State University, has been a rabbi for more than 35 years. He has a DMin from the Divinity School of the University of Chicago and was the first rabbi to complete his doctoral work in Christian theology. He served on President Clinton's Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS and currently co-directs Living India, a nonprofit focused on HIV/AIDS prevention education.

Rebecca Burroway received her BA in English and Sociology from Aurora University, MA in International Relations from the University of Chicago, and MA in Sociology from Duke University. A PhD candidate at Duke, Ms Burroway is currently involved in several other research projects examining health insurance inequality among low-income Americans, domestic violence and child immunisation rates in the Dominican Republic, cross-national disparities in AIDS death rates, and issues of control among female sex workers in India.

Fatima Sattar is currently a student and teaching assistant in the doctorate program in Sociology at Boston College. She received her MA in Middle Eastern Studies and BA in Sociology. Her MA research project is titled 'A Study on the Reconstruction of Memory of Violence from the Aftermath of the 1947 British Partition of India'. She presented her BA thesis research project, 'Varying Attitudes Toward Foreign Accents', at the American Sociological Association's annual meeting in 2006.

Meg Bero is the Executive Director of the Schingoethe Center for Native American Cultures at Aurora University. Previous positions include curator, associate director and art educator. She has taught courses in Native American Spirituality and Native American Art and developed a museum studies curriculum for Aurora University. Bero has received awards for her curatorial work and educational programming and was named 1999 Illinois Museum Educator of the Year. She is featured in Who's Who in America and Who's Who of American Women.

The Importance of Family

Elder Dirk Smibert
Dienen Karna
Rabbi Rayna Gevurtz
Mejinderpal Kaur
Room 215

This session will highlight the importance of family in faith communities and in society at large. Elder Dirk Smibert from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and religious leaders from other faiths will share their perspectives. The family provides the ideal setting to learn key values such as love, understanding, cooperation and service, which lead to the development of responsible, caring citizens contributing to more harmonious and productive communities at all levels. After hearing from each of the participants, the interfaith panel will discuss topical family issues together in an interactive forum.

As a Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, **Elder Smibert** supervises various jurisdictions in the Pacific Area of the Church, including assignments in Pacific Island nations, Papua New Guinea and Australia. Elder Smibert has served as one of the Church's mission presidents and has held various local leadership roles. Professionally, Elder Smibert has primarily worked in senior positions within the advertising, marketing and sales industries. He is married and has five children.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

11:30am–1:00pm
INTERRELIGIOUS SESSION

Dienen Karna (or Ann Warren, her name in English) is an Elder of North Eastern Victoria. She is a medicine woman of the Aborigine Ya'itd-mitung (pronounced Yamadang).

Prior to her rabbinic training, **Rabbi Rayna Gevurtz** earned a BSc (Psych) and was a Youth Director for Young Judea. She has served as a rabbi at Isaac Mayer Wise Temple in Ohio and Temple Bat Yahm in California. She joined the Temple Beth Israel (TBI) rabbinic team in Victoria after serving as rabbi at King David School. In addition to her general rabbinic duties at TBI, Rabbi Gevurtz has particular responsibility for family programs. She is married to TBI rabbi Gersh Zylberman, and they are blessed with two daughters and a schnoodle.

Mejinderpal Kaur is legal director and chair of the UK chapter of UNITED SIKHS, a registered charity which serves minority and underprivileged communities globally through programs for civil and human rights advocacy, human development and humanitarian relief. She leads the legal team that is fighting for the right to wear the Sikh articles of faith in Europe, particularly France.

108 Bowls: A Mala of Water

Ven Bonnie Myotai Treace

Room 216

Lecture

Water is a shared reality of the human experience. Our existence depends upon it, we are made of it, its crisis is our own, its beauty heals our hearts as perhaps no other natural element can. This talk profiles the movement inspired by the Bodies of Water School (BOWS) of simply 'paying attention to water', in which groups of 108 people agree to place small ceramic cups (each made and fired ritually as an offering by a BOWS artist) filled with water in a windowsill in their home. What began with a few Buddhist practitioners now includes people of many faiths, engaging in a simple gesture that is seemingly private and has already changed the way hundreds of people live.

Ven Bonnie Myotai Treace is the founder of Hermitage Heart Zen and the Bodies of Water School of Practice. For many years she was the Vice-Abbess of Zen Mountain Monastery and Abbess of the Zen Center of New York City, having received ordination and transmission in the Soto School of Buddhism. Her work in recent years has been dedicated to the intrareligious and to bringing environmental protection and celebration into contemplative depth.

I-Kuan Tao: Healing the Earth with Care and Concern, Sharing Wisdom in the Search of Inner Peace

Jeng Chen

Room 217

Lecture

It is the ideal of I-Kuan Tao that when all peoples and nations live as one family on the five continents, viewing each other with respect and equality, there will be both inner peace in individuals and world peace among nations. To make this ideal into a reality, I-Kuan Tao has extended substantial assistance to relieve human suffering caused by natural catastrophes such as Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans; the tsunami in Indonesia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka; the cyclone in Myanmar; and the earthquake in Sichuan Province, China. In his presentation, Dr Chen

will outline his work plans and experience and share earth-friendly and people-friendly insights based on the fundamental beliefs of I-Kuan Tao such as respect for the Sky and the Earth, worship of the Sage, carrying out of filial duties to parents, and refinement of bad habit into goodwill.

Dr Jeng Fu (Joseph) Chen is the Secretary General and Vice President of World I-Kuan Tao Headquarters. He received his Bachelor of Science degree at California State University at Los Angeles and also holds a Doctorate in Religious Studies from the University of the West, California, USA. He has served as commissioner and Chairman of the Cultural Commission of the City of El Monte since 1997. He is the author of the book 'I-Kuan Tao'.

Closing Remarks on Conflict Resolution

Dharma Master Hsin Tao

Father Leonel Narvaez

Room 219

Panel Discussion

When people of conviction, skill and knowledge commit themselves to understanding, nonviolence and peace, aggression can be stemmed and, sometimes, ended. Summing up the insights, inspiration and knowledge gained in the Conflict Resolution Sessions, Dharma Master Hsin Tao, Father Leonel Narvaez and others discuss practical ways to achieve peace building in our time.

Dharma Master Hsin Tao was born in Burma in 1948 and came to Taiwan at age thirteen. He became a monk at age 25 and established the Wu-sheng Monastery on Ling-jiou mountain in 1983. He founded the Museum of World Religions and is president of the Global Family of Love and Peace. The series of Buddhist-Muslim dialogues he initiated in 2001 have been conducted in ten countries, including the UNESCO Paris and UN in New York.

Father Leonel Narvaez is a Catholic missionary who initially worked with nomadic tribes in Eastern Africa and currently works in the forest of the South Amazon area of Colombia. In 2000, he established the Schools of Forgiveness and Reconciliation. He was a key figure in the Goldin Institute's 2007 global gathering on the topic of reintegration of former child soldiers.

Healing the Earth: Buddhist and Hindu Theological Perspectives

Rajendra Damodara Yenkanamoole

Venerable Miao You

Dr Tong Yun Kai

Dr T V Muralivallabhan

Room 220

Lecture

In this program, practitioners of both Buddhist and Hindu theological traditions will share their teachings about healing the Earth. The first part of this program will explore how meditation and vegetarianism can heal our relationships with each other and reduce our impact on the environment. The second part of the presentation will posit the idea that we can achieve a sustainable future and lasting world peace by fostering a genuine commitment to treat the human community with understanding, compassion and love.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

11:30am–1:00pm
INTERRELIGIOUS SESSION

Rajendra Damodara Yenkanamoole is the founder of the Vasudeva Kriya Yoga and hails from a small village in South India. He has Master's degrees in Chemical Engineering as well as Business Administration and currently resides in Melbourne. Rajendra met his Guru, Sri Paramhans Swami Maheshwaranandji, in 1996. In 2008 and 2009, he organised seminars on sustainable living through Yoga in Melbourne by bringing together various Yoga and Naturopath Schools on a single platform.

Venerable Miao You is a resident teacher of the Nan Tien Temple, Wollongong region of New South Wales. A disciple of the renowned Master Hsing-Yun of the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Order, she has been sharing and promoting the teachings of Humanistic Buddhism for nearly ten years in Australia. Before joining the Buddhist Order, she was a teacher and has a degree in Early Childhood Education from Macquarie University.

Dr Tong Yun Kai, DBA, MBE, is the President of the Confucian Academy and Managing Director of four companies. In 2005, he was granted the World Peace Award by World Religion Federation in Japan and was awarded by US President Bush the President's Award for Educational Excellence as an Outstanding Confucian Scholar. In 2009, the Lincoln Memorial Foundation for Peace awarded him the World Peace Grand Prize. He has received 170 honorary titles from institutions around the world.

Dr T V Muralivallabhan is a Reader in Economics. His areas of interest are sustainable development, eco-spirituality and environmental education. He authored a book on sustainable development and many articles on these topics. He has presented papers in 25 international conferences on various aspects of sustainable development and successfully completed the Kailash-Manasarovar Trek in 2005 in Tibet.

LUNCHTIME PROGRAMMING

1:00–2:30pm

Furthering Global Human Thriving through Interreligious and Interdisciplinary Discourse, Continued

Room 214

This interdisciplinary program will focus on the critical issues of providing health care, especially to those in impoverished areas. Providing effective and sustainable health care requires attention to a complex interplay of factors that reach far beyond the building of clinics, training of health care professionals and dispensing of medications. Good health care stems from effective partnerships among a variety of people and institutions. Panel members will provide data on basic conditions of sanitation, safe water supply and child nutrition as well as the role that interethnic conflict and interreligious differences play in supporting or impeding an environment conducive to healthy living. This lunch hour session is the continuation of a three hour program. For a complete list of speakers, please see the 11:30am listing.