

**Community Coalition for Social Justice**  
**PO Box 160**  
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**UPDATE: 5 JANUARY 2015**

**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, January 12, at 7:00 p.m. We will meet in the back room. All are welcome.

Please send your web site suggestions to Mike Atfield at [atfield@comcast.net](mailto:atfield@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. You can join or donate by credit card via PayPal on our web site.

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY 2015 CELEBRATION:** Our theme for the 2015 celebration on January 19 will be "The Road to the Vote" to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and other milestones in winning the right to vote for all citizens. Please plan to join us at 2:00 pm that day for this annual free family-friendly event at the Metropolitan Theatre on High Street in Morgantown.

This year's program will feature a welcome by Morgantown Mayor Jenny Selin and music by Belinda Nicholas, the Cheat Lake Elementary School Choir, Thomas Family singers, and the Flying Colors. Eric Murphy and students from St. Francis School will present the long struggle to guarantee the right to the vote for all Americans, while those in attendance try to pass a literacy test. Sarah Little will tell the story of Harriet Tubman, leader of the Underground Railroad who led many enslaved people out of the South, and a narrator will read the story of a *Child of the Civil Rights Movement*. The League of Women Voters, Morgantown City Clerk Linda Little, and the Morgantown Human Rights Commission will have information available on voting. Art students from Cheat Lake Elementary School and St. Francis have prepared posters related to the theme to display in local businesses. We will also have our social justice bumper stickers for sale.

Those attending are invited to bring outerwear like coats and boots, plus gloves and hats, for the Coordinating Council on Homelessness (CCoH) and/or items to donate to the Scotts Run Settlement House Backpack Feeding Program, which provides food for children at area schools for the weekends. Suggested items include 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 Jell-O cups. Please only bring items with pop tops or individual cups, and do not bring glass items. More information on this program is available on the CCSJ web site at [www.ccsjwv.org](http://www.ccsjwv.org). For more information on the CCoH, please contact John Sonnenday, executive director of the CCoH at [ccohwv@gmail.com](mailto:ccohwv@gmail.com) or 304-685-5360.

We also again thank Main Street Morgantown for co-sponsoring this event with us and assisting with publicity, as well as the City of Morgantown, which provides the funding to allow us to rent the Metropolitan Theatre.

**MONONGALIA FRIENDS MEETING INVITES ALL TO FEBRUARY 8 MEETING:** As a follow-up to our Religious Diversity Forum in September, the Monongalia Friends (Quakers) Meeting welcomes the community to participate in their Meeting for Worship on Sunday, February 8th, from 11 am – 12 noon with a light

snack following the Rise of Meeting. At 11 am there will be a brief introduction to Quaker faith and practice followed by Meeting for Worship. Monongalia Friends gather in silence with no preset program and no minister leading the worship. The Divine Spirit within each of us allows us to find spiritual truth and to hold direct communion with God. "Unprogrammed" worship in the manner of Friends is a process of prayerful waiting and listening. Please join us as we patiently listen for the truth as it arises from within and as it is shared by friends who are moved to speak it. The Monongalia Friends Meetinghouse is located at 648 East Brockway Avenue (across the street from Superior Photo). For more information, you may call Keith Fullerton at (724) 579-4889.

**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](http://www.tolerance.org), and we would pay for the postage. If you are interested in this project, please email us at [ccsjwv@hotmail.com](mailto:ccsjwv@hotmail.com).

**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. You can also buy the bumper stickers on January 19<sup>th</sup>.

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.

**FIND US ON FACEBOOK!** Just look for "Community Coalition for Social Justice" under "Groups" and become our friend. Thanks to Mike Sharley for being our group "leader."



#### LOCAL NEWS



**MORGANTOWN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:** The next regular meeting of the commission will be Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 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/>.

The commission's Human Rights Needs Survey is now available in summary format at <http://www.morgantownwv.gov/wp-content/uploads/Final-2014-HR-Needs-Survey-Report.pdf>. The commission plans to use the information as one foundation for an Inclusive City Plan.

**"THE MOST VULNERABLE" EXHIBIT AT MONONGALIA ARTS CENTER:** The Proud Students Against Landmines and Cluster Bombs (PSALM) of St. Francis School will have their annual exhibit in the Benedum Gallery at the Monongalia Arts Center, 107 High Street, Morgantown from January 9 to 31. This exhibit will feature "portraits of child survivors of landmines and cluster munitions to raise awareness about this global social justice issue." The opening reception is Friday, January 9, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, and PSALM members will be gallery guides. The reception is free and open to the public. Please come and meet these students who are passionate about ending landmines. Nora Sheets, St. Francis's art teacher, is their advisor.

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., DAY SPEAKER AND UNITY BREAKFAST:** Anand Giridharadas will be the featured speaker for the MLK Commemoration this year. His presentation on "The True American" Race, Reality, and the Dream" will be on Thursday, January 15, at 7:00 pm at St. Paul AME Church on Beechurst Avenue between Knapp Hall and Stansbury Hall and is free and open to the public.

According to his web site ([www.anand.ly/](http://www.anand.ly/)), "Anand Giridharadas is an author and New York Times columnist. He writes the "Admit One" column for *The Times's* arts pages, and the *Letter from America* for its global edition. He is the author of the new book *The True American: Murder and Mercy in Texas*, about a Muslim immigrant's campaign to spare from Texas's Death Row the white supremacist who tried to kill him. In 2011 he published *India Calling: An Intimate Portrait of a Nation's Remaking*, about returning to the India his parents left.

“His datelines include Italy, India, China, Dubai, Norway, Haiti, Brazil, Colombia, Nigeria, Uruguay, and the United States. He has written occasional pieces for *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Atlantic* and elsewhere.”

The 25<sup>th</sup> annual breakfast will be held on Monday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00 am to 10:30 am at the WVU Mountainlair Ballrooms. The Martin Luther King, Jr., Achievement Award and Scholarship Award will be presented at this time. **Please RSVP for the breakfast by Monday, January 12** to 304-293-7029. For more information, please call 304-293-7029 or go to [cbc.wvu.edu](http://cbc.wvu.edu).

Those who wish to contribute to the MLK, Jr. Scholarship Fund may send checks payable to that fund to the WVU Foundation, Inc., PO Box 1650, Morgantown, WV 26505.

#### STATE-WIDE NEWS

**FAIRNESS WEST VIRGINIA DAY OF ACTION IN CHARLESTON IS JANUARY 19.** If you can't be at the Met Theatre for our event on the 19<sup>th</sup>, consider going to Charleston. Here is the information from Fairness West Virginia:

“Every year since our founding in 2009, Fairness supporters have rallied at the West Virginia State Capitol to let lawmakers know that LGBT rights matter and this year will be no exception.

“On Martin Luther King Day - January 19th - we will meet in Charleston to lobby our state Senators and Delegates on behalf of the 57,000 LGBT West Virginians who face daily discrimination at work, at home, and at school for simply being who they are. [Click here to register for our 2015 Day of Action now!](#)

“This will be an opportunity for you to gather with like-minded advocates and allies. You will take part in an advocacy training that will build on the grassroots organizing skills we covered at last year's Day of Action. You will meet your legislators and let them know how critical it is that West Virginia pass nondiscrimination policies to protect LGBT West Virginians from state sanctioned discrimination.

“Now that marriage equality is the law of the land in West Virginia, it is even more alarming that in the Mountain State it is still legal to fire or evict someone based solely on who they love. Imagine marrying your soulmate on Sunday and then getting fired or evicted on Monday all because of who you are and who you love. We need the lawmakers in Charleston to know that LGBT West Virginians are facing harmful discrimination on a daily basis and that they can do something to stop it.

“Register now for the 2015 Day of Action on January 19th MLK Day in Charleston.

“With the new political landscape at the legislature this year, we will also be defending our community from efforts to pass homophobic and transphobic legislation known as the ‘West Virginia Religious Freedom Restoration Act’ (RFRA). This legislation would enshrine discrimination against LGBT West Virginians into state law by allowing citizens and private companies to use religion as a cloak to justify discrimination and further marginalize LGBT West Virginians.

“Should the legislature pass a RFRA, employers could use their right to ‘religious freedom’ to deny health insurance to legally married same-sex spouses. It means LGBT West Virginians can be denied services from any private business simply because of who they are. It means that individuals can use their freedom to practice religion as a means to exercise hatred against fellow West Virginians instead of doing what is fair and what is right.

“Religious freedom is a fundamental part of America, and we are all entitled to our religious beliefs. But those beliefs don't allow us to discriminate against others. Freedom means freedom for everyone, and none of us would like to be turned away from a business just because of who we are or who we love. It's clear that the West Virginia RFRA is not just about protecting the freedom to practice religion, it's about enshrining homophobia and transphobia into our state laws.

“Join us on MLK Day in Charleston as we speak out against hate and bigotry, stand up for LGBT rights, and encourage West Virginia's lawmakers to choose to stand on the right side of history.

“Register at [equalityfederation.salsalabs.com/o/35039/p/salsa/event/common/public/index.sjs?event\\_KEY=3318](http://equalityfederation.salsalabs.com/o/35039/p/salsa/event/common/public/index.sjs?event_KEY=3318) for 2015 Fairness Day of Action on January 19th!

“Yours in Fairness, Andrew Schneider, Executive Director.”

### INTERFAITH HOLY DAYS IN JANUARY 2015

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. It is also the season of K’aliyee, the time of the north wind that blows off glaciers and icecaps that linger from the last ice age.

Thursday, January 1-New Year’s Day

- Temple Day – Buddhism

North American Buddhists attend special services in temples on this day.

- Birthday of Meitreyā Bodhisattva – Buddhism [Pure Land schools]

Marking the birth of Meitreyā, who will come at the end of time to renew the pristine Buddhist teachings.

- Feast of Mary, Mother of God; and the Naming of Jesus Christ – Christianity

Some Christians celebrate this day in honor of Jesus’ mother; others celebrate this day (eight days after Jesus’ birth) as the day when Jesus was presented at the Temple and officially named by his parents.

- Gantan-sai (O-shōgatsu) – Shintō

This Japanese celebration of the New Year includes prayers for the renewal of hearts, good health and prosperity. The festival lasts for a week, during which time people visit one another’s homes and offer gifts of good wishes for the coming year.

Friday, January 2

- Mawlid al-Nabi – Islam

The anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad in Mecca in ca. 570 C.E., beginning at sundown. Shi’a Muslims mark this day on January 8th.

Sunday, January 4

- Ghambar Maidyarem ends – Zoroastrianism

A celebration for the creation of animals, and a time for the equitable sharing of food with all.

Monday, January 5

- Birthday of Gurū Gobind Singh Ji – Sikhism

A celebration in honor of the tenth and final Sikh master [1666 – 1708 C.E.], who created the Brotherhood of the Pure (Khalsa) and who declared the scriptures (Adi Granth) to be the gurū for all Sikhs from that time onward. This date is used by adherents of the Nanakshahi tradition.

- Mahāyāna New Year – Buddhism

This celebration falls on the first full moon day in January for Buddhists who practice in the Mahāyāna (Great Vehicle) stream. By contrast, in Theravadin countries (Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and Laos) the new year is celebrated in April, while Tibetan Buddhists generally celebrate it in March.

Tuesday, January 6

- Epiphany – Christianity (Western and some Eastern churches)

Marking the traditional date of the visitation of the Magi to meet the infant Jesus and the end of the twelve days of Christmas, also known as Día de los Reyes (Day of the Kings). In Armenian Christian churches, this date is celebrated as the Feast of the Nativity. Most Western churches celebrate this feast as Epiphany, which comes from the Latin word meaning “manifestation”; in Ethiopian Orthodox churches it is known as Timkat and is celebrated on January 19th.

- Feast of the Theophany – Christianity (some Eastern churches)

In some Eastern churches, this feast is associated with the baptism of Jesus by John and Jesus’ first recorded miracle in the Gospels, where he changed water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana. This

celebration begins at sundown on the previous day. In Eastern churches using the Julian calendar, this feast occurs on January 19th.

Wednesday, January 7

- Christmas – Christianity (some Eastern churches)

The celebration of Jesus' birth begins at sundown on this day, according to the Julian calendar used in some Orthodox churches.

- Birthday of Amitābha Buddha – Buddhism

Marking the birth of the bodhisattva Dharmakāra who resolved to attain enlightenment as a buddha and vowed to create a Pure Land. He became the buddha Amitābha ("infinite light"), and any sentient being who desires to be born into that land is guaranteed rebirth there through his vow, and from there she/he/it will unfailingly reach Nirvana. This belief forms the foundation of Pure Land Buddhism, which is practiced by many Buddhists in Japan, China, and other East Asian countries.

Saturday, January 10

- Memorial of Línjì Yìxuán – Buddhism

Anniversary of the death in 866 C.E. of the Chinese Buddhist teacher who founded what is often known as the Rinzai sect of Zen Buddhism.

Monday, January 12

- Swami Vivekananda Jayanti – Hinduism

A celebration of the birth of Swami Vivekananda, who introduced Hinduism to North America at the World's Parliament of Religions, held in 1893 in Chicago during the World's Fair.

- Seijin-no-hi – Shintō

Coming-of-Age Day, a Japanese national holiday in which families travel to shrines and announce to the gods that their children have reached adulthood. Prayers are offered for the children's wellbeing and lifelong health.

Tuesday, January 13

- Maghi – Sikhism

Commemorating a battle in which forty Sikhs (the Forty Liberated Ones or Immortal Ones), led by a woman named Maathaa Bhaag Kaur, sacrificed themselves for their gurū.

Wednesday, January 14

- Makar Sankranti – Hinduism

A festival marking the change from decrease to increase of the sun.

Saturday, January 17

- World Religion Day – Bahá'í

A celebration of the teachings of unity found in all religious traditions. The observance begins at sundown.

Sunday, January 18

- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins – Christianity

Monday, January 19

- Martin Luther King, Jr., Day – USA national holiday

A day remembering the life and legacy of the American civil rights leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

- Sultán – Bahá'í

The first day of Sultán (Sovereignty), the seventeenth month of the Bahá'í year.

Saturday, January 24

- Vasanta Panchami – Hinduism

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

Sunday, January 25

- Memorial of Hōnen Shonin – Buddhism  
Anniversary of the death in 1212 C.E. of the founder of the Jōdo Shū (Pure Land) school of Mahāyāna Buddhism in Japan.

Friday, January 30

- Jashne Sadeh – Zoroastrianism  
A celebration of the discovery of fire by King Hashang of the Peshdadian dynasty.

Saturday, January 31

- Birth of Gurū Har Rai – Sikhism  
A celebration of the birth of the seventh of the Sikh gurūs [1630 – 1661 C.E.], according to the Nanakshahi calendar.

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. 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, the Anti-Defamation League, Project Interfaith (Omaha, NE), and [www.interfaithcalendar.org](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org)

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