

Michigan Coalition for Human Rights

*"...injustice anywhere is an affront
to justice everywhere."*

M. L. King, Jr.



B. Pennie Millender
Chairperson, Board of Directors

Bishop H. Coleman McGehee, Jr.
MCHR Chair Emeritus

MC HR

About MCHR...

The Michigan Coalition for Human Rights is an interfaith, multi-racial network of individuals and civic, business, religious, labor and humanitarian groups, working primarily with the religious community in pursuit of justice and peace.

The Board of Directors of MCHR has identified the problem of racial prejudice at home and abroad as a priority issue toward which organization programs and resources will be directed.

Our Mission...

From a position of solidarity with those who suffer oppression and injustice locally and globally, the mission of MCHR is to promote awareness and commitment to human rights through education, community organization and action.

We stand in active opposition to those forces which suppress human dignity, freedom and justice.

A Brief History of MCHR

MCHR was formed officially in December 1980 following a press conference at which Detroit clergy (including Episcopal Bishop H. Coleman McGehee, Rabbi Richard C. Hertz, the Rev. Rudolph Gelsey of First Unitarian Universalist Church, the Rev. Dr. Hugh White of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan and Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit) made known their concern about religious groups, such as the Moral Majority, which were openly committed to injecting biblical principles into American government.

The group of clergy did not take issue with the right of those who were publicizing their views to do so, but wanted it known that such views constituted a narrow interpretation of Holy Scripture and gravely neglected the curses of unemployment, racism, sexism, militarism and economic hardship. The group consisted of Catholics, Jews, Protestants and Muslims who abhorred what it viewed as a return to simplistic self-righteous fervor that ignored the biblical concern for justice and peace, compassion and mercy. In 1981, a board of directors was formed and began to hold regular meetings with offices in the Episcopal Diocesan Center at 4800 Woodward Avenue in Detroit. Under the leadership of its newly elected officers, the board called upon individuals and civic, business, labor, religious and humanitarian groups to join in an effort to: affirm the right of every person to decent housing, equal justice and religious freedom; promote and advance human rights for all persons; and work towards the elimination of war, poverty, racism and sexism.

The early years of the organization were devoted to gaining participation on the part of persons and groups throughout the community with special educational programs, radio and TV appearances, meetings, writings and press conferences--all designed to address a variety of peace and justice issues including hunger, poverty, oppression, intrusion of religion into the public schools, welfare benefits, the rights of gays and lesbians, the equality of women, crime, war and peace.

One of the turning points in the life of MCHR was the selection in 1984 of Mr. Tom Fentin to be the first full-time director. Mr. Fentin's outstanding leadership, organizational abilities and personal commitment helped revitalize the work of MCHR and led to MCHR becoming one of the best known and respected organizations of its kind in Michigan. Ms. Kathryn Savoie continued, as Executive Director, the good example set by Tom Fentin until her leaving in April 1994.

Today, MCHR is nationally known for its youth project, The Freedom Tour, and for its leadership as part of the international effort to impact the struggle for justice in South Africa.



What We've Been Doing:



*This is some of what we've been doing.
With your help, we can continue!*

- MCHR organized a major midwest regional conference **Abolishing Apartheid/Ending Racism: The Struggle For Justice in South Africa and the U.S.**, held in Detroit, March 6-8, 1992.

- MCHR's fourth **FREEDOM TOUR IV: A Journey of Discovery** was held July 18-August 2, 1992 with 23 students participating.

- MCHR held a special screening of **Malcolm X** and follow-up discussion, co-sponsored by the Racial Justice Center of Grosse Pointe and New Detroit.

- MCHR hosted a five-part **film/lecture series, A Question of Justice: Challenging Apartheid and Racism**, in January and February 1993.

- MCHR, working with the Cranbrook Peace Foundation, organized a gathering of Detroit area religious leadership with South Africa's **Archbishop Desmond Tutu** on July 15, 1993.

- MCHR sent three **delegates to South Africa** in May 1994 to monitor the outcomes of the first democratic elections.

- MCHR organized a day-long conference on Environmental Justice, "**Detroit's First Environmental Justice Gathering**," June 18, 1994.

MEMBERSHIP

Michigan Coalition for Human Rights

Levels

- \$10 Student/Senior/Limited Income
 \$25 Basic Membership
 \$100 Sustainer
 \$500 Benefactor

Membership Renewal Please change my address

I have enclosed an additional contribution of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 Other _____

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

I will work on the following MCHR program(s):

- Race Relations
 Southern Africa
 Freedom Tour
 MCHR Development

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

Return to: Michigan Coalition for Human Rights • 4800 Woodward Ave. • Detroit, MI 48201 • 313-831-0258

