

**Community Coalition for Social Justice**  
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**UPDATE: 1 DECEMBER 2013**

**MISSION STATEMENT:** The Community Coalition for Social Justice is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to promoting the principles of social, environmental, and economic justice and respect for all persons. We oppose discrimination and hate-motivated violence in Morgantown and surrounding communities.

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING AND MEMBERSHIP:** Our next steering committee meeting will be at Panera's on Monday, December 9 at 7:00 p.m. We will be finalizing plans for our Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Celebration for 2014, so please join us if you wish to help us plan this annual event at the Metropolitan Theatre.

Please send your web site suggestions to Mike Attfield at [attfield@comcast.net](mailto:attfield@comcast.net). Please contact any of the steering committee members to volunteer to help and to share your suggestions for our work or e-mail us at [ccsjwv@hotmail.com](mailto:ccsjwv@hotmail.com). Please send items to share with our membership to Barb Howe at [barbara.howe@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:barbara.howe@mail.wvu.edu).

**PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER TO SEND YOUR DUES** - \$10 for individuals and \$25 for organizations – to CCSJ, PO Box 160, Morgantown, WV 26507-0160. We decided at the last steering committee meeting that, after more than 13 years of keeping our dues at \$5, we should ask for \$10 for individuals.

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., DAY UPDATE:** Please plan to join us at the Met Theatre on Monday, January 20, at 2:00 pm for our eighth annual program to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We again appreciate the assistance of Main Street Morgantown and the City of Morgantown in making this event possible.

Look for posters in downtown store windows by early January to publicize the event. Students from the Morgantown Learning Academy, Cheat Lake Elementary School, and St. Francis School will be providing the posters, and we are pleased to welcome Morgantown Learning Academy as a new partner for this event.

Our theme this year is "Every Good Thing Begins with a Dream." Our program is free, family friendly, and open to all! This year, we will feature the Flying Colors, the West Virginia University Hip Hop Dance Team, the Diversity Line Dancers, Morgantown Children's Choir, and Cheat Lake Elementary School Children's Choir, as well as presentations about Harriet Tubman by Sarah Little and life in Scotts Run by Al Anderson, a solo by Janis-Rozena Peri, and a sing-along led by Peri and Barry Wendell.

This year, we will be collecting items for the Scotts Run Settlement House Backpack Program. Here's a description of the program from the Settlement House web site at [www.srsh.org](http://www.srsh.org):

**"Backpack Feeding Program**

"Started in 2011 at Mylan Park Elementary with 212 children, SRSB is now serving 630 children at Brookhaven, Mason-Dixon, Mylan Park and North Elementary Schools. Each summer food is provided to the children participating in various Energy Express programs.

"Our goal is to ensure that no school child spends a weekend hungry. This program relies heavily on financial donations as well as donated foods. Executive Director Julie Harris is available to speak to

local groups at anytime about the status of food insecurity and hunger in our community by calling (304) 599-5020.”

You can get a complete list of the items needed from our web site at [www.ccsjwv.org](http://www.ccsjwv.org), but here are some samples: granola bars, whole grain cereal bars, individual cereal boxes, fruit cups, applesauce cups, dried fruit like raisins and cranberries, individual snack packs of veggies, and Jello cups. Please only bring items with pop tops or individual cups, and do not bring glass items.

We will also have our new diversity-themed bumper stickers for sale at the event.

We also hope to have a reception at Arts Mon on Friday, January 17, to showcase student art projects related to our theme. We'll have more details on this in the January Update.

### **Local news**

**MORGANTOWN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:** The Morgantown Human Rights Commission will hold a special meeting on Monday, December 2, from noon to 2:00 pm to discuss drafts of legislative proposals.

The next regular meeting of the commission will be Thursday, December 19, at 6:30 p.m. in the Public Safety Building Conference Room on Spruce Street. You can get copies of the agendas and minutes for the commission meetings at <http://www.morgantownwv.gov/government/commissions/human-rights-commission/human-rights-commission-agenda-minutes/>.

**COMMUNITY MURAL THEME IS “A CELEBRATION OF DIVERSITY:** The last workshop will be on Wednesday, December 4, at the Wiles Hill Senior Center (the old Wiles Hill School for long-time Morgantown resident) from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. to make glass mosaic leaves to add to the “Celebration of Diversity” mural that is along the rail trail. You don’t need any experience to make a leaf that represents you or your organization or special interest group. Leaf-makers are asked to donate \$11 for each leaf to cover the costs of materials. The leaves will be installed in April.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS MORGANTOWN-MONONGALIA COUNTY MEETING ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES TO BE HELD MONDAY DECEMBER 2, 7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.** This forum will be at the Aull Center, which is next to the public library on Spruce Street. The purpose is to discuss the upcoming 2014 state legislative session. The League of Women Voters has invited all local members of the House of Delegates and State Senate. This is a time for citizens to let the legislators know what is important to them. Members will have time to discuss their priorities, and also what they think will be the major issues this session. The public will then be given time for comments and questions about their concerns. This is a great opportunity to question legislators on key issues coming up in the 2014 session, including social justice issues.

**JOBS WITH JUSTICE UPDATE:** There is no further information on this initiative at the moment, as Jeff Cech, who had been instrumental in getting us organized has moved on to another assignment. Stay tuned.

**EMPTY BOWLS 2014 TO BE HELD FEBRUARY 22:** Tickets are now available for the 2014 Empty Bowls Soup and Bread Lunch to be held at the Hazel and JW Ruby Community Center at Mylan Park. The lunch will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The lunch benefits the food pantries in Monongalia County and raises awareness about food insecurity in our county. It has become “the place to be” on that day.

Tickets are available for a minimum donation of \$15 per person. Children 10 and under eat free but do not receive a ceramic bowl. Purchasing a ticket in advance reserves a bowl on the day of the event. Tickets will be sold to walk in patrons as available. Take out is available any time from 11:00 a.m. to

2:20 p.m. Tickets may be purchased at the WOW! Factory – 3453 University Avenue, Star City; Slight Indulgence – 2300 Collins Ferry Road; Slight Indulgence – 407 High Street; The Sew Inn – 120 High Street  
The Elegant Alley Cat – 358 High Street; Appalachian Gallery – 270 Walnut Street; Arts Monongalia – 201 High Street; and Classic Furniture – 1537 Sabraton Avenue.

## DECEMBER 2013 DIVERSITY CALENDAR FROM ED HORVAT

**Interfaith (USA)** – It's that time of year again! The American Red Cross is gearing up for this year's **Holiday Mail for Heroes** program. You are invited to send holiday cards to our American service members, their families, and veterans. Please send all cards to: Holiday Mail for Heroes, PO Box 5456, Capitol Heights, MD 20791-5456. The deadline for this year is December 6<sup>th</sup> (anything postmarked after the 6<sup>th</sup> may not be delivered). After Pitney Bowes collects and screens the mail received in the PO Box, Red Cross workers deliver holiday greetings to service men and women in their communities. More information: <http://www.redcross.org/news/article/va/richmond/Holiday-Mail-for-Heroes-Mailbox-Open-Through-December-6>.

**JUDAISM** – November 28 - December 5. **Hanukkah** (Chanukah), the **Festival of Lights**, is celebrated for eight days to remember the victory of Judah the Maccabee for religious freedom, the rededication of the Temple in 165 BCE, and to celebrate the awesome power of God. According to the Talmud, only a one-day supply of nondesecrated oil was found in the Temple when the Maccabees prepared it for rededication. Miraculously, the oil lasted for eight days until oil that was fit for use in the temple could be obtained. Jews light menorahs in their homes to commemorate this miracle. Hanukkah began at sundown on November 27.

**CHRISTIANITY** – December 1 - 24. **Advent** begins (Western churches); & **Fast of the Nativity/Philippian Fast** continues through December 24 (Eastern churches following Gregorian calendar) or through January 6<sup>th</sup> (Eastern churches following Julian calendar): "If, as did Herod, we fill our lives with things; and if we consider ourselves so unimportant that we must fill every moment of our lives with "noise" and "busy-ness," when will we have the time to make the long, slow journey across the desert, as did the Magi? Or sit and watch the stars, as did the shepherds? Or brood over the coming of the child, as did Mary? For each one of us, there is a desert to travel. A star to discover. A being within ourselves to bring to life." –Author Unknown

**CHRISTIANITY** – December 6 (Gregorian calendar), December 19 (Julian calendar). **Feast of St. Nicholas**, the Wonder-Worker, born in 275 in Myra, Turkey. Because of his famous generosity, Nicholas is the holiday gift-giver in many countries. In the Americas, Santa Claus is modeled after this Eastern Christian Bishop.

**BUDDHISM** – December 8. **Awakening Day** is the anniversary of the historical Buddha's awakening.

**JAINISM** – December 13. **Maunajiyaras** is a day of fasting, silence and meditation on the five holy beings: monks, teachers, religious leaders, Arihants (Jinas, enlightened masters) and Siddhas (liberated souls). This day is also regarded as the anniversary of the birth of many of the Tirhankaras or Pathfinders.

**EARTH-BASED SPIRITUALITIES** – December 21. **Yule**, which marks the New Year in the Anglo-

Saxon and northern traditions of Wicca, is the celebration of the birth of the God as the Winter-born King, symbolized by the rebirth of the life-generating and life-sustaining sun. It is a time for ritually shedding the dross of the past year, and for contemplating avenues of spiritual development in the year ahead.

**SHINTO** – December 21. Tohji-taisai, the Grand Ceremony of the **Winter Solstice**, celebrates the joy of the ending of the yin period of the sun, when it declines in strength, and the beginning of its growing power or yang period. The sun is of central importance for Japanese-Americans, expressing the presence of Amaterasu Omi-kami, the Kami of the Sun.

**MORMON** – December 23. **Birthday of Joseph Smith**, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

**HUMANISM** – December 23. The **HumanLight Festival** illuminates Humanism's positive secular vision. In Western societies, late December is a season of good cheer and a time for gatherings of friends and families. During the winter holiday season, many events are observed. This tradition of celebrations, however, is often grounded in religious beliefs that many people in modern society cannot accept. **HumanLight** presents an alternative reason to celebrate: a Humanist's vision of a good future. It is a future in which all people can identify with each other, behave with the highest moral standards, and work together toward a happy, just and peaceful world.

**CHRISTIANITY** – December 25. **Christmas** (Western churches and some Eastern churches following the Gregorian calendar) celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah. Technically, Christmas begins at sundown on December 24. The Christmas Season, which begins with Christmas Eve, ends on the eve of Epiphany (Western) or Theophany (Eastern churches following the Gregorian calendar), which is sundown on January 6. This period is called the **Twelve Days of Christmas**.

**KWANZAA** – December 26 – January 1 is celebrated by many North Americans of West African descent in recognition of their **African heritage**. The candles of a seven-branched candelabrum representing the attributes of unity, self-determination, responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith, are successively lit over the seven days of the festival.

**ZARATHUSHTI** (Zoroastrianism) – December 26. The anniversary of the death of Zarathustra (Zoroaster), the founder of the Zarathushti (Zoroastrian) faith. His dates are uncertain: the ancient Greeks dated him at ca. 6000 bce. Modern scholarship suggests he lived in the second millennium bce. Some of his hymns, known as Gathas, are preserved in the Zarathushti (Zoroastrian) scriptures.

**ZARATHUSHTI** (Zoroastrianism) – December 31 – January 4. Ghambar Maidyarem celebrates the creation of animals. It is also the time for equitable sharing of food.

**NOTE.** To purchase the **Multifaith Calendar for 2014**, visit <http://www.interfaithmarketplace.com/> in the USA; or [www.multifaithcalendar.org](http://www.multifaithcalendar.org) in Canada and elsewhere.