



## My Immersion

The first words I heard, in the country that would be my home for the next two weeks, were, "Pasaporte, por favor!" I decided to better equip myself, for the growing ministry at South Richmond Center, by experiencing the country, the people, and the language of Guatemala through a Spanish immersion with Máximo Nivel, in Antigua, Guatemala.



Above: Wesley Garrett in Guatemala

My flight down to Central America for the two-week intense language training began with a hiccup prior to the actual immersion. After an unexpected night in Houston, I finally arrived in Guatemala, a day late to start this adventure. My host family was accommodating and gracious. There were six other immersion students there and soon I was given a brief orientation of the house. In the course of the two weeks, I didn't master how to get the shower's warm water just right, so many mornings, I settled for the cold showers. After a delicious breakfast prepared by the host mother, I set off for my mile walk to Máximo Nivel school, orientation and first day of class. During orientation, I was given a placement test, in which I already knew my skill level, having no prior Spanish education, unlike many that were in the program. To my surprise, I was placed in an advanced basic class, in which I struggled that first week.

The class schedule set for me was: four hours of classroom group instruction, and then 2 hours of one-on-one training. In each class, the complete lectures, discussions, and instructions were fully communicated in Spanish. Although I sometimes did not understand most of the lesson, I was able to catch up while doing homework, from extensive notetaking. In the school, there were students from all over United States as well as the world. In my classroom group, some were from Great Britain, New Zealand, and the Netherlands. One sixteen-year-old young man came from California with his mother and grandmother. This family were all studying and improving their Spanish, through the Máximo Nivel program. Although I was among the oldest participating in the Spanish immersion that week, the young people were kind and helpful when needed. On more than one occasion I was complimented for taking on this endeavor at my age. I took the comments as compliments. The teachers, all local and from the city of Antigua, were friendly but kept to the rule of Spanish 100% of the time while teaching.



Above: Sightseeing in Guatemala

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## Noteworthy Dates

**Camp Alkulana Younger Girls Session** July 30– Aug 6

**OHBC Haircutting Ministry**  
August 1, 15, 29

**OHBC Movie Nights**  
August 4, 18

**A Day at Camp Alkulana**  
August 4

**OHBC Back to School**  
August 8

**WMU Leaders Meeting**  
Aug 15–10-12:30 pm @RCFN

**SRBC Back to School**  
August 12

**CHCWC Back to School**  
August 19

**Camp Alkulana Golf Tournament**  
Monday, October 9



Richmond Country Club

Lunch at Noon  
1 PM Shotgun Start

Register at [www.alkulana.org](http://www.alkulana.org)

## MINISTRY OF THE WEEK August 2023

8/6– Morning Star Baptist

8/13– Mount Carmel

8/20– Mount Sinai Baptist

8/27– Mount Tabor Baptist

## My Immersion *(continued)*

The school also taught English to local students, in which a good estimate would be about two hundred students in the last two months. My days started at 8:00 am and ended at 4:00pm. When finished, I would walk back to my host family's home to study and, of course, struggle to complete my daily homework assignments. At the school, there is a travel company to assist with extra-curricular activities, like Salsa dancing and cooking classes, as well as traveling to the nearby towns, even hiking up mountains and volcanoes. Classes were conducted during the week and the week-ends were open to rest, study and take in some local activities.

The immersion experience was intense and, on a few occasions, while trying to do my classroom assignments, I questioned my own sanity. By day ten, my Spanish pronunciation and understanding were getting better, but I was overwhelmed. I knew before going that I would not become fluent on the first trip and expected that I would be able to speak Spanish well and become more comfortable with common phrases, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Each morning I practiced my Spanish by speaking to all who I encountered. One such instance, which became a habit, was with a lady, on the cleaning staff with whom I would sit for a moment over coffee and talk. On my last day, she came by my class and shared with my instructor that she was thankful for my kindness each day and she wished me a safe trip home. Her gesture and kindness were humbling and seemed to impress my instructor as well. I look forward to returning to study again. I am hopeful that this experience and what I learned will be a help to the many new residents here in South Richmond. We have a growing Latino population, and their presence will guide our Center's "Macedonian call," and that call for ministry. The example of the Apostle Paul is recorded in the Book of Acts: "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them." ---- Acts 16:9-10 (KJV).

-Rev. Wesley R. Garrett



## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

SAVE THE DATE!

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**

5:15-8:30 PM

**SHALOM BAPTIST CHURCH**

8116 Walnut Grove Rd.  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

DINNER, FELLOWSHIP, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**WWW.BAPTISTLEADERS.ORG**



"...AND LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." MARK 12:31

**RCFN 2023 MISSION OFFERING**  
**\$12,738.02 OF \$100,000.00**

HELP US REACH  
OUR GOAL!

**RIVER CITY FAITH NETWORK**  
**WWW.RICHMONDBAPTIST.ORG**

**SAVE THE DATE!!! Please join the RCFN for the 2023 Annual Meeting!!**

We hope you will join us on **October 15, 2023 at 3 p.m.**

Additional information about the event will be shared shortly.

Please be sure to add this date to your church calendar and activities. You can also visit our website at [www.richmondbaptist.org](http://www.richmondbaptist.org) for up to date information, program details and to RSVP for this event beginning next month.



Please contact your church's center director for updates or for more information about this year's events.

### **Church Hill Christian Wellness Center**

Glinda Ford- 804-234-3549 ext.101

**Event Date: Saturday, 8/19/23, 10 am-1:00 pm**

Please deliver backpacks and toiletry bags to  
Bethlehem Baptist Church, 1920 Fairmount Ave  
August 17 and 18, 10:00-Noon and 1:00-3:00

**CHCWC** is collecting filled backpacks and **toiletry bags**. We need new packages of underwear and socks (sizes from 3T through young adult) as well as these items for toiletry bags: Shampoo, Comb & Brush, Deodorant, Soap, Washcloth, Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Mouthwash, Floss, and Lotion

Backpacks should include: 1 three-ring binder and divider tabs, 1 or 2 packs of loose-leaf paper (wide or standard rule), 4 black-and-white composition books, 2 One-subject spiral notebooks, 1 Three- or five-subject spiral notebook No. 2 pencils (not mechanical), Black or blue ink pens (no gel), Pocket folders (with or without brads) in solid colors, Red pens, Elmer's glue-4 oz. and/or Glue sticks

**Churches:** Bethlehem (Wilkinson), Bethlehem (Penick), Carlisle Avenue, Derbyshire, Gayton, Ginter Park, Hatcher Memorial, Lakeside, Mt. Tabor, River Road, Skipwith, and The Light Community

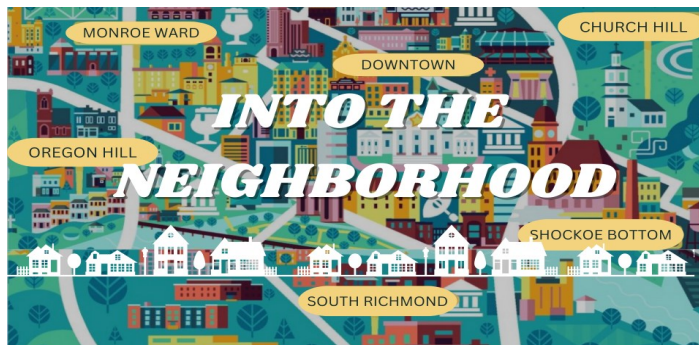
### **South Richmond Baptist Center**

Wesley Garrett- 804-232-0174

**Event Date: Saturday, August 12, 10 am– 2pm**

Backpacks will be given out for South Richmond  
ZIP codes 23224, 23225, and 23235.

Remember we are requesting that the Backpacks already filled with: Large Binder -1, Composition books - 3, Spiral notebooks - 4, Pencils - large pack, (ten count or more), Pens - Large package, (ten count or more), black or blue ink, Folders, Dividers, Erasers, Large Markers, Loose leaf paper - large package, Elmer's school glue or glue sticks.  
**We do not need: crayon, pencil sharpeners or red ink pens.** Deliver filled backpacks to the SRBC Satellite on August 8,9 or 10th from 10:00-2:00.



**Please contact the RCFN if you or your church would like to participate in any of these Into the Neighborhood events!**

### **Camp Alkulana**

Day at Camp	August 4
Golf Tournament	October 9

### **Church Hill Christian Wellness Center**

Summer Night Lights	July 22
Back to School Celebration	August 19

### **South Richmond Baptist Center**

SRBC Annex Improvements	All summer
Block Party &	August 12
Back to School Celebration	

### **Oregon Hill Baptist Center**

Movies in the Park	2nd & 4th Friday
Nights	
Back to School	August 8

### **South Richmond Baptist Center– con't**

**Churches:** Bethany Place, Bon Air, First Union, Friendship Memorial, Grace, Gravel Hill, Huguenot Road, Jahnke Road, Korean, Morning Star, New Canaan, Rising Liberty, Shalom Fellowship, Southampton, Saint Paul's, Stockton Memorial, Swift Creek, United for Christ, Weatherford Mission Group, Westover, and Woodland Heights

### **Oregon Hill Baptist Center**

Jennifer Turner- 804-648-1353  
jennifer.turner@rbaonline.org

**Event Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2023**

**All day by Appointment**

Please call or e-mail Jennifer for SPECIFIC NEEDS and to make delivery appointments. **Churches:** Pine Street, First Baptist, New Community Baptist



River City Faith Network  
Richmond Baptist Association  
2828 Emerywood Parkway  
Richmond, VA 23294  
Phone: 804-329-1701  
office@rbaonline.org  
www.richmond baptist.org

Electronic Service Requested

*Working together until  
Metro Richmond is...*

**TRANSFORMED**  
August 2023



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ATTENTION CHURCHES!! It's Directory time!! Please be sure to respond with your updated information for the 2024 RCFN Church Directory by 9/1/23. Call 804-329-1701 ext: 101 with any questions!

*Celebrating*  
God's Children

Join the BGAV for this year's **Church Weekday Education Conference** on **August 5th** in Richmond to be held at Second Baptist Church. This conference provides training, ideas and networking opportunities for teachers and directors of faith-based weekday preschool programs and can be counted as part of the required training hours. The cost is \$35.00.

Four breakout sessions will be offered with many sessions to choose from. Please contact Karen Rackett at 800.255.2428, ext. 2243 with any questions. Register today!

## Our Centers Need Your Help!

# SUMMER NEEDS FOR RCFN

Our outreach doesn't take a summer vacation! Please contact our ministries to help with the following:

**OHBC- Call Jennifer Turner at 804-648-1353**

**Snack Bags-** OHBC needs roughly 90 bags each week! Please contact Jennifer if you can help!!

**CHCWC- Call Glinda Ford at 804-234-3549**

**Needs toiletry bags-** see list of items with Back to School List on Page 3. Also looking for a Queen and Twin mattress and a coffee table for a family in need. Contact Glinda.

