

Working together until Metro Richmond is...

# TRANSFORMED



## A Sacred Space

This summer I spent time in a few sacred places. I was blessed to spend part of three sessions at Camp Alkulana. I was there with some of the best people. They served as counselors, nurses, crafters, cooks, gardeners, and campers. I got to experience some sacred times in sacred spaces.

From morning until evening, there is someone in the kitchen below the dining hall at Camp Alkulana. Morning to evening someone works in the kitchen preparing breakfast, lunch, and dinner, washing dishes, and getting ready to repeat the tasks.

A table stands in the middle of that kitchen. Someone chops vegetables, mixes ingredients, and prepares food at that table.

Something else happens at that table. Some staff sit and talk. After everyone else has eaten, they share a meal at that table.

Nearby on the wall stands a sink, actually several sinks together. I got to spend some time standing at that sink. I cleared and cleaned plates and utensils and cookware. I think of it as a sacred mess in a sacred space.

In the craft shack next to the creek, the sacred space looks like picnic tables where campers made rain sticks, painted tee shirts, and created works of art with thread and sand. God created the space and campers used their God-given talents to create their art. They talked and listened. They laughed. They transformed the space from empty, silent seats into a sacred place of presence—God's and theirs.



The big lodge is a big place where big events happen. Staff talent shows bring out the imagination of the counselors. There are balls and hula hoops.

That building has its own testimony. It used to stand somewhere else. The building was taken down and rebuilt on the grounds of Camp Alkulana. Generations of campers have played there. They can make lots of noise there. It hosts sacred sounds in a sacred space.

In the field outside the big lodge, campfire logs surround the sacred space where the fire lights the faces of the campers seated on them. Campers gather around the campfire to receive their camp patches. One generation of campers teaches the next generation camp songs there, some funny, some holy. Campers lifting their voices in songs around the fire transform that place into a sacred space.

The creek runs through the middle of camp, literally. You have to cross it to get from cabin row to the field, the swim hole, or the tower. Sometimes campers cross it on the bridge. Sometimes they cross it over the dam. You can ford it. You can walk in it. You can swim in it. You can just sit and watch and listen to this flowing, dancing water in this sacred space.

On a hill overlooking the creek sits Lantern Lodge, more commonly known as the retreat house. There are three bedrooms where cooks, crafters, and other helpers sleep. Lantern Lodge has two living rooms and a kitchen with a big farm table. You can find respite and retreat there (just ask if you want to experience it yourself). This sacred place offers sacred rest.

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### PLEASE TAKE NOTE

- 9/5– RCFN Office Closed
- 9/12– RCFN Staff Meeting
- 9/20– OHBC Support Team
- 9/27– RCFN Board Meeting  
3:30 pm Room 265
- 10/1– Camp Alkulana Golf  
Tournament
- 10/16– RCFN Annual Meeting
- 10/17– RCFN Office Closed

### MINISTRY OF THE WEEK SEPTEMBER 2022

- 9/4-- Mount Carmel Baptist
- 9/11– Mount Sinai Baptist
- 9/18– Mount Tabor Baptist
- 9/25– New Canaan Baptist

### HATCHER MEMORIAL 100th ANNIVERSARY

September 18, 2022  
[www.hatcherchurch.org](http://www.hatcherchurch.org)

### WMU Fall Celebration

September 20, 2022  
10:30 am, Room 265  
Lunch will be included  
804-338-7416

### CAMP ALKULANA GOLF TOURNAMENT

October 1, 2022  
Belmont Golf Course  
Register at  
[www.alkulana.org](http://www.alkulana.org)

## RCFN Executive Search Update

RCFN has guidelines for creating a search committee to find our next Executive Director. The guidelines provide for search committee members to come from current and former RCFN Board members. Following the guidelines, our Board of Directors appointed a committee of nine men and women, including some ministers, to search for RCFN's next Executive Director.

When Steve Allsbrook agreed to serve as RCFN's Interim Executive Director, he offered to stay up to two years. We want to have a new leader by his departure.

Steve trained the search committee on December 9. As 2022 dawned the committee began its work. The search committee members had met one another, but this group had never worked together. Several members had served on other search committees. Each of us brought talents and experiences that have helped our work. All of us brought a commitment to Christ and RCFN.

The committee started with monthly meetings. We added additional meetings as needed and have met eleven times so far. Between meetings we have shared numerous e-mail messages and phone calls.

We reviewed detailed information about RCFN. We assembled documents to share with potential candidates. We prepared a profile of the candidate we would seek. We spread the word across multiple networks and placed ads

with various media. Applicants sent their resumes to our search committee's unique e-mail address. Each member of the search committee reviewed the resumes.

We received resumes and followed up with applicants from Virginia to Oklahoma. The process we followed helped us shorten our list for virtual interviews. Our virtual interviews helped us narrow our list of candidates further.

Thank you for the prayers that have supported our committee as we have searched for the person God has prepared to lead River City Faith Network and its staff. God has answered your prayers in our work, in our honest and graceful discussions, and in the resumes we received. As we have gotten to know each other better, we have turned into a fellowship of Christ's servants sharing a spiritual journey.

We have a challenging task, one worth the time each of us has sacrificed. Keep on praying as we move toward the conclusion of our search. Pray for us and for the person God has prepared for us.

We think we are on track to present a candidate at RCFN's Annual Meeting on October 16. If so, we would ask those present and voting at the Annual Meeting to vote to extend a call to the candidate we would present then. Plan to attend the Annual Meeting and keep praying as we continue our work.

—Philip Turner

## HELP US REACH THE ANNUAL OFFERING GOAL: \$120,000



**Help support the ministries that support the Richmond Community!**



Prayer Guide and more at [www.richmondbaptist.org](http://www.richmondbaptist.org)



**VCLA FALL CONFERENCE**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2022**  
**8:30 AM - 3:30 PM**  
 IN-PERSON OR ONLINE (ZOOM)

**Conference Information**  
 f vacla.org Instagram

Sponsored by:  
 Virginia Church Library Association

**Conference Leader**  
 Hope Ferguson  
 Church Librarians Network -  
 Church Library Ministry Specialist

**Guest Author**  
 Rev. Kathy Fogg Berry

**Location**  
 Dover Baptist Association  
 11006 Lakeridge Parkway  
 Ashland, VA 23005

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE**

SAVE THE DATE!  
**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2022**

5:15-8:30 PM  
**HUGUENOT ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH**  
 10525 W. Huguenot Road  
 North Chesterfield, VA 23235

DINNER, FELLOWSHIP, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**WWW.BAPTISTLEADERS.ORG (804) 314-0294**

Early Bird Rate \$10 until September 6

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS:**

**“Dealing with Limited Financial Resources”**

- Kevin James

**“Sabbath: The Rest of the Story for a Restless World”**

- Scott Spencer

**“Avoiding/Surviving Burnout: Soul Care/Self Care”**

(1 session for clergy and 1 session for everyone)

- Steve Allsbrook

**“Attracting Talent Today– It’s Everyone’s Job!”**

-Laura H. Shreaves, SHRM-SCP

**“Jesus, Juicing, and the Blessings & Benefits of Spiritual Fasting”** - Win Davis

**“Anybody Out There? Experiencing Grief and Loss During the Pandemic”** - Judith Cain-Oliver

**“Richmond’s Racial History”** -Ben Campbell

**“COVID and Kids: How Can I Help?”**

- Elizabeth Davis-Crane

**“To Be or Not to Be Online”** Panel Discussion with

Jean Dart and Lindsay Ray

**A Sacred Space** *(continued)*

Every camper makes themselves a promise they write on a slip of paper. I will be a better brother or sister. I will pray. I will read the Bible. I will be nicer to myself. I won't get angry at bugs. I won't hit my brother until we get off of the bus.

On the last night at camp, the campers and staff gather at Piney Park to say these promises aloud. They are sacred words, spoken in a sacred space.

Later we mail a letter to each camper and enclose the slip of paper on which they wrote their promise. We add our own message of encouragement to the sacred words they spoke in a sacred space.

Do they think of this special place as sacred? One mother expected her child to get homesick. The child returned from camp and asked, “When can I go back?” That happens year after year.

Since 1915 this wonderful ministry has blessed youth with a place that helps them discover the beauty of God's creation, including themselves, God's beautiful creations. The generosity of River City Faith Network church members, church legacy gifts, camp alumni, individual donors, grants, fund-raising events, and camper fees combine to make this ministry possible today.

We would love to visit your church and tell you more about this sacred space. We would also love to find ways to help you and others experience it. Maybe your church group would like to visit Lantern Lodge. Sometimes groups use the more rustic camp facilities. Contact us to discuss some options.

—SaraAnne Burgess

Pictured right and below: Campers and counselors participate in an activity in one of camp's sacred spaces, Piney Park.



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Electronic Service Requested

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Metro Richmond is...*

**TRANSFORMED**  
**September 2022**



THE **River**  
**City** FAITH  
NETWORK  
Richmond Baptist Association

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Permit No. 3022

THE **River**  
**City** FAITH  
NETWORK  
Richmond Baptist Association

**2022  
ANNUAL  
MEETING**

**HUGUENOT ROAD  
BAPTIST CHURCH  
OCTOBER 16  
3 P.M.**

**Registration now open!**  
**www.richmondbaptist.org**  
**/annualmeeting**

## Get ready for the 2022 RCFN Annual Meeting

You can find the latest information on the website at [www.richmondbaptist.org](http://www.richmondbaptist.org). Look for the Events tab titled Annual Meeting.

Your church should elect your messengers. They represent your church, vote on RCFN business, and bring information from the Annual Meeting to share with your congregation. Contact our office if you have questions.

Our office will mail details about the meeting and post the information on our website. This year's business includes proposed revisions to RCFN's Bylaws, the proposed 2023 Budget, and annual reports. We also expect a report from the Executive Search Committee.

You may register for the Annual Meeting on our website. Call 804-329-1701 ext: 101 or e-mail [office@rbaonline.org](mailto:office@rbaonline.org) for more information.