2014 CHRISTMAS STORES AT OUR BAPTIST CENTERS

The Community Missionaries of the RBA Baptist Centers, Glinda Ford, Jennifer Turner and Wesley Garrett express their sincere appreciation to all the WMU members, churches and individuals who contributed to the Christmas Stores this year. The Stores could not have happened without the donations from 31 churches (RCFN & others); and over 128 volunteers who helped set up, registered shoppers, assisted with selecting items and then helped pack up. Many bicycles were given to the Centers along with the new clothing and toys.

The stores blessed 430 children and their families as you can see from the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church Hill</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon Hill</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Richmond</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All leftover items from Church Hill’s Store were taken to the African Christian Community Church for their Christmas Store.

A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to the Christmas Stores in any way!!!
Shepherds in Jesus’ day were hardly what one would call the “upper crust” of society! They frequently spent days and weeks out on the remote hillsides often far from local towns and cities. For extended periods there might be little social interaction with anyone other than fellow shepherds. Their lives were rough and crude; their existence was simple. The closest they might expect to come to a palace would be the barn where the sheep would be attended when they returned home from their time in the fields looking for adequate pasturing.

And yet, it was to the shepherds as they watched their sheep by night that the angels appeared and announced the birth of the King of kings! “...behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:10-11) Luke goes on to tell us that after the angels left to return to heaven, it was decision time! A conversation began immediately as the shepherds determined among themselves to “go straight to Bethlehem” to see this thing “which the Lord has made known to us.” Verse 16 continues: “So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, ….”

Imagine for a moment the challenges of fulfilling that decision! These were shepherd who may well have not owned the sheep but tended them on behalf of another, an employer. They could not simply abandon their master’s sheep to engage in some adventure prompted by the appearance of angels. It could scarcely be expected that explaining such action would go well with the master. And even if they owned the sheep they couldn’t responsibly leave them behind in the open fields while they headed off to the city of David. What wolves did not eat or scatter thieves would claim for themselves and the shepherds would be without livelihood and their families without the provisions of their family members’ professional efforts.

And yet, we are told that they hurried! Sheep don’t respond to stress well and don’t move particularly well even during the day when they are able to clearly see their shepherds, following their movements and direction. Nighttime sheep herding could proved disastrous! But the shepherds did what was necessary to provide safety and direction for their sheep and began to move them toward Bethlehem! And to the degree that the sheep would allow, the shepherds hurried!

For me there are a couple of threads of application: (1) when the shepherds received direction from God they were motivated to a level of urgency that did not leave room for complacency. And so, hurrying became a natural response. But, although Luke does not elaborate, I think it is safe to assume that (2) these shepherds did not take the need for haste as permission to act irresponsibly. They hurried to Bethlehem but they also “took care of business” as they hurried. The details of how the shepherds accomplished this balancing act are not revealed to us, but the principle remains: God’s direction warrants obedience of an urgent nature but is never an excuse for acting irresponsibly!

Our River City Faith Network Community Missionsaries as well as their many lay volunteers and church partners have carried out these principles so beautifully during the last week! It was time to provide the Christmas Stores to our communities, making available to moms and dads, grandmothers and grandfathers, and aunts and uncles toys, clothing and bicycles to brighten family Christmases!

Demonstrating the love of Christ and our heavenly Father’s provision for those in need, they have engaged in an exhausting week of receiving Christmas items, displaying them for purchase, and then hosting the shoppers as they looked for just the right items for the persons most precious to them. There was no time to waste! It was a week of hustle and hurry! But the work was done responsibly and well.

Once the combined Christmas Store of the South Richmond and Oregon Hill Centers was completed, all that was left over was bagged and boxed for transport to the Church Hill Christian Wellness Center where it was added to the provisions in place for the second River City Christmas Store! Hustle and hurry were again watch words in preparing the Church Hill Store!

But the hustle and hurry did not end there! As soon as the Church Hill Christmas Store was completed, the packing process began anew in order to extend our efforts to our Liberian and other African friends at the African Christian Community Church housed at Hatcher Memorial Baptist Church! And so, on Sunday afternoon, December 7th, the third Christmas Store was under way and continued through Wednesday!

Yet again, as soon as the ACCC Christmas Store was underway, additional items were packed and prepared to be taken to the International Christian Community Church led by Minh Ha Nguyen for our refugee friends primarily from East Asia! All that you gave for the Christmas Stores was used and distributed with great care to impact as many families and homes as possible!

There is no adequate word of appreciation that can be extended to Glinda, Jennifer and Wesley as well as our faithful volunteers and partnering churches for the marvelous way in which you have responded to the calling of the season with haste, with hustle and with tremendously responsible dedication. Thank you all SO, SO MUCH!

Most gratefully,
Mike
TRY YEAR-END

TO THE RCFN/RBA GENERAL FUND!

We Gladly Accept Donations the Old Fashioned Way by Check, BUT we also accept Donations by a Relatively New Way - Online E-giving!

As you consider your end-of-year-giving, be sure to include the River City Faith Network of the Richmond Baptist Association's General Program Fund which provides the essential administrative support for our camp, centers, partnership missions, Standing Committees, Support Teams and other ministries throughout the year!

All donations for 2014, must be postmarked by December 31, 2014, to be credited as a 2014 tax contribution!

BY CHECK: Of course, The RCFN/RBA will gladly receive your donations by check, with the designation “for RBA General Program” and mailed to: River City Faith Network of the Richmond Baptist Association, Attn: Year-End Giving, 3111 Moss Side Ave., Richmond, VA 23222.

But, we are also encouraging individuals and our churches to try out....

ON-LINE E-GIVING: offers you the convenience of giving that can be completed from the comfort of your own home, any time day or night, in a matter of moments. All you need to do to make a secure, on-line donation to the General Program with a credit or debit card or by ACH transfer from a checking or savings account, is go to our website www.richmondbaptist.org and click on the E-Giving logo. This takes you to the page which explains how to make your contribution. You will have the option of making a one-time donation or scheduling a recurring one. If you have any questions about the process, contact the office at office@rbaonline.org or 804-329-1701. Below is an example of how you can designate your gift.

We thank you for providing the much needed financial resources for the RCFN/RBA General Program Fund to support our associational missions and ministries for God's kingdom as together we transform lives!

River City Faith Network of the Richmond Baptist Association
Church Support/Monthly Remittance Form

Please specify how your funds should be credited (undesignated funds will go toward the RBA General Program).

Your Church Name ____________________________________________

Contact Name __________________________________ Phone Number __________________________

Date of Remittance ___________________ Amount of Check $ __________________________

RBA General Program One-Time or Monthly Gift ... $ __________________________

Camp Alkulana Offering ........................................ $ __________________________

Designated Gifts

Church Hill Christian Wellness Center ....................... $ __________________________

Oregon Hill Baptist Center .................................... $ __________________________

South Richmond Baptist Center ................................. $ __________________________

Special Gifts (Please be specific)

1.___________________________________________________ $ __________________________

2.___________________________________________________ $ __________________________

Thank you for your generosity to our many ministries, such as Camp Alkulana, Church Hill Christian Wellness Center, Oregon Hill Baptist Center, and South Richmond Baptist Center. Every gift is greatly appreciated.

Thank you!
Great question! While there are numerous slots to be filled, here is who by virtue of position is on the Board of Directors currently:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairman (Moderator)</td>
<td>Dr. Cecil Chambers</td>
<td>Skipwith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-chairman (Vice Moderator)</td>
<td>Mr. Don Sage</td>
<td>Derbyshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk/Historian</td>
<td>Mrs. Joyce Clemmons</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Mr. Richard Martin</td>
<td>Huguenot Road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chairpersons of Standing Committees:
- Affiliations Committee: TBD
- Endowment Committee: TBD
- Facilities Committee: TBD
- Ministry Placement Committee: Mrs. Ruth Guill, Huguenot Road
- Personnel Committee: Dr. Jim Peak, River Road
- Stewardship Committee: Mr. Richard Martin, Huguenot Road

Chairpersons of Support Teams:
- CAST (Camp Alkulana Support Team): Mr. Chris Neal, Pine Street
- CHST (Church Hill Support Team): TBD
- OHST (Oregon Hill Support Team): TBD
- SRST (South Richmond Support Team): TBD
- CVBMST (CVBM Support Team): TBD

Director of Woman’s Missionary Union: Mrs. Mary Palmer, First

Not more than nine (9) duly elected persons from qualifying churches and organizations as specified in Network Policies and Procedures.

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*Why Consider Crown Financial Ministries for Your Church?*

Noncompliance with biblical financial principles, or ignorance of them, often leads to financial mistakes. And God loves and cares for us so deeply, that He placed 2,350 verses about money and possessions in the Bible to equip us to make the wisest possible financial decisions.

Crown’s personal finance solutions help people develop financial habits and practices of a faithful steward. Crown has shown leadership in this area and has been developing innovative teaching solutions for over 35 years. At Crown, we combine timeless biblical principles with relevant practical tools. We have been partnering with churches to deliver ministry that leads to exponential Kingdom impact. Our emphasis is on resources that are Christ-focused, rather than man-focused, and the depth of those resources has resulted in life transformation that goes beyond simply strengthening the financial situation of individuals and families. At the macro level, Crown provides insight, interpretation and analysis of market forces from a biblical perspective.

Contact me if you would like to discuss Crown solutions for your church.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**Randy Rowekamp**
*MoneyLife® Advisor*
804-683-1595

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BTSR Announces New Center for Congregational Leadership

Beginning in the spring of 2015 BTSR will offer a new program aimed at providing practical ministry training for laity and clergy. This new center seeks to draw students from across a broad spectrum of theological and denominational backgrounds. We hope that you, or someone in your congregation, might be interested in taking advantage of this new opportunity. Please read below for more details and to learn how to register for a course.

Interested in taking your Congregation to a New Level?

Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond created the Center for Congregational Leadership to assist clergy and laity in growing and enhancing skills for ministry. Better equipped leaders make for healthier congregations.

Classes will be offered each Fall and Spring on six Monday evenings at the BTSR campus, 8040 Villa Park Drive, Suite 250, Richmond, VA 23228. The cost is $75 for the 6-week course, plus the cost of book(s) for the course.

Spring 2015 Courses:
Mondays, 6:30-8:30 pm (Feb. 16-Mar. 23, 2015)

“Jesus and the Gospel"
Course taught by Dr. Art Wright, BTSR

“Believers Guide to Ethical Dilemmas”
(Meeting on Tuesday evenings. 2/17-3/24.)
Course taught by Tim Gilbert, Dean, BTSR.

“Becoming an Effective Lay Leader”
Course taught by Dr. Jim White, CCL

To Enroll:
Please call Beverly Vandevender in the Dean’s office for questions and to register for one of the courses above.
804-204-1223/BTSR.edu
8040 Villa Park Drive, Suite 250

Deadline: Registration form and payment must be received by February 2, 2015.

Belltower Pictures Launches Live to Serve Campaign

The time to Live to Serve is now! Our Live to Serve campaign has started and Belltower Pictures needs your help to produce our first feature film, SHOOTING THE PRODIGAL - and you can participate just by shopping, playing, and eating in local restaurants!

Live to Serve is a Richmond based ecommerce site where you can shop for vouchers to local merchants and drive 50-70% of every transaction to Belltower Pictures. Yes, you read that right. 50-70%!

Here’s what to do in 3 Easy Steps:
2. Purchase vouchers for local merchants.
3. Have fun and enjoy knowing that 50-70% of everything you purchased goes back to Belltower Pictures!

Have fun and thanks for supporting Belltower Pictures through Live to Serve.

Thanksgiving at the Oregon Hill Baptist Center

Rev. Jennifer Turner, Community Missionary of the Oregon Hill Baptist Center, distributed Thanksgiving Meal bags to 72 households and served a Thanksgiving meal to 39 homeless individuals. This was made possible with the assistance of many volunteers and donations!

Thank you to everyone who contributed items or time to these events!!

November 2014 RBA/RCFN Budget Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget Amount</td>
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<td>Budget Receipts</td>
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</tr>
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<td>YTD Budget Amount</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>YTD Budget Receipts</td>
<td>$355,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YTD Budget Expenses</td>
<td>$521,070</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2014 Camp Alkulana Offering

As of 11/30/2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offering Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offering Goal</td>
<td>$148,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YTD Receipts</td>
<td>$109,384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thanks be to God for 100 years of ministry to Richmond’s children!
You are invited to attend:

Camp Alkulana’s 100th Anniversary Celebration
Saturday, March 21, 2015, 2 pm, at First Baptist Church

Generations of campers, counselors, and Alkulana supporters will gather to celebrate the ministry’s legacy and all of those who have worked to sustain it. A reception will follow the formal program.

Please RSVP at www.alkulana.org

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**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**BON AIR (BUFORD ROAD)** has developed a Pastor Profile for their new Senior Pastor which can be viewed at this link: [http://www.bonairbaptist.org/files/uploads/PastorProfile9-22-14-2.pdf](http://www.bonairbaptist.org/files/uploads/PastorProfile9-22-14-2.pdf)

**GRACE** is seeking a Senior Pastor to lead their 273-member congregation. For more information you can visit their church website, [www.gbconline.org](http://www.gbconline.org) or Pastor Search webpage: [http://gbcpastor.net](http://gbcpastor.net). Resumes can be emailed to [gbcnewpastor@gmail.com](mailto:gbcnewpastor@gmail.com) or mailed to Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 7404, Richmond, VA 23221.

**HATCHER MEMORIAL** has a full-time Senior Pastor position open with salary plus benefits in the $55,000 to $75,000 range per year. The church is located in the Lakeside area of Henrico County in the suburbs of Richmond. The Pastor Search Committee is accepting resumes at this email address: [pastorhmbc@yahoo.com](mailto:pastorhmbc@yahoo.com). For more information, visit [HatcherChurch.org](http://HatcherChurch.org).

**HATCHER MEMORIAL** is seeking a part-time Financial Secretary/Bookkeeper to maintain accounting and payroll systems for the church and assist the Hatcher Child Development Center. Experience in church-related bookkeeping and payroll required. Knowledge of ACS church software is a plus, approximately 30 flexible hours and pay is based on experience. Employment beginning in early December.

Send letter of interest and resume to [HatcherChurch@comcast.net](mailto:HatcherChurch@comcast.net) or to 2300 Dumbarton Rd., Henrico, VA 23228.

**SKIPWITH** is seeking a part-time Director of Children and Student Ministries to assist in worship, Bible studies, mission ministries and event coordination for youth and students, and to be a resource for parents and youth on issues related to spiritual formation. Call 804-282-2234 for more info. or go to [skipwithbaptistchurch.org](http://skipwithbaptistchurch.org).

Send resume or inquiries to Skipwith Baptist Church, 1900 Skipwith Road, Henrico, VA 23229.

**STOCKTON MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH**, a Southern Baptist affiliated Baptist church, is seeking a part-time youth director. Please send resume to [Stockton.church@comcast.net](mailto:Stockton.church@comcast.net), Attention Pastor Watson.

**BETHLEHEM BAPTIST** (9600 Midlothian Turnpike, Chesterfield) is seeking a part-time Minister of Music. Please email the church office at [bethlehembaptist@comcast.net](mailto:bethlehembaptist@comcast.net) if you have questions or if you would like to send your resume. You can also call the church office at 272-0597 for more information.
CHURCH NEWS

CHAMBERLAYNE raised over $2,600 from their Silent Auction for Missions. The church will have their “Holy Light” Advent Music Service on Sunday, December 21, at 11:00 am. HATCHER MEMORIAL will have their Candlelight and Communion Christmas Eve Service December 24, at 5:00 pm, featuring Scripture Lessons, Special Music, Communion, telling of the Christmas Story and the Lighting of Candles. SOUTHAMPTON will have a Christmas Eve Service at 3:00 pm. STOCKTON MEMORIAL will have a special musical “Trans-Siberian Orchestra Christmas” program on Sunday, December 21, at 6:00 pm.

STAFF NEWS

CHAMBERLAYNE has added a volunteer Ministry Intern, John Hamlett, to their staff. GRACE has approved Danny Smith as their new Church Administrator. HATCHER MEMORIAL’S Financial Secretary, Marsha Taylor, is retiring at the end of December and they have hired Diane Ladd to fill that position beginning in January. LAKESIDE has hired Melita Nash as their new Administrative Assistant.

Exciting Camp Alkulana News!!

We are pleased to announce that Camp Alkulana has been added to the Virginia Landmarks Register! Inclusion on this registry does not at all limit use of the land or changes to the facility. Rather, this addition is simply an honorary recognition that points to the camp’s historic value to the State of Virginia. The nomination will now proceed to the National Register of Historic Places, where it will be considered for inclusion at the national level.

Those of us who have been part of Camp Alkulana have long felt that our story is significant, but it’s always nice to have an outside perspective that acknowledges it!

In Memory of

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Jody Harlow, a former long time Administrative Coordinator for the Richmond Baptist Association. She lost her brief battle with cancer on December 1, 2014. She is survived by her husband of 47 years, Charles Harlow, and her son, Stephen Harlow.

RCFN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, January 15, 2015
Skipwith Baptist Church
1900 Skipwith Road
6:30 pm

RBA/RCFN Offices CLOSED

Thursday & Friday, January 1 & 2
for the New Year’s Holiday
and on
Monday, January 19
for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday!

Pray for the RBA/RCFN Church of the Week

January 4— Bon Air, Northstar Community
January 11— Carlisle Avenue
January 18— Chamberlayne
January 25— Community Mission
February 1— Community of Grace
 transforming! is published monthly by the River City Faith Network of the Richmond Baptist Association, 3111 Moss Side Avenue, Richmond, VA, 23222
804-329-1701.

Contact Amy Sowder via email or snail mail at the addresses listed above:
• To submit an article—must be received by the 7th of each month.
• To be added to or deleted from the mailing list.
• To submit a change of address in a timely manner so that the Network will not incur postage due costs for undeliverable newsletters.

Making a Delivery to the RBA/RCFN Office?
Please call before you plan to arrive to make sure that someone will be at the office. There are times during the day when everyone may be away, so it will save time and gas to call ahead. The RBA Office is open from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Thursday.

Pray for
RBA Churches Seeking a Pastor

Bethlehem (Penick)  Bon Air
Disciples of Christ  First Union
Grace  Hatcher Memorial
Huguenot Road  Westover
Woodland Heights

2014 Financial Books Closing
We will be closing the 2014 financial books on Friday, January 16, 2015. Any contributions that you desire to be included in 2014 need to be sent in and postmarked by December 31, 2014.
Thanks so much!

January 1 & 2
RCFN Office Closed
New Year’s Day Holiday

January 6 @ 10:00 AM
RCFN Officers Meeting, Huguenot Road

January 7 @ 12:00 Noon
Deadline to Submit Material for “Transformed!”

January 12 @ 10:00 AM
RCFN Staff Meeting

January 12 @ 1:00 PM
CVBM L15 Planning Team, RCFN

January 13 @ 6:30 PM
Camp Alkulana Support Team, RCFN

January 15 @ 6:00 PM
RCFN Board of Directors Meeting, Skipwith

January 19
RCFN Office Closed
Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

January 26 @ 12 Noon
Center Support Group Meeting, RBA
(Note: this date is moved from normal third Monday meeting date due to MLK Holiday.)