



conference 2018

Hosted by: Faith Communities Council of Victoria in association with
Brimbank and Maribyrnong Interfaith Network and City of Brimbank

WORKSHOPS & PLENARY SESSIONS

Workshop 1: The Social Costs of Gambling Harm: A Faith Response

Location: Flexible Space 1, St. Albans Community Centre **Time:** 2:30 - 3:50pm

Gambling is normalised in our society and marketed as entertainment. But did you know Australians spend more per person on gambling than any other country in the world. In fact we spend more money gambling than on any other dangerous activity including alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs

Gambling harm is a negative consequence, caused or made worse by gambling, that affects the health or wellbeing of an individual, their family or community. The social costs of gambling harm are enormous: bankruptcy, homelessness, family and personal dysfunction, domestic violence and countless other stories. And these negative effects seem to fall disproportionately on the poor and disadvantaged, including culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse communities.

What do the world's great religions have to say about gambling? What issues and concerns do faith communities face regarding gambling harm, and what primary, secondary and tertiary approaches have they taken to address these issues within their communities? And what practical responses can faith communities collectively take to tackle the ravaging impact of gambling on our society?

Facilitator: Dr Mark Zirnsak, Uniting Church in Australia (Synod of Victoria and Tasmania), Chair of the Victorian Inter-Church Gambling Taskforce, and member of the Victorian Responsible Gambling Ministerial Advisory Council.

Panelists:

- Rev Tim Costello, Baptist minister, Spokesman & Director Alliance for Gambling Reform, Chief Advocate of World Vision Australia
- Gulhan Eryegit Yoldas, Community Engagement Facilitator, Al Siraat College
- Rabbi Yaakov Glasman, Senior Rabbi of St Kilda Hebrew Congregation & Immediate Past President of the Rabbinical Council of Australia & New Zealand
- Venerable Phuoc Tan Thich, Abbot of Quang Minh Temple in Braybrook & President of the Buddhist Council of Victoria
- Lyn Dundon, Gambling Harm Project Coordinator, Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria



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Workshop 2: Freedom of Religion Vs Freedom of Artistic Expression

Location: Flexible Space 3, St. Albans Community Centre **Time:** 2:30 - 3:50pm

Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Artistic Expression have been at loggerheads for ages in different parts of the world.

Religious communities feel outraged when their religious beliefs and sacred symbols are mocked, insulted, attacked or vilified. Aggrieved believers argue that respect for beliefs and symbols is fundamental to and part and parcel of the right of Freedom of Religion.

On the other hand, the artists and creators of these controversial works argue that any law seeking to restrict their works amounts to a violation of the sacrosanct right of Freedom of Artistic Expression.

So what happens when the liberty to freely express oneself is at odds with another's right to freedom of religion? Join our expert panel as they explore the rationales underpinning the freedoms of expression and religion to determine the boundaries and limits of each of these rights in a pluralistic, secular, multi-faith society.

Facilitator: Nur Shkembi, Writer, Scholar and Past Exhibitions Manager of Islamic Museum of Australia

Panelists:

- Daniel Nellor, Advisor to the Australian Human Rights (Freedom of Religion) Commissioner, Mr Edward Santow
- Robyn Ayres, Chief Executive Officer, Arts Law Centre of Australia
- Bhakta Dasa, Hindu Council of Australia (Vic) & Minister of Religion in the Vaisnava Vedic Tradition
- Dr Anna Halafoff, Senior Lecturer in Sociology @ Deakin Uni. & Research Associate of UNESCO Chair in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations @ Monash University



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Workshop 3: Living the Change: faithful choices for a flourishing world

Location: Meeting Room 1, St. Albans Community Centre **Time:** 2:30 - 3:50pm

Our generation is the first to start feeling the impacts of climate disruption and the last to be able to do something meaningful about it. One response is **Living the Change**, a multi-faith global campaign which draws on our spiritual beliefs and values to inspire lifestyle choices which, when aggregated with the actions of others, will help limit global warming.

Today, we know that climate disruption is hurting most those who are already vulnerable, and that Western greed is a large part of the problem. Consumerism tells us we never have "enough". Living the Change calls on people of faith to lead in a global effort to re-set what is regarded as enough. We want to promote lifestyles of gratitude for life's blessings, lifestyles of care for the earth and all who depend on it.

Given that close to six billion people globally identify with a religion (Pew Research Center, 2017), the opportunity for these groups to create meaningful change through collective action cannot be ignored.

What are religious people being asked to do? Ordinary people and communities have the power to help keep emissions down and thereby help to protect our common home. Through commitments in diet, transportation, and energy use, Living the Change invites individuals to fortify healthy, balanced relationships that help sustain the earth.

Be part of our workshop and join a globally-connected community of religious and spiritual institutions working together to champion sustainable ways of living.

Facilitator: Rabbi Jonathan Keren-Black | Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC), Rabbi at Leo Baeck Centre and member of the Jewish Ecological Coalition (JECO)

ARRCC is a multi-faith, member-based organisation of people from around Australia who are committed to taking action on climate change. We believe that as people dedicated to the common good, inspired by our beliefs and energized by our spirituality, people of all faiths can and should be at the forefront of creating a safe climate. While celebrating the uniqueness of our different traditions, we stand together in working for an ecologically and socially sustainable future. For more information on 'Living the Change: faithful choices for a flourishing world' see www.arrcc.org.au/living_the_change



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Workshop 4: Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme

Location: Meeting Room 2, St. Albans Community Centre **Time:** 2:30 - 3:50pm

From 1 January 2017, religious and faith-based organisations that provide services for children are required to comply with **Child Safe Standards**. These standards aim to drive cultural change in organisations so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in everyday thinking and practice. The standards are compulsory but not prescriptive. This allows religious organisations flexibility in how they implement the standards to meet the requirements.

From 1 January 2018, religious and faith-based organisations are required to comply with the **Reportable Conduct Scheme** and respond to allegations of reportable conduct, and misconduct that may include reportable conduct, made against their workers and volunteers, by investigating those allegations and reporting to the Commission for Children and Young People.

If you are part of a religious and faith-based organisation that is required by law to be compliant with Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, this is an information session to support your knowledge and implementation. We all have an obligation to do the best we can to keep children safe from harm and abuse.

Facilitator: Emily Sanders, Director Regulation | Commission for Children and Young People

The Commission for Children and Young People is an independent statutory body that promotes improvement in policies and practices affecting the safety and wellbeing of Victorian children and young people. We have a particular focus on vulnerable children and young people. For more information see: www.ccyp.vic.gov.au