

## **Detailed Information for Potential Participants of the Study:**

**“Perceptions of climate justice and sustainability signposts in Waterloo region:  
A mixed methods qualitative study”**

**Led by Kai Reimer-Watts, PhD candidate, Community Psychology  
Wilfrid Laurier University**

As a community-based study, Kai will be conducting conversational interviews with interested participants who have engaged with the climate justice banner in different ways. He will also be reflecting on his own role in the banner creation and promotion process, and as an active member of FCJ and ongoing community advocate for climate justice. “Walking alongside” and in solidarity with communities including through work that bridges both scholarship and activism is a common approach of many community psychology practitioners. Kai hopes to embody a similar approach as a community-based researcher with both humility and in a spirit of listening, in service of gathering and honouring community knowledge related to the climate justice symbolism now present in Waterloo Region.

In the weeks/months ahead, Kai will be approaching potential participants to consider engaging in a one-on-one semi-structured interview with him about their experiences with and perspectives on the climate justice banner. Kai’s hope is to have a diversity of people participate from across multiple faith communities that raised the banner, to gain a rich and multilayered view of the meaning and influence of this symbol from multiple perspectives. In addition to its academic value such research can also benefit local climate organizing as well, by centering community knowledge and perspectives on public climate justice communication. One intended output is to produce a community report that will summarize the research findings and can be used to support future organizing for climate justice in Waterloo Region, in addition to other potential research publications/outputs.

It is important to note that for anyone approached by Kai with an invitation to participate, *participation in this study, or not, is entirely voluntary and your decision alone*. This research design has been reviewed by Wilfrid Laurier University's Research Ethics Board, which determined it to be ethically sound. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments regarding this study, please reach out to Kai directly at [CJSresearch@wlu.ca](mailto:CJSresearch@wlu.ca). If interested, you can find further details on a broader context for this study below.

### **Contributions**

This research is highly relevant to developing a more informed public response to the growing climate change crisis we all face. As the FCJ climate justice banner has now been taken up by 21

different faith communities across Waterloo region and beyond (at last count), studying this symbol and the influences it may have can make a valuable contribution to community-based knowledge, practices and research on public climate communication. This is also an opportunity for those engaged with creating, promoting, raising and interacting with the climate justice banner to share their unique perspectives.

### **Study questions and participation**

Kai is excited and grateful to be engaging with a broader community to help answer some of the core questions of this study, including exploring the process of creation and promotion of the climate justice banner including the discourses that informed it; how this public symbol now influences broader climate justice awareness, discourse and actions, if at all; and understandings of this climate justice symbol, including in comparison with other sustainability symbols in Waterloo region.

To answer these questions, Kai will be speaking with members/affiliates of FCJ who helped create and/or promote the banner, as well as members of faith communities that have now raised the banner. To be considered to participate in the study, participants must be:

1. 16+ years of age, and either
2. a member/affiliate of FCJ, and/or
3. a member of a faith community that raised the faith-based symbol for climate justice created by FCJ (a “host faith community”).

In addition to the above criteria, a detailed sampling design is being followed to help to ensure a broad and more diverse sample of participants who have engaged with the banner are able to participate in the study. For further information and any questions on participation criteria; to provide a confidential recommendation of yourself or someone else who may be interested to share on the climate justice banner, aligned with the above criteria; or to simply share a message of support please contact Kai directly at [CJSresearch@wlu.ca](mailto:CJSresearch@wlu.ca). Note that to respect confidentiality, Kai will not disclose who may or may not participate or be invited to participate in the study.

### **Potential benefits to participation**

Participants may benefit from participation in this research project by:

- Feeling **empowered** through participating in a knowledge-creation process on the impacts of public climate justice symbols, reflecting on the potential relationship between public symbols and action for climate justice.

- Enjoying **reflecting** on how faith communities may use such symbols to motivate increased climate justice awareness, discourse and actions, with potential ‘lessons learned’ that may be transferable to other areas of personal engagement on climate, including with their own faith community(ies).
- Meaningful **reflection** on their own experiences and involvement with action for climate justice and the climate justice banner specifically here in Waterloo Region, and beyond.
- Helping to **advance our understanding** of how individuals involved in the creation, promotion, raising and/or interaction with climate justice symbols conceptualize and experience climate justice and climate action in Waterloo Region, producing useful knowledge for climate justice action that may be transferable to other contexts also.

### Intended research contributions

- This study answers calls from scholars on the need to **support movement-based efforts** to promote climate justice, with significant implications for theory, research, and practice of climate change communication.
- This study will contribute to a growing body of literature and knowledge on **public climate change communication**, including informing potential ‘best practices’ or possible approaches to climate communication in the public sphere
- This study will help climate communicators to **better understand climate justice signposts’ impacts** in shaping complex climate justice discourse and actions, including the ‘ripple effects’ that may emerge from people’s engagement with these symbols in a local context.
- Results may be of benefit to **informing and promoting future climate justice engagement**, including within local faith communities, movements, and broader society in Waterloo Region

Other specific benefits and contributions may emerge as this research project moves forward. In the face of an escalating global climate crisis demanding both action and justice, it is the researcher’s view that such a study is very timely, and matters.

**Interested in participating, or learning more? Please send an [email message](#) to the study’s principal investigator Kai Reimer-Watts to indicate your interest or any questions at: [CJSresearch@wlu.ca](mailto:CJSresearch@wlu.ca)**