

**Community Coalition for Social Justice**  
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**UPDATE: 1 FEBRUARY 2014**

**ACTION ALERT:** The Morgantown City Council will be voting on two resolutions at its meeting on Tuesday, February 4, at City Hall, 389 Spruce Street, at 7:00 pm. The resolutions will ask our state legislators to support laws to end discrimination in employment and housing based on sexual orientation and to support marriage equality. The Morgantown Human Rights Commission presented these resolutions at the Committee of the Whole meeting on January 28, and several speakers gave eloquent comments in support. Bob Jones, for instance, reminded the audience that Pete Seeger had died the day before and that he was famous for singing that "This land belongs to you and me."

The CCSJ steering committee submitted the following statement by email to council members:

The Community Coalition for Social Justice steering committee supports these resolutions from the Morgantown Human Rights Commission to end discrimination in housing and employment and to allow marriage equality in West Virginia and urges City Council to support them and to convey that support to our legislators in Charleston.

As you know, there have been numerous efforts in past legislative sessions to end discrimination in housing, public accommodation, and employment because of sexual orientation, and CCSJ has always encouraged our members to support this legislation. In 2013, Monongalia County Delegates Barbara Evans Fleischauer and Charlene Marshall and Senator Bob Beach introduced West Virginia Employment and Housing Non-discrimination Act. At the December 2013 League of Women Voters' forum with our local legislators, Delegate Amanda Pasdon joined Delegate Fleischauer and Senator Beach by stating her opposition to discrimination in any form.

Now that the United States Supreme Court has ruled in *United States v. Windsor* that the Defense of Marriage Act violates equal protection guarantees in the Fifth Amendment's due process clause as applied to same-sex couples legally married under the laws of their states, we feel that it is time for West Virginia to allow same-sex couples to have the same right to marry as heterosexual couples.

Thank you for taking these steps to show that Morgantown is a community committed to social justice and equal rights for all."

Council then agreed to move the resolutions to the agenda for the meeting Tuesday. There only needs to be one vote on resolutions.

Please come to the meeting and speak during the public portion. Or, if you cannot come to the meeting, you can email all council members at [citycouncil@cityofmorgantown.org](mailto:citycouncil@cityofmorgantown.org).

You can find copies of the Human Rights Commission's resolutions on our web page at [www.ccsjwv.org](http://www.ccsjwv.org). The resolutions have now been rewritten to come from the council, not from the

commission. You can find copies of the resolutions that the council will consider at <http://www.morgantownwv.gov/wp-content/uploads/02-04-14-Regular.pdf>. This is the complete agenda for the council meeting, so go to page 14 to see where the relevant section starts.

**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 meeting will be at Panera's on Monday, February 10, at 7:00 p.m.

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.

#### **REVIEW OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., DAY CELEBRATION**

Thank you to all who attend our art exhibit opening and our program on January 20. The art exhibit is open at Arts Mon, 201 High Street, until February 14, so there is still time to look at the pillow cases, murals from St. Francis's students, and the large mural that some of our steering committee members help produce at the Wiles Hill Senior Center. You can add your thoughts to that mural or add your comments to the wall of "dreams" from students at North Elementary School. The students' comments are very poignant and give all pause for thought – from the student with ties to Syria wishing for peace there; to the one who reminded us that his religion, Islam, means peace; to the many students asking the world to end child abuse, abuse of animals, and gun violence.

We thank the City of Morgantown for its financial support for our program and Main Street Morgantown for co-sponsoring these events, especially by providing publicity.

#### **Local news**

**MORGANTOWN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:** City Council will be interviewing candidates for the vacancy on the Human Rights Commission at a special meeting on February 4 at 6:00 pm at City Hall.

The commission is sponsoring a needs survey for residents of the City of Morgantown. According to their web site, "The Morgantown Human Rights Commission needs your assistance in identifying human rights needs for its preparation of a community action plan to help Morgantown to become a more 'inclusive city'.

"We are interested in receiving responses from residents who live within the city of Morgantown.

Your name is not needed and responses will be treated with confidentiality. A summary report will be available to the public in summer 2014.

[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)

“If you need assistance in completing this survey form or have questions, please contact a member of the Human Rights Commission by e-mail at [dspencer36@comcast.net](mailto:dspencer36@comcast.net) or by phone at (304) 284-7405. Braille and large print formats are available upon request.

“If you wish to submit this survey by mail, please send to: Human Rights Commission, 389 Spruce Street, Morgantown, WV 26505.”

The next regular meeting of the commission will be Thursday, February 20, 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/>.

**WVU CENTER FOR BLACK CULTURE AND RESEARCH EVENTS:** February is Black History Month, so the Center for Black Culture and Research is sponsoring HeartBEAT Afrika at 7:00 pm on Monday, February 3, in the Mountainlair Ballrooms. This is a professional dance troupe that features African drumming.

On Wednesday, February 5, Angela Davis will be speaking at 7:30 pm in the Mountainlair Ballrooms as part of the David C. Hardesty, Jr., Festival of Ideas. This is free and open to the public. The Festival of Ideas provides this biography of Davis:

Davis is known internationally for her ongoing work to combat all forms of oppression in the U.S. and abroad. Over the years she has been active as a student, teacher, writer, scholar, activist and organizer. She is a living witness to the historical struggles of the contemporary era.

In the 1960s, Davis joined the Communist Party, protested with the Black Panthers and became a principal spokesperson for the burgeoning prison reform movement. As a result, she found herself fighting to keep her job as a newly appointed philosophy professor at UCLA when her detractors characterized her as a dangerous subversive menace in the national media. Her supporters, however, viewed her as a strong leader challenging authority and boldly advocating for power to all people.

On August 7, 1970, Davis was implicated in the politically motivated kidnapping and murder of a judge in a brazen daylight shootout at the Marin County courthouse. Davis fled California, convinced she would not be given a fair trial, and was placed on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List. After a national manhunt, she was captured two months later in New York City.

Charged with murder, kidnapping and conspiracy, Davis was put on trial in one of the most sensational court cases of its time. After a two year legal battle, an all-white jury acquitted her on all charges in 1972. In the recently released documentary, “Free Angela and All Political Prisoners,” Davis speaks for the first time in 40 years about the actions that branded her a terrorist and simultaneously spurred a worldwide political movement for her freedom. This film will be shown on Feb. 5 in the Mountainlair's Gluck Theater before and after her Festival talk, at 5 p.m. And 9 p.m.

Today, Davis works on a range of social problems associated with incarceration and the criminalization of those communities that are most affected by poverty and racial discrimination. She is especially concerned with the general tendency to devote more resources and attention to the prison system than to educational institutions. Having helped

to popularize the notion of the prison-industrial complex, her work urges audiences to think seriously about the future possibility of a world without prisons.

Davis sits on the executive board of the Women of Color Resource Center, a San Francisco Bay Area organization that emphasizes popular education of and about women who live in conditions of poverty. She also works with Critical Resistance, a national organization dedicated to the dismantling of the prison-industrial complex. She is also affiliated with Sisters Inside, an abolitionist organization based in Queensland, Australia, that works in solidarity with women in prison.

Her teaching career has taken her to San Francisco State University, Mills College and UC Berkeley, as well as UCLA, Vassar, the Claremont Colleges and Stanford. Davis has spent the last 15 years at UC Santa Cruz, where she is now professor emerita of history of consciousness, an interdisciplinary doctoral program, and of feminist studies.

A book signing and reception with Davis will follow her talk. For more information, visit <http://festivalofideas.wvu.edu> and follow the conversation on Twitter at #wvuideas.

**SIERRA CLUB LECTURE ON RENEWABLE ENERGY:** The WVU Student Sierra Coalition and Monongahela Group of the West Virginia Sierra Club are co-sponsoring a presentation by Chris Haddox at 7:00 pm February 4 in Room 106 Oglebay Hall on the downtown WVU campus. According to the chapter's press release, "Haddox will discuss fundraising for New Vision Renewable energy, a nonprofit based in Philippi that supplies solar lights to families in communities lacking electricity." Using solar lights instead of kerosene lamps reduces pollution and provides better health for residents. The groups are raising money to support a community in the Philippines. For more information, please contact Sally Wilts at [sallywilts@yahoo.com](mailto:sallywilts@yahoo.com) or 304-379-7567.

**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.

## STATE NEWS

### **FAIRNESS WEST VIRGINIA LOBBY DAY IS FEBRUARY 10:**

This email came on February 1. Same-sex WV couples to have their day in court!

Late last week, US District Judge Robert C. Chambers ruled to allow the federal case for marriage

equality in West Virginia to continue. This means we are one step closer to achieving the freedom to marry in the Mountain State!

Fairness West Virginia Vice Chair Justin Murdock and his fiancé William Glavaris along with two other same-sex families are the brave plaintiffs in Lambda Legal's federal case for the freedom to marry. [If you haven't yet, watch this moving video about Justin and Will produced by our sister organization Fairness West Virginia Institute and pass it along to friends and family!](#)

### **Faces of Fairness: A Case for Marriage**

[As the marriage case continues, Fairness is calling on all West Virginians who stand for LGBT equality to come together on February 10 at the State Capitol for our 2014 Day of Action. Register now to learn how to build momentum in your community and help show the West Virginia Legislature that Fairness means business when it comes to equality in your state!](#)

Fairness WV: Day of Action, February 10, 2014

For more breaking news on marriage equality and the state of fairness in West Virginia, follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!

January j **RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS IN FEBRUARY 2014**  
FROM PETER CLARK, *UCSF MEDICAL CENTER SPIRITUAL CARE SERVICES*  
*Celebrating Black History Month*

The **Iroquois Midwinter Ceremony**, in which old fires are extinguished and new fires are lit, and the **Hopi Holy Cycle**, in which the changing of the seasons and the nature of the Hopi sacred universe are celebrated, begin in January and February, but the dates of observance vary by tribe. This month is also known as **Buxwlaaks** or the season of blowing needles in aboriginal spirituality, in which the wind knocks loose the foliage of frozen evergreens. It marks the approach of the new year.

#### **Sunday, February 2**

- Presentation of Jesus in the Temple – **Christianity**

Commemorates Mary and Joseph's presentation of the child Jesus at the Temple in Jerusalem, as required by Mosaic law.

- Imbolc [also known as the Feast of Torches or Lughnassad] – **Wicca**

A celebration of beginning growth and the divine generative powers (i.e., the Goddess nurturing her young Son) from which physical and spiritual harvests will come, Imbolc is often an initiatory period.

- Four Chaplains Sunday – **Interfaith**

A commemoration of four U.S. Army chaplains—Rabbi Alexander D. Goode, Rev. George L. Fox, Fr. John P. Washington, and Rev. Clark V. Poling—who died while saving soldiers from drowning when their troop transport ship, the U.S.A.T. *Dorchester*, was torpedoed by a Nazi U-boat in 1943. The four chaplains are remembered for their courage and their spirit of interfaith collaboration in service to humanity.

### Monday, February 3

- Setsunbun-sai – **Shintō**

A family celebration of the end of winter; beans are thrown into rooms of a house for good luck, with the shout, “Devils out, Fortune in!”

### Tuesday, February 4

- Vasanta Panchami – **Hinduism**

A North Indian celebration associated with Saraswati, the goddess of learning, and with Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.

### Friday, February 7

- Mulk – **Bahá’í**

Beginning of the eighteenth month of the Bahá’í year, the name “Mulk” means “dominion.”

### Saturday, February 8

- Parinirvana – **Buddhism**

Some Mahāyāna Buddhist traditions mark this date as the anniversary of the historical Buddha’s death in ca. 486 B.C.E. and his subsequent entrance into enlightenment or Nirvana. Other Buddhist schools mark this event on February 15<sup>th</sup> (*see below*).

### Friday, February 14

- Valentine’s Day – **Western Christianity**

A celebration of love originally connected to the Roman Christian martyr who died in 269 C.E.

- Magha Puja Day [Dharma Day] – **Buddhism**

In the Theravāda Buddhist tradition, this full moon day of the third lunar month marks the historical Buddha’s sermon at Veruvana Monastery in the city of Rajagaha, where he spoke to 1250 enlightened monks who were ordained by him.

### Saturday, February 15

- Nirvana Day – **Buddhism**

In northern Buddhist traditions, this day marks the anniversary of the historical Buddha’s death in ca. 486 B.C.E. and his subsequent entrance into enlightenment or Nirvana. In southern Buddhist traditions, the Buddha’s death is commemorated during Visakha.

### Sunday, February 16

- Triodion begins – **Christianity (Eastern churches)**

This day marks the beginning of the ten weeks preceding Holy Pascha (Easter). The term *Triodion* refers to the book containing the liturgies for the worship services during this time period.

### Wednesday, February 26

- Ayyám-i-Há – **Bahá’í** [*through March 1*]

Starting at sundown, this festival marks the beginning of the intercalary days for festivities, gift giving, and charitable actions.

### Friday, February 28

- **Mahashivratri – Hinduism**

A night devoted to the worship of the god Shiva, whose dance creates and destroys and recreates the world; it is marked by vigils and fasting.

*If you want more information about any of these holy days, please contact UCSF Medical Center Spiritual Care Services at 415-353-1941 (Rev. Dr. Michele Shields) or 415-353-2319 (Rev. Dr. Peter Yuichi Clark)*

Our thanks to the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago, the Multifaith Action Society of British Columbia (Canada), BBC's Religion Website, Peel Schools District Board (Mississauga, Ontario, Canada), the Arizona State University Provost's Office, the NCCJ of the Piedmont Triad, and [www.interfaithcalendar.org](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org)