

Community Coalition for Social Justice
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UPDATE: 1 MARCH 2016

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 **Tuesday, March 8, at 6:30 p.m.** We will meet in the back room. All are welcome.

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. You can join or donate by credit card via PayPal on our web site.

PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOKS: Steering Committee members have contacted the Morgantown Public Library to promote the books that we have purchased in the past related to social justice issues. We have also talked to Matthew Wilson, the assistant store manager for the WVU Downtown Bookstore about promoting more books that are related to various social justice themes each month, like March for Women's History Month.

CCSJ IN THE NEWS: Susan Brown had a letter to the editor in the *Dominion Post* on February 24th, promoting social justice.

At the invitation of Morgantown City Council member Jenny Selin, Barb Howe spoke at the Morgantown City Council Committee of the Whole Meeting on February 23 as part of a group presentation asking Council to pass a resolution promoting social justice for all in opposition to HB 4012. Kelly Kimble of the Morgantown Area Chamber of Commerce, Paula Fitzgerald of the WVU College of Business and Economics, and Billie Murray of the Morgantown Human Rights Commission also spoke. The resolution to support the Morgantown Area Chamber of Commerce statement is on the agenda for the March 1 City Council meeting.

We have told our state senators that we oppose HB 4012 and, as part of the work of the West Virginia Friends of Syrian Refugees, we will be contacting our representatives in Congress to ask that they vote against any measure that would restrict the admission of refugees into the U.S. and that we are prepared to welcome and assist them to resettle here.

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 will be Thursday, March 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 www.morgantownwv.gov/government/commissions/human-rights-commission/human-rights-commission-agenda-minutes/.

You can find a calendar of annual human rights observances at www.morgantownwv.gov/wp-content/uploads/Annual-HR-Observances.pdf.

Here are the events for March, which is National Women’s History Month to honor “women as significant agents of change.”

March 8 Day International Women’s Day – Celebration of the economic, political, and social achievements of women worldwide. Recognition of need for empowering women to meet their health and family planning needs as central to realizing greater equality. With access to education, economic opportunity, and quality health care, healthier mothers can have healthier babies, economic gains, and help create less pressure on our planet's natural resources.

March 21 International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination – Call to action to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination worldwide.

International Forest Day – Call for awareness of the importance of forests in protecting air quality, water retention, plants for pharmaceuticals, habitat for birds and other wildlife – all of which provide a balance for survival of all.

March 22 World Water Day – Calls for awareness of how essential potable water is to the rights of all people in West Virginia and worldwide.

March 31 Cesar Chavez Day – Honors Mexican American farm worker. Labor leader, and activist Cesar Chavez (1927- 1993) who was a nationally respected voice of social justice.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL: All are invited to these events in the Gluck Theatre of the WVU Mountainlair. The festival is sponsored by the WVU Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; The City of Morgantown Human Rights Commission; WVU Libraries; WVU Human Rights Film Festival Planning Committee; and WVU Office of Multicultural Programs.

Tuesday, March 1, 7 p.m.: “Not My Life.” Directed by Robert Bilheimer. “Not My Life” comprehensively depicts the cruel and dehumanizing practices of human trafficking and modern slavery on a global scale. Filmed on five continents, in a dozen countries, “Not My Life” takes viewers into a world where millions of children are exploited through an astonishing array of practices including forced labor, sex tourism, sexual exploitation, and child soldiering.

Tuesday, March 8, 7 p.m. “Oxyana.” Directed by Sean Dunne. “Oxyana” is a harrowing front line account of a community in the grips of an epidemic, told through the voices of the addicts, the

dealers and all those affected. It is a haunting glimpse into an American nightmare unfolding before our eyes, a cautionary tale told with raw and unflinching honesty.

For more information, go to diversity.wvu.edu/di/human-rights-film.

WVU CENTER FOR WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES:

March 15-17: WVU Women: Celebrating 125 Years of Graduating Women from West Virginia University. There will be a series of events during these days to celebrate 125 years of women's education at WVU. Dr. Gina Barreca of the University of Connecticut will speak on "Courage, Curiosity and Conviction: Celebrating 125 Years of Women's Education @WVU" at 7:30pm on March 16th in the Milano Reading Room at the Downtown Campus Library. This event is free and open to the public.

For a complete schedule, go to symposium.lib.wvu.edu/.

For more information, contact Carroll Wilkinson, 304-293-0308, or cwilkins@wvu.edu.

March 17 Scholarship deadline: These scholarships are being offered for the 2016-17 academic year, with more information available at womensgenderstudies.wvu.edu/about-us/honors-scholarships-and-awards:

Carrie Koeturius Scholarship for Returning Women Students

Sally Lowther Norris Showalter Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Related Disciplines

Winifred South Knutti Graduate Scholarship in Women's Studies

Velma Miller/West Virginia Alliance for Women's & Gender Studies Graduate Scholar Award

Alma & Claude Rowe Excellence through Equity Award

WVU NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM HOSTS TWO EVENTS:

March 10th, at 7:00P.M. in G09 White Hall, WVU: "Coming to Light - The Edward S. Curtis Story." A WVU film screening co-hosted by The School of Art & Design Photography Program and The Native American Studies Program.

Edward S. Curtis was a renowned photographer of 19th and 20th century American Indians. This film chronicles his dramatic life story and the creation of his monumental portfolio of images of Native Americans. Descendants of his photographic subjects tell stories about the photos and reveal their meaning to Indian people today. Hot popcorn and refreshments will be provided. For more information, contact Professor Sherwin at: michael.sherwin@mail.wvu.edu. This event is free and open to the public.

April 6th, 7:00 p.m. (welcome reception at 6:30 p.m.) "From Reservation Cabin to the Corridors of Power: Changing Our World from Within:" A public lecture by 2016 Native American Studies Elder-in-Residence Ada Deer (Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin), former tribal chair and head of the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Ms. Deer was the first American Indian woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the first American Indian to receive a Master's in Social Work from Columbia University. The daughter of a white Quaker mother and Menominee father, she emerged from her reservation youth to become a respected, powerful leader in the struggle for indigenous rights. This event is free and open to the public.

WVU CENTER FOR BLACK CULTURE AND RESEARCH:

March 7th, 7:00 p.m.: Black & Brown: In Search of Solidarity for Black and Latino People. Panel discussion in the Greenbrier Room of the WVU Mountainlair.

March 10th, 7:00 p.m.: "...and Justice For All." Panel discussion in the Mountaineer Room of the WVU Mountainlair.

MORGANTOWN INTERFAITH GROUP: This group has been focusing on gun violence. For more information, contact Rev. Monica Styron at mstryon2015@gmail.com.

MONONGALIA COUNTY CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER: The annual "Girls Night Out" will be held on Friday, April 29th, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Waterfront Place Hotel. To buy tickets, go to www.moncocac.org/events/.

STATE NEWS

The legislature is in session, and there are some bills of importance to those interested in social justice.

SB 11 and HB 2508 – The West Virginia Freedom of Conscience Protection Act. This bill has not moved out of either the House or Senate Judiciary Committees so is probably dead for this session.

HB 4012 – West Virginia Religious Freedom Restoration Act – Now the West Virginia Religious Freedom Protection Act. At this writing, the bill is up for second reading in the Senate. Please call your legislators and ask them to oppose it.

Senate Joint Resolution 13 – On February 20, Senator Craig Blair introduced this potential State constitutional amendment to ARTICLE IX. §14: Elimination of Protected Class. No county, municipality or other political subdivision may adopt or enforce a local law, ordinance, resolution, rule or policy that creates a protected classification or promotes discrimination on a basis not contained in state law, recognizing that all life is equal from conception to the grave.

Resolved further, That in accordance with the provisions of article eleven, chapter three of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, the proposed amendment is hereby numbered "Amendment No. 1" and designated as the "No Protected Class Amendment" and the purpose of the proposed amendment is summarized as follows: "To prohibit adoption and enforcement of a local law, ordinance, resolution, rule or policy that creates a protected classification or promotes discrimination on a basis not contained in state law, recognizing that all life is equal from conception to the grave."

NOTE: The purpose of this resolution is ensure that businesses, organizations and employers doing business in West Virginia are subject to uniform nondiscrimination laws and obligations.

Senator Beach has indicated that he does not think this proposed amendment is going anywhere.

You can contact Senator Bob Beach at Bob.Beach@wvsenate.gov or 304-357-7919, Senator Roman Prezioso at Roman.Prezioso@wvsenate.org or 304-357-7961, and Senator Leonhardt at Kent.Leonhardt@wvsenate.gov or 304-357-7827.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS IN MARCH 2016

FROM PETER CLARK

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.

Tuesday, March 1

- '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 20]. Adult believers in good health abstain from food and drink from dawn to dusk.

Sunday, March 6

- 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.

Monday, March 7

- Maha Shivaratri – 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.

Wednesday, March 9

- Losar [Tibetan New Year] – Buddhism

Celebrating the beginning of a three-day festival for the year 2143 in the Tibetan calendar.

Thursday, March 10

- 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.

Sunday, March 13

- 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 14

- New Year's Day – Sikhism

In the Nanakshahi calendar, this day is the beginning of the year 548.

- 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.

Wednesday, 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.

Thursday, March 17

- Saint Patrick's Day – Western Christianity

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

Sunday, March 20 Spring equinox

- Palm Sunday – Christianity (Western churches)

The remembrance of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem, when crowds spread palm fronds on the ground as Jesus rode into the city. Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week.

- 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.

- Naw Rúz – Bahá'í

Marking the beginning of the year 173 of the Bahá'í era, and the beginning of the first month of the year, known as Bahá or "splendor."

Monday, March 21

- Navruz [Now Ruz or Norooz] – Zoroastrianism

The beginning of the Zoroastrian new year, 1386 AY or 3754 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.

Wednesday, March 23

- 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.

- 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.

Thursday, March 24

- 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 en-lightened monks who were ordained by him.

- Hola Mohallah – Sikhism

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

- 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.

- Maundy Thursday [Holy Thursday] – Christianity (Western churches)

The remembrance of Jesus’ last supper with his disciples and his institution of the “love commandment” (the term “Maundy” comes from the Latin word for “commandment”) while he washed their feet as a servant.

Friday, March 25

- Good Friday – Christianity (Western churches)

A commemoration of the passion of Jesus of Nazareth, i.e., his death by crucifixion. At sundown some churches begin the Easter vigil either this evening or on Holy Saturday (March 26).

Saturday, March 26

- Khordad Sal – Zoroastrianism

The birth anniversary of the prophet Zarathustra.

Sunday, March 27

- Easter Sunday – Christianity (Western churches)

Celebrating God’s raising of Jesus of Nazareth from the dead, this day is the oldest and most central festival in the Christian year and initiates the fifty-day period culminating in Pentecost.

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), the University of Victoria Faculty of Law (British Columbia, Canada), and www.interfaithcalendar.org

To subscribe to this calendar and sync it with your Google, Outlook, or iCal calendars, visit ucsfspiritcare.org and select the “Resources” menu