

## **Immersion Group Descriptions for Shalom Justice Camp**

### **1. Follow the Food—Poverty and Food**

Are food banks necessary or even wrong? Besides food banks, how else can communities increase their food security? We'll talk about these issues and visit food security programs in Peterborough and the Greater Toronto Area. Group members can prepare by undertaking a three-day "Food bank Diet" before Justice Camp.

### **2. Why are you here? Challenges of Immigrants, Migrant Workers and new Canadians**

How do we welcome newcomers to Canada? Become an immigrant for a day to get a taste of how it feels, first-hand, to try and find a job, a place to live, and meet other basic needs in a strange land. Meet with staff from the New Canadian Centre, the Anglican-United Refugee Alliance and others working with newcomers to learn about the challenges involved and current issues, including the high rates of poverty among newcomers to Canada.

### **3. Follow the Flow – Water Quality Action**

Water is a vital spiritual and biological reality as well as a contentious political issue in our culture. At the end of the camp, participants will be able to articulate a personal view of water as a spiritual reality, will have had a hands-on experience of the Peterborough watershed, will be more familiar with local, national and international water issues, and will have tools and motivation to engage with others in their home communities in addressing local watershed issues.

### **4. Native Urban and Rural Realities**

Learning exercises, films and visits with local First Nations communities will ground participants in First Nations realities and challenges. Meetings with people involved in counselling, healing and reconciliation initiatives will point the way toward a more positive future, including ideas for follow-up action in one's home community.

### **5. Sustainable Agriculture**

Through discussion, tours, and hands-on experience we will explore topics of sustainability in the food system, spirituality and the land, farmland conservation, ecological farming, urban agriculture, and other farming models and challenges. We will visit farms, gardens and projects in the local Kawartha region, exploring the types of initiatives people are undertaking to address unsustainability and injustice in the food system from a production standpoint. Expect to get your hands dirty! We'll roll up our sleeves to get a feel for what's happening on (and in) the ground, while giving back to the growers who will share their knowledge with us.

### **6. Raising the Roof – Housing for All**

In a society where so many live in degrading conditions, including having nowhere to call "home", the affordable housing crisis wears many faces. Come meet some of them: those living in rooming house ghettos, in shelters and social housing projects. We'll reflect on where housing fits in the dominant economic system, and the difference between being a homeless woman and a homeless man. And we'll meet advocates and activists keeping up the fight for a society where there truly is decent housing for all.

## **7. Violence and Cycles of Violence**

This group will explore different definitions and manifestations of violence including structural, physical, and emotional violence. Group visits might include a local prison, a halfway house for offenders released from prison, and a domestic abuse support network. The leaders will demonstrate that crime is not simply the breaking of laws but is more importantly a breaking of values and relationships. We hope to present a restorative alternative to a system that currently is designed to simply punish. Group members will leave with a better understanding of the interconnection of violence, especially in Canada's judicial and correctional systems, taking home tools and ideas for addressing it in their own lives and communities.

## **8. Healthy Communities**

In an individualistic society we often forget the need and importance of being a part of a healthy community. Through hands-on exploration, discussion and eating together we will be attempting to address the questions of what is a community, what makes it healthy, how do we assess the health of our community, and how do we build a healthy community in our context. We will consider these questions from many angles such as city planning, medical issues, volunteerism, the common good, and sustainability.

## **9. Strategies for Political Advocacy**

Over the course of the three days, participants will work together to discern key issues facing the local community as well as potential solutions to these local challenges. Drawing on input from experienced activists, campers will identify core messages related to these potential solutions, prepare an advocacy campaign and engage local clergy, government leaders, and media in dialogue towards change. Campers will go beyond learning about what could be done to advocate for a particular political change, to taking action themselves.

## **10. Arts and Social Change**

There's a healthy and vibrant tradition of artists working for social transformation and shalom. This immersion group will develop creative responses to the gospel call to proclaim justice and peacemaking and get to know the work of some local artists involved in this work. Together we will develop work, inspired and facilitated by experienced artists, and present it to the Justice Camp community. If you're interested in this workshop, bring the tools of your creative practice: musical instruments, sketch pads, energy and imagination.

## **11. Technology and Social Change**

As advocates for social justice, Christians have adopted the Internet and new technology as helpful tools for being a prophetic voice in the world. But in doing so, we have often justified the means by the end, neglecting our commitments to stewardship, mission and justice. Join experts in the field of communications as we consider open source technology, media justice, e-waste, net neutrality, and responsible electronic ministry.