# WIHW Report – Victoria BC, Canada

The collaborative VMS/MFS event in honour of UN World Interfaith Harmony Week, **Creating Our Future: Visioning a Sustainable Compassionate World**, was held 4 February, with over 150 attending.

Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps opened the afternoon with enthusiasm for genuine civic discourse and warm encouragement for interfaith harmony.  MC Paul Bramadat, Director of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society, echoed these sentiments in remarks regarding the need for positive dialogue about the kind of future we all want. Dr. Bramadat also expressed a valuable historical perspective, noting the way interfaith dialogue has moved beyond educating each other to actually increasing our interconnectedness.

Professional storyteller Shoshana Litman included the audience in her beautifully enacted story about a “Balagan” – a big mess – an apt analogy for our present times! First Nations speaker Tiffany Joseph, young and passionate about her heritage, won hearts with her story of surpassing boundaries.  Several of the speakers wove their personal stories into their moving responses regarding the needs of the future.

VMS and co-sponsor UVic Multifaith Services are very grateful for the time and effort all made for this event – Tiffany of the W̱SÁNEĆ (Saanich) and Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) cultures, Rabbi Louis Sutker of Congregation Emanu-El,  Imam Ismail Nur of the Sunni Muslim community, Gita Badiyan of the Bahá’í community, Wayne Codling of the Soto Zen lineage, Unitarian minister and MFS chaplain Rev. Shana Lynngood, Lutheran Aneeta Saroop who graciously agreed on short notice to replace a panelist forced to cancel, and VMS board member Parminder Virk. In Shoshana’s words, Kol hakavod (all the honour) to everyone involved!

Special thanks as well to Sabine Lehr of the Inter-Cultural Association (ICA) who spoke of present refugee needs in Victoria, the [SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus](http://singyourjoy.ca/) whose voices raised everyone’s spirits, and all our wonderful volunteers in IT, displays, greeting, set up/take down and those who made and served the much appreciated refreshments. It was a huge team effort! Many, many thanks to all!

Thanks too, to Steve Baileys of ICA for [this WIHW 2018 photo album](https://www.flickr.com/photos/66839147%40N02/sets/72157669290003439/with/25249757687/)! Great work!



