

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 Patteson drive on Monday, July 14, at 7:00 p.m. If the weather is nice, we may be meeting outside.

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 have added PayPal to our website so you can join or donate by credit card if you wish to do that.

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.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM ON RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY: CCSJ is planning a program on the religious diversity of the Morgantown-area community to be held Tuesday, September 9th, at 7:00 pm at Greater St. Paul AME Church on Beechurst Avenue, next to Stansbury Hall. The speakers confirmed to date are Rev. Georgia Morrow of Greater St. Paul AME Church, Rabbi Joe Hample of Tree of Life Congregation, and Dr. Sumitra Reddy, speaking on Hinduism. We will also be inviting other speakers. Each will speak on two issues related to his/her faith community: "What is your message about social justice and tolerance in your teaching and practice?" And "What does your religion teach about compassion?"

Following the program, we would like to set up an adult interfaith group to visit various congregations throughout the area, following the pattern of a youth interfaith group that has been active in Morgantown. We have already been invited to the Tree of Life Congregation for the harvest festival of Sukkot in October.

We hope this will be an opportunity for all of us to learn about the rich diversity of the Morgantown area as reflected in its religious practices.

CCSJ PROMOTING TEACHING TOLERANCE MATERIALS: We want to reach out to community groups to see if they are interested in using the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance materials. These are available free of charge to educators, which can include leaders of youth groups, not just school teachers. Those using the materials could order them online at www.tolerance.org, and we would pay for the postage. If you are interested in this project, please email us at ccsjwv@hotmail.com.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY 2015 CELEBRATION: The City of Morgantown has allocated \$1500 for our 2015 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration and Arts Mon reception. We will soon begin

planning these events, so let us know if you wish to be involved. And many thanks to City Council and Jeff Mikorski, city manager, for this support!

At the same time, we wish to note the passing of Kitty Hughes, a member of the Flying Colors that performed so energetically at our 2014 celebration and previous events. She had also been a member of our community choirs in several recent celebrations. Kitty passed away on June 28, and we will miss her!

Local news

SIERRA CLUB PROGRAM ON PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S CARBON EMISSION STANDARDS: The Sierra Club and League of Women Voters are sponsoring a public program on Tuesday, July 15th, at 7:00 pm at the Aull Center next to the Morgantown Public Library on Spruce Street on the guidelines released June 2nd as part of the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan. The event will feature presentations by Our speakers include Mary Anne Hitt from Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign, Jamie Van Nostrand from the WVU College of Law, and Randy Francisco from Sierra Club's Coal to Clean Energy Campaign to explain these historic guidelines--which will require U.S. electric power plants, for the first time, to cut their carbon emissions. The sponsors think it is critically important that members of the public be well-informed about the guidelines so they can voice their opinions to our elected officials and the EPA during the current public comment period.

A local Sierra representative will also discuss actions people can take to voice their opinions. There will be computers available for writing letters to the editor, for example, and encourage people to attend the EPA's public hearing on the new rules in Pittsburgh on July 31st.

MORGANTOWN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION: 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, July 17, 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/>.

WEST VIRGINIA COUNCIL OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS NEEDS HOSTS FOR VISITING PROFESSIONALS: The West Virginia Council for International Programs (CIP) is looking for people to host 8 visiting professionals from various countries who will be in Morgantown from August 24 to November 22, working at area agencies, auditing WVU classes, and generally learning about life in the U.S. Each person stays with three different hosts for about a month at a time; hosts are volunteers who provide a room, meals, and, sometimes, some transportation for a professional. If you are interested, please contact Christine Titus, chair of the host family committee, at

Christine.Titus@hotmail.com or call her at 304-290-0995.

Religious Holy Days in July 2014

With thanks to Peter Clark of the University of California-San Francisco

For Native Americans, July marks the season of the Mountain Spirit Dances for the Mescalero Apache people of New Mexico; the Hopi Snake Dances, marking a sixteen-day ritual of purification; the Green Corn Ceremony or Stomp Dance, performed by Seminole and other Oklahoma tribes as a time of renewal and purification; and the Sun Dance, observed by Plains peoples (Arapaho, Cheyenne, Shoshone, Arikara, Crow, Sioux, and others) as a time of penitence and sacrifice. It is also known as Xmaay, the season of big berries when summer fruit is ripe for harvesting.

Tuesday, July 1

- Jashn-e Tirgan – Zoroastrianism: The festival of water.

Thursday, July 3

- Ghambar Maidyoshem ends – Zoroastrianism: Ending the celebration of the creation of water, the sowing of summer crops, and the harvesting of grain.

Friday, July 5:

- Birthday of Gurū Hargobind Sahib Ji – Sikhism

Celebrating a renowned martial artist who was named the 6th of the 11 Sikh Gurūs (1595 – 1644 C.E.).

Sunday, July 6

- Birthday of the XIVth Dalai Lama – Tibetan Buddhism

Celebrating the 79th birthday of His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, born in 1935 C.E. in northeastern Tibet. The Nobel Peace Prize laureate is the spiritual leader of the Tibetan government in exile and is revered as the fourteenth in a succession of manifestations of Avalokiteśvara, the enlightened being (bodhisattva) who embodies compassion in Buddhist practice.

Wednesday, July 9

- Martyrdom of the Báb – Bahá'í

Anniversary of the martyrdom of the Báb, the forerunner of Bahá'u'lláh, in Persia in 1850 C.E.

The Báb and 20,000 of his followers were killed because of their religious convictions throughout the mid-1800s. Work is suspended on this day.

Saturday, July 12

- Gurū Purnima – Hinduism

This day celebrates the ancient Hindu sage Krishna Dvaipayana, also known as Veda Vyāsa, who is credited as the compiler of the sacred Vedas, the author of the Eighteen Puranas (supplementary texts), and credited with writing the Sanskrit epic Mahābhārata. The term “gurū” refers to a teacher or remover of darkness. Buddhists also mark this day as an opportunity to thank their teachers.

- Chaturmas – Hinduism and Jainism

This day marks the beginning of a four-month period (ending in October) during which time devotees observe some form of vow. Penance, fasting, and other religious observances mark this period. It is considered an inauspicious time for weddings or thread ceremonies.

Sunday, July 13

- Kalimát – Bahá'í

The beginning of the seventh month of the Bahá'í year, meaning “words.”

- Obon (Ulambana) – Buddhism

A Japanese festival to honor deceased ancestors, usually involving the lighting of bonfires, traditional meals, paper lanterns, and folk dancing. Locally this festival is celebrated at various times in July and August.

- Dharma Day (Asalha Puja Day) – Buddhism

This day commemorates the historical Buddha's first sermon, called "Turning of the wheel of Dharma (Dhamma)," following his own enlightenment. The following day marks the beginning of the three-month Vassa or "Rains Retreat" for Theravadin Buddhist monks and nuns. This period is a time for training in Dharma studies, meditation practice, and giving religious services to the people.

Monday, July 14

- Feast Day of St. Kateri Tekakwitha – Catholic Christianity and Native American spirituality

Celebrating the life and ministry of Kateri Tekakwitha (1656 – April 17, 1680), a Mohawk-Algonquin woman who is the first Native American to be canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. She was so recognized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012, over three hundred years after her death.

Tuesday, July 22

- Feast of St. Mary Magdalene – Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, and Lutheran Christian churches

Also known as the Penitent, Mary Magdalene is celebrated as one of Jesus' earliest and most faithful disciples, after being healed by him. She is also recognized as a witness to Jesus' death and the first recorded witness of his resurrection on Easter.

Wednesday, July 23

- Laylat al-Qadr [Night of Power or Destiny] – Islam

A festival commemorating the first revelation of the Qur'ān to the Prophet Muhammad in 610 C.E., at the age of forty. The festival begins at sundown.

- Birthday of Emperor Haile Salassi I – Rastafari

Celebrating the birth of Ras [prince or chief] Tafari Makonnen (1892 – 1975 C.E.), who ruled as Emperor of Ethiopia from 1916 to 1974 (officially from 1930 to 1974), and who is professed by faithful Rasta believers as God incarnate.

- Birthday of Gurū Har Krishan Sahib Ji – Sikhism

Marking the birth of the 8th and youngest of the 11 Sikh Gurūs (1656 – 1664 C.E.) in the Nanakshahi calendar.

Thursday, July 24

- Pioneer Day – Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Celebrated annually as the anniversary of the entry of LDS pioneers into the Valley of the Great Salt Lake, in Utah in 1847 C.E., after a historic trek across 1,300 miles of wilderness.

- Khordad Sal – Zoroastrianism

The birth anniversary of the prophet Zarathustra (Zoroaster), according to the Qadimi calendar.

Friday, July 25

- Jum'at al-Wadā [Farewell Friday] – Islam

As the last Friday in the month of Ramadān and the Friday immediately preceding Eid al-Fitr, this day is not a festival day, but it is still considered special by many Muslims.

Monday, July 28

- Eid al-Fitr – Islam

This is the Breaking of the Fast that celebrates the end of the month of Ramadān. Usually lasting

three days, this festival begins with communal prayer and may also include charitable acts, visiting family and friends, preparing special foods, dressing in new clothes, and giving gifts.

Wednesday, July 30

- Oharai-taisai – Shinto

A purification ceremony to cleanse believers from offenses committed during the first half of the year. A large ring of woven grasses and reeds is placed at the entrance to Shinto shrines, and people walk through the ring as a symbol of inner purification.

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