

[Embargoed till Wednesday, 3 Oct 2018, 12.30 pm]

Media Release



1 Oct 2018

News Editor

CLEARING THE AIR: UNDERSTANDING PRECEPTS & MISCONCEPTIONS WITH LAUNCH OF COMMON SENSES FOR COMMON SPACES @ SOUTH WEST

- **Faith players seeks acceptance beyond mere tolerance; Four religious leaders and practitioners of the Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and Hindu, to share key tenets of their respective religions and address common misconceptions**
- **Frontline workers in the community, such as Social Service Organisations (SSOrgs), schools and grassroots organisations, to deepen understanding and appreciation of faiths to better connect with residents**

This Wednesday, South West CDC (SWCDC) will kick off the inaugural Common Senses for Common Spaces (CSCS) @ South West - Foundation of Faiths dialogue series, which is part of the nationwide interfaith CSCS programme. With the support from Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) and Church of St. Mary of the Angels, Common Senses for Common Spaces @ South West seeks to intensify exchanges, identify commonalities and amplify common spaces, so as to deepen mutual understanding, respect and appreciation, hence **acceptance beyond mere tolerance**. Four religious leaders and practitioners of the **Buddhist, Christian, Muslim** and

Hindu faiths — will each share thumbnails on the key tenets of their respective religions and address common misconceptions.

2 In 2015, the Global Religious Diversity Report ranked Singapore as the most diverse nation, in terms of religions, out of 232 countries. Diversity is strength when properly cultivated and coordinated. But if left unattended, taken for granted or let to be manipulated, it would be disastrous.

3 It is critical that there are conscious efforts and constant engagements to bring people together and acquaint them with each other better; make them understand one another clearer, bond them closer together and remove any divisive elements or obstacles. Only then can Singaporeans enhance their level of mutual confidence and comfort, and hold together better through thick and thin.

4 Matters of religion have always been dicey and have had deep fault lines, and they have become more complex. With the ever-growing reach of and penetration by the social media, people are more exposed, hence more vulnerable to inaccurate or extreme doctrinal interpretations, where the sources stemmed from differing landscapes, histories, cultures and challenges. Singaporeans must also consciously refrain from the common habit of using the term or having to 'tolerate' other religious practices, as it connotes negativity in relationships.

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5 Mayor Low says, "We must never take our social and religious harmony for granted. With the speed of technology and social media, falsehoods or extreme doctrines can spread easily. The Common Senses Common Spaces Interfaith Dialogue Series provides a safe platform for residents to have candid exchanges about the different religions found here. By learning and discussing

the various faiths, we are establishing common spaces of mutual understanding, hope and peace, and deepening our social resilience. As we do so, we gain greater unity in diversity from appreciating and celebrating our differences and commonalities.”

6 We have invited the following speakers below to share their thoughts and insights on the various religions.

Venerable Shi Fa Xun	Buddhism
Ms Regina Chin	Christianity
Ustaz Ashraf Anwar	Islam
Mr Somasekharan	Hinduism
Dr Norhisham Ma'in	Moderator

7 We would like to invite your reporter and photographer/TV crew to the **Launch of Common Senses for Common Spaces @ South West**. Interviews will be arranged prior to commencement of the event. Please contact our media liaison officer for queries. We look forward to receiving you and your crew/photographer.

Date/Time Wednesday, 3 October 2018
7.00 – 9.00pm (Media is invited at 6.30 pm)

Venue Church of St Mary of the Angels
5 Bukit Batok East Ave 2, S (659918)

Guest of Honour Ms Low Yen Ling
Mayor of South West District

Media Liaison Officer

Ms Joscelin Tay
Manager (Corporate Management & Communications)
South West Community Development Council
DID: 6551 9278
Mobile: 9848 2711

Email: Joscelin_Tay@pa.gov.sg

Ms Juliah Bee
General Manager
Wise SG Asia
Mobile: 9841 1156
Email: cscs@wiseag.asia

About the South West Community Development Council (CDC)

The South West Community Development Council (CDC) was formed on 24 November 2001, with the mission to Assist the Needy, Bond the People and Connect the Community. Through local help programmes, the South West CDC provides assistance to help the less fortunate in our community. The CDC also organises projects and programmes to promote community bonding and social cohesion. The South West CDC adopts the "Many Helping Hands" approach to encourage community ownership among residents, community partners and corporations to realise its vision of "Owning Your Community".

Programme

Time	Administrative Programme
6.40 pm	Arrival of Mayor Low Yen Ling <i>*Media interview will be arranged, if any</i>
7.00 pm	Commencement of Programme
7.05 pm	Welcome Address by Mayor
7.10 pm	Opening Video
7.15 pm	Panel Presentation
7.55 pm	Floor Discussion
8.45 pm	Closing Remarks by Moderator
8.50 pm	Presentation of Tokens
9.00 pm	End of Programme