

Community Coalition for Social Justice

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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, March 10, at 7:00 p.m.

Please send your web site suggestions to Mike Attfield at 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. Please send items to share with our membership to Barb Howe at 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.

SUCCESS AT CITY COUNCIL!! We aren't going to even try to be objective! The Morgantown City Council meeting on February 4 was an amazing evening! The room was filled to overflowing with people supporting the two resolutions before City Council in regard to ending discrimination in employment and housing and in support of marriage equality.

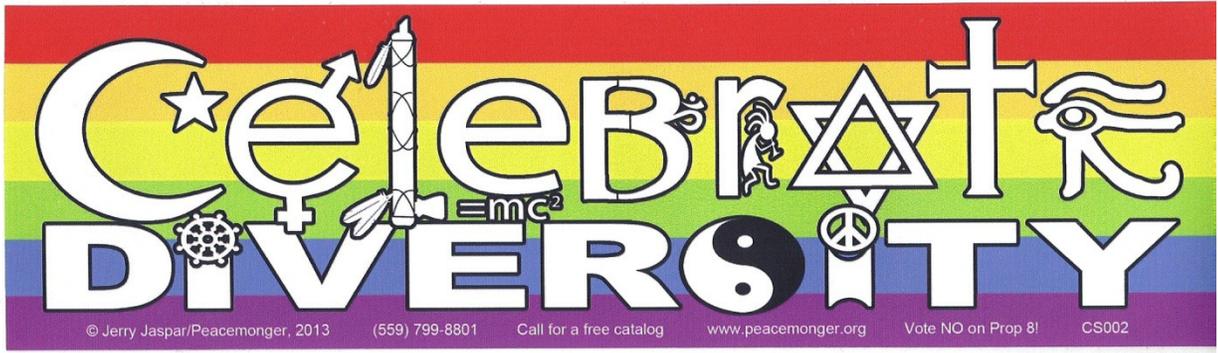
Numerous people spoke on behalf of one or both resolutions from many different perspectives, and T. Anne Hawkins read a letter from David Fryson, WVU's Chief Diversity Officer, regarding the importance of ending discrimination in housing and employment for WVU. Someone asked if the presentations were planned in advance, but, except for a few people organizers knew would speak, the evening just flowed with people speaking from the heart. Don Spencer, chair of the Human Rights Commission, explained why the resolutions were coming to City Council for a vote after the legislative session had started. No one spoke against the resolutions, and there was no evidence anyone opposed was even in the audience. One council member said had only received one e-mail in opposition to the resolutions but had received 89 in favor!

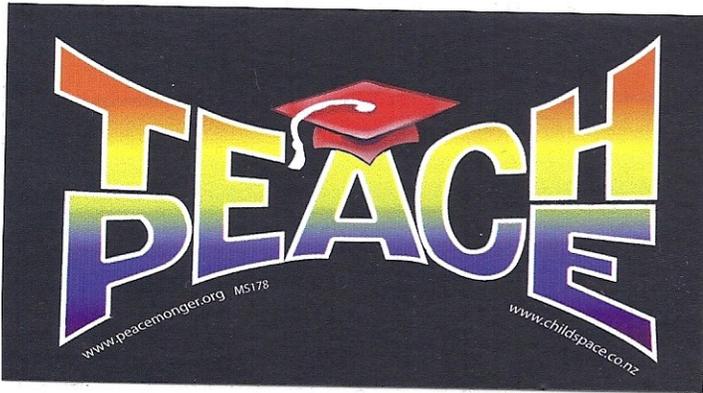
After thoughtful conversation among council members, both resolutions passed on votes of 6-0, with Councilor Wes Nugent absent.

Don Spencer took the resolutions down to Charleston the following Monday, which was Fairness West Virginia's day at the legislature, to present them to our legislators. Unfortunately, nothing has happened in the West Virginia Legislature on ending discrimination in housing and employment, as HB 2856, the House of Delegates' bill, was introduced in the House of Delegates that day, with Morgantown-area Delegates Barbara Evans Fleischauer and Charlene Marshall among the sponsors, and was referred to the House Judiciary Committee on January 9 and died there. The Senate version, SB 472, was not introduced into the Senate until February 3 and then sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee, where it has died. No legislation as introduced dealing with marriage equality.

BUMPER STICKERS FOR SALE: CCSJ has diversity-related bumper stickers for sale. The large ones (Celebrate Diversity and Coexist) are \$3.50 each, the "Olympic circles" one is \$2.00, and the "Teach Peace" one is \$1.50, which includes postage.

If you'd like one, please send a check made payable to CCSJ to PO Box 160, Morgantown, WV 26507-0160, and indicate which one you'd like:





LOCAL NEWS

MORGANTOWN SISTER CITIES COMMISSION OPENING: There is an opening on the Sister Cities Commission. The applicant must live in the Greater Morgantown area but does not have to live within City limits and attend one meeting a month. The Sister Cities Commission meets to discuss tourism, international programs, and exchanges.

The deadline for application is March 30, 2014.

For more information, please call the City Clerk's Office at 304-284-7439 or visit <http://www.morgantownwv.gov/government/commissions/sister-city-commission/>.



MORGANTOWN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION: We welcome Brian Jara as the newest member of the Morgantown Human Rights Commission. He was appointed to fill a vacancy on February 4, 2014. Brian is a senior lecturer in the WVU Center for Women's and Gender

Studies.

The commission is still 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 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, March 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 OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL PROGRAMS SPONSORS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH PROGRAMS: The WVU Office of Multicultural Programs and the Office of International Student Affairs and Global Services, will host a series of CECILIA ROLLINS BROWN BAG FILM AND DISCUSSION programs in the WVU Mountainlair Gluck Theatre as follows:

Tuesday, March 4, 2014 at 7:00 pm – the film *Chisholm '72: Unbought & Unbossed*, about Shirley Chisholm's 1972 campaign for the presidency of the United States.

Chisholm was the first black woman elected to Congress and the first to seek the nomination for President. "It is the story of the fight for inclusion, and follows Chisholm from the announcement of her candidacy through her historic speech in Miami at the Democratic National Convention. Shunned by the political establishment and the media, Chisholm was a longtime champion of marginalized Americans and asked for support from people of color, women, gays, and young people newly empowered to vote at the age of 18."

Thursday, March 6, with the Council for Women's Concerns at 11:30 am – the film *Salt of the Earth*.

"Based on an actual strike against the Empire Zinc Mine in New Mexico, *Salt of the Earth* deals with the prejudice against the Mexican-American workers, who struck to attain equal wages with Anglo workers in other mines, and to be treated fairly by the bosses. The film shows early views on feminism, as the miner's wives play a pivotal role in the strike. This film was written, directed and produced by members of the original 'Hollywood Ten,' who were blacklisted for refusing to answer Congressional inquiries on First Amendment grounds."

Thursday, March 20, 2014 at 11:30 AM – the film *Sisters of '77*.

"On a historic weekend in November 1977, 20,000 women and men left their jobs and homes in cities and small towns around the country to end discrimination against women and promote their equal rights. They debated issues and hammered out resolutions that would determine the future of the Women's Movement. Using archival footage and interviews with participants such as women's rights activists Gloria Steinem and Betty Freidan, former Texas governor Ann Richards, and former White House reporter Liz Carpenter, 'Sisters of '77' brings to life this unprecedented event in women's history."

Tuesday, March 25, 2014 at 7:00 pm- the film *Makers: Women Who Make America Part 3, Charting a New Course*.

"Watch history come alive through the women who made it happen. Narrated by Meryl Streep, Barak

Goodman's 3rd segment of the history of the women's movement in America takes a look at issues facing women in the workforce in the 80s and 90s, and individual women who crashed through the glass ceiling, and to the courts, where they waged a battle against the "hidden injuries" of battery, sexual harassment, and rape."

Thursday, March 27 at 11:30 am – the film *Training Rules*

"The film examines how a wealthy athletic department, enabled by the silence of a complacent university, allowed talented athletes who were thought to be gay, to be dismissed from their college team, and serves as a wake-up call to the many athletic departments nationwide that still discriminate against their student athletes and coaches."

All the events are free and open to the public. Pizza will be served on a first come, first served basis. For more information, call the Office of Multicultural Programs at 304-293-0890 or go to http://studentlife.wvu.edu/office_of_multicultural_programs/upcoming_programs.

Upcoming Event:

The Appalachian Prison Book Project is sponsoring an Educational Justice & Appalachian Prisons Symposium, **April 4-6**, at West Virginia University. The event will bring together people interested in higher education and arts programs in prisons, restorative justice, and prison book projects. Our goal is to learn about issues related to Appalachian prisons and to emerge with action plans for creating greater educational justice. Speakers will include

- Dwayne Betts, poet and author of *A Question of Freedom*; served eight years in a Virginia prison <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/books/2010/12/the-exchange-r-dwayne-betts-on-prison-poetry-and-justice.html>
- Rebecca Ginsburg, Founder of the Education Justice Project (Univ of Illinois, Champagne-Urbana)
- Jean Trounstone, Co-Director of Changing Lives Through Literature and author of *Shakespeare in Prison*
- Kyes Stevens, Founder of the Alabama Creative Arts + Education Project (Auburn Univ.)
- Jim Rubenstein, Commissioner of the WV Division of Corrections
- Larry Starcher, former WV Supreme Court Justice
- Students from FCI, Morgantown
- Jim Nolan, Professor of Sociology, former police officer and FBI officer
- Valena Beety, Law professor and Director of the WVU Innocence Project
- Anne Rice, Coordinator of TEDx talks inside prisons (Lehman University)
- many more!

Funded by a WV Humanities Council grant, the Symposium is free and open to the public.

For more info and the full schedule, see <http://educationaljusticeappalachianprisons.wordpress.com/>

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS IN MARCH 2014

FROM PETER CLARK, *UCSF MEDICAL CENTER SPIRITUAL CARE SERVICES*

March and April mark the season of the **Eagle Dances**, when people of the Arizona Pueblo tribes dance to dramatize their communities' relationship with the Sky-World. This month is also known as **Xsaak**, the season when candlefish swarm and members of the Nisga'a tribes catch these fish, dry them, and render them into oil for lamps.

Saturday, March 1

- Ayyám-i-Há ends – **Bahá'í**

Ending of the intercalary days for festivities, gift giving, and charitable actions.

Sunday, March 2

- 'Alá – **Bahá'í**

The beginning of the nineteenth and final month, meaning “loftiness,” and also of a 19-day fast in preparation for Naw Rúz [see *March 21*]. Adult believers in good health abstain from food and drink from dawn to dusk.

- Cheesefare Sunday [Forgiveness Sunday] – **Christianity (Eastern churches)**

This feast marks the last day of eating dairy products prior to Holy Pascha (also known as Easter). The Great Fast or Great Lent begins at sundown and is marked by forty days of vegetarian fasting, intense prayer, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week. The following day is known as Clean Monday.

Monday, March 3

- Sri Ramakrishna Jayanti – **Hinduism**

A celebration of the birth of the teacher of Swami Vivekananda, who introduced Hinduism to the United States at the first Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893.

Wednesday, March 5

- Ash Wednesday – **Christianity (Western churches)**

The beginning of Lent, a forty-day period (excluding Sundays) in which Christians pray, repent, fast and reflect on Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem. It is a preparatory period for Holy Week and Easter; on this day, believers often receive an ashen cross on their foreheads to mark their repentance and mortality.

Sunday, March 9

- Orthodox Sunday – **Christianity (Eastern churches)**

A celebration of the restoration of icons, which had been banned from Byzantine churches in the seventh century. The Christian empress Theodora ordered them restored in 843 C.E.

Friday, March 14

- New Year's Day – **Sikhism**

In the Nanakshahi calendar, this day is the beginning of the year 546.

- Memorial of Shan-tao (Zendō) – **Buddhism**

Anniversary of the death of a Chinese Pure Land Buddhist priest who died in 681 C.E. He taught that enlightenment could occur simply through repetition of the name of Amitabha or Amida Buddha (*nianfo* or *nembutsu*), and is honored as the Fifth Patriarch of that Buddhist school.

Saturday, March 15

- Eve of Purim – **Judaism**

A celebration of the Jews' rescue from an evil plot to destroy them while they were living in Persia, the events of which are recorded in the Hebrew biblical book of *Esther*. The holiday includes reading the Megillah (the scroll of Esther), exchanging gifts, and special pastries called *hamantashen*.

Sunday, March 16

- Ghambar Hamaspathmaedem, Fravardegan, or Muktdad – **Zoroastrianism**
(continues until *March 20*)

A celebration of the creation of human beings and a commemoration of souls who have died. Prayers are offered to the *fravashis* (the divine spark within each human, which lives forever), asking for their blessings and protection.

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

In the Theravada 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.

Monday, March 17

- Saint Patrick's Day – **Western Christianity**

A commemoration of the missionary bishop who evangelized Ireland in the fifth century C.E.

- Holi – **Hinduism**

This festival is one of Hinduism's most popular celebrations. People throw colored powder or spray colored water to celebrate episodes in the life of the god Krishna.

- Hola Mohallah – **Sikhism**

A three-day festival instituted by the tenth Sikh gurū, Gobind Singh, as a time for military pre-paredness exercises, Hola Mohallah now is celebrated with mock battles, music competitions, and festivities.

Wednesday, March 19

- Birthday of Avalokiteśvara or Kuan Yin [Kannon] – **Buddhism**

Usually celebrated on or near the full moon day in March, this day marks the occasion when the enlightened being known as Avalokiteśvara (in the Mahāyāna traditions of Tibet and China) or as Kuan Yin or Kannon (the feminine embodiment of this bodhisattva in Chinese, Japanese, and Vietnamese Buddhism) vowed to attain final, supreme enlightenment and thereby save all suffering sentient beings.

Thursday, March 20 *spring equinox*

- Spring Ohigon – **Buddhism**

For Buddhists who practice in the *Jōdo Shinshū* [Japanese Pure Land] tradition, this is a special time to listen to the teaching of the Buddha and meditate on the perfection of enlightenment as lived in the Six Perfections or Paramitas (generosity, morality, wisdom, honesty, endeavor, and patience).

- Shunki-sorei-sai – **Shintō**

The time of the spring memorial service, when ancestors' spirits are revered at home altars and gravesites are cleaned and purified.

- Ostara – **Wicca**

A time to mark the divine goddess's blanketing of the Earth with fertility as the god stretches and grows to maturity, manifested in the reawakening of seeds within the Earth as they are touched by divine love.

- Spring Feast – **Native American spirituality**

A day to mark the coming and going of seasons and to honor planting through songs, stories, and prayer.

Friday, March 21

- Naw Rúz – **Bahá'í**

Marking the beginning of the year 171 of the Bahá'í era, and the beginning of the first month of the year, known as Bahá or "splendor."

- Navruz [Now Ruz or Norooz] – **Zoroastrianism**

The beginning of the Zoroastrian new year, 1383 AY or 3752 AZ in the Fasli seasonal calendar, which also celebrates the renewal of the world and the creation of fire (which symbolizes righteousness). Zarathustra, the founder of Zoroastrianism, received his revelation on this day.

Tuesday, March 25

- Feast of the Annunciation – **Christianity**

This festival marks the visit of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary of Nazareth and Mary's faithful response to God's plan by consenting to be Jesus' mother.

Wednesday, March 26

- Khordad Sal – **Zoroastrianism**

The birth anniversary of the prophet Zarathustra.

Thursday, March 27

- Avan Ardvisoor nu Parab – **Zoroastrianism**

A day celebrated by Parsi Zoroastrians in honor of the waters. Indian adherents gather at the ocean's edge to say prayers and offer flowers.

*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

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