

EVENTS SET FOR TAX CRUNCH TIME POST OFFICE TO STAY OPEN UNTIL MIDNIGHT; NEARBY CHURCH TO OFFER FREE FOOD, REFRESHMENTS

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Last-minute tax filers may take comfort in knowing procrastination has its rewards - refreshments, entertainment and extended postal hours.

The main post office in downtown Charleston will be open 5:30 a.m. to midnight Friday to accommodate those mailing tax forms.

No one will be on hand to help with tax questions. However, refreshments will be served, entertainment provided and parking expanded.

Aside from regular parking lots on Lee Street and Washington Street, overflow parking will be provided on the district lot on the right side of Lee Street after 5 p.m.

Among those on hand for tax night activities will be radio stations Rock 105, 94.5 Z Rock and Electric 102.7.

Just across the street from the main post office, another gathering will be under way from 3 p.m. to midnight.

A banner above the door of St. Marks United Methodist Church, 900 Washington St. E., says: "The faith communities of Judaism, Christianity and Islam invite you to free food, drink and hospitality April 15, 3 p.m. to midnight."

The event is sponsored by the Charleston Area Religious Leaders Association (CARLA). The group includes religious leaders from a variety of faiths who meet for discussions and to promote understanding, said the Rev. Monty Brown, pastor of St. Marks.

"CARLA gathers monthly," Brown said. "For me, as a pastor, it is such a profound experience." "Even with doctrinal differences, we can work and play together," Brown said. "We live in an age where there is rampant prejudice. We are all unified by having to pay taxes."

So he figures it can be a good opportunity to get to know each other at the church where finger foods will be provided free.

"CARLA is providing a wonderful service for the community," said Jamal Daoudi, imam of the Islamic Center of West Virginia. "CARLA is trying to bring people of faith to work together."

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