

Horseshoe Falls Discipleship and Justice Commission 2025

Horseshoe Falls Regional Council is fortunate to have a team of dedicated people who offer their passions, gifts and hopes for the church as commissioners serving on the Discipleship and Justice Commission. This team meets most months to discern how to share the resources of time and money in supporting various ministry programs, and the people in our communities of faith doing the work of Christ.

We would welcome new members and encourage you to send an expression of interest should this work fit for you. <https://hfrucc.ca/expression-of-interest/>

Please thank our commissioners when you meet them.

Jake Girton, Joe Hopkins, Wendy Lowden, Parker Neale, Jess Swance, Geoff Thompson, Lahring Tribe, and Donalee Williams.

The D&J Commission is dedicated to helping communities of faith live out their ministry of faith formation, mission and justice. Their mandate includes working in right relations with Indigenous partners, supporting Affirming ministries with LGBTQ2SIA+ members, making safe space for all, opening dialogue and strengthening relationships everywhere in our churches and world. With an understanding of the need to be a multigenerational, multiracial and multicultural denomination, reflecting the world around us, this commission helps to articulate why Christian faith matters and where it makes a difference.

Highlights for 2025 include:

- Mission and Service Grants. We were able to award \$140, 000.00 to the following ministries for 2025. Check them out and consider learning more about these ministries and the wonderful work they do. Perhaps your community might like to apply for a grant next year.
 - 5 Oaks Retreat Centre
 - Brock University Chaplaincy
 - Delta United Church, Hamilton- Sunday School Coordinator
 - Delta United Church, Hamilton-Edith's Pantry
 - Grand River Spiritual and Education Resource Centre
 - McMaster University Campus Ecumenical Chaplaincy
 - St John's & Glen Williams United Churches, Georgetown- Food for Life
 - Trinity United Church, Kitchener- The Hub
 - Wesley Urban Ministries, Hamilton
 - Cave Springs Camp- Grow the Mission
 - Silver Spire United Church, St Catharines -Queer Kid Bible Camp
 - Silver Spire United Church, St Catharines -Community Kitchen
- A few examples of some Events and Programs supported through D&J
 - **Preaching with an Ecological Lens** with Rev. Dr. Hye Ran Kim-Cragg
Addressing the climate crisis from the pulpit. This event was for Ministry Personnel, LLWLs and others who lead in worship
 - **Strawberry Thanksgiving & Communion** The gathering was led by Adrian Jacobs, Cayuga Nation of the Six Nations Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Adrian lead a reflection on the Spiritual Covenant, which is a symbolic agreement that helps a faith community take steps towards mutual respect and financial repair. In Haudenosaunee culture,

strawberries are celebrated as the first fruit of the season in ceremonies of gratitude, and we will share strawberry juice together in communion

- **Tri Region Palestine Network** This recently formed network offers resources, education and advocacy for justice in Israel and Palestine. Consider hosting a Palestine Land Exercise (PLE) in your community of faith, where trained leaders provide an experiential educational event.
- **Worshiplude 2025** Funds from the former Niagara Youth Festival helped to subsidize a bus trip to Ottawa for 38 participants. Youth and their leaders enjoyed Winterlude activities, built community, and attended a large worship service over a three-day weekend. There is hope that this program grows each year.
- **Cave Springs Camp and Ryerson Camp**
- **Kids Across the Regions at Camp Bimini** A fun, faith-filled overnight retreat for children (grade 4 to 7/8) with youth leadership as Cabin Leaders (high school) & Jr Cabin Leaders (grade 8). This event also offers a great opportunity to build community and share resources among adult leaders
- **Great Lakes Creation Collaborative Retreat** An initiative between the United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ where representatives of our region attended a weekend event in Michigan with representatives from communities surrounding the Great Lakes. The theme speaker, theologian Ched Myers, reminded the church of the urgency to- learn about, become intimate with and love our watersheds in our quest for creation care.
- **There is much more. Learn more about HF D&J Commission by contacting commission members or staff supporting this work.**

- Staff Support for HF D&J Commission
 - Kathy Douglas, Faith Formation Minister
 - John Egger, Social Justice Minister
 - Krista Ford, Administrative Assistant, Finance
 - Thérèse Samuel, Right Relations and Social Justice Minister