Join us for
CAMP ALKULANA'S
100th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, March 21, 2015, 2 pm
at Richmond’s 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 program.

RSVP at www.alkulana.org
“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times….” To whom is that expression ascribed? Do you know? I have to admit; I had to “google” it. I had forgotten! It is from a book I read as a eighth grader!

You probably do not remember the less familiar words that follow these so much more often quoted ones: “...it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness; it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity; it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness; it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair; we had everything before us, we had nothing before us; we were all going directly to Heaven, we were all going the other way.” What a crossroads! What a dichotomy!

These were the words of Charles Dickens to open his novel, A Tale of Two Cities. As one commentator puts it, they hint at the novel’s central tension between love and family, on the one hand, and oppression and hatred, on the other. The passage makes marked use of the literary mechanism of the anaphora, the repetition of a phrase at the beginning of consecutive clauses—for example, “it was the age . . . it was the age” and “it was the epoch . . . it was the epoch . . .” This technique, along with the passage’s steady rhythm, suggests that good and evil, wisdom and folly, and light and darkness stand equally matched in their struggle.

I wonder—as you and I participate in the unfolding drama of life—is that our appraisal? Good and evil, wisdom and folly, and light and darkness stand equally matched in their struggle! Life is a draw! There is no winner and no loser!

It is fashionable to reason that there are no winners and nor losers, everyone is a winner! None are losers except at the hand of injustice! Some argue that choices should have no negative consequences; everyone should receive the same prize! By default, there are no distinct rewards for good choices either.

If one’s view of Christ is that of a hands off, distant observer of the human dilemma Who doesn’t get involved, Who dares not interfere with the playing out of the human drama, then there’s a good chance that there is not much optimism toward the triumph of good over evil. Everyone is just left to work out their own life and determine what is right for oneself. Culture becomes the standard by which we measure our success according to how well we fit in or how well we manage the culture to minimize the damage to ourselves.

Fortunately, there’s an alternative view of Christ as the Transformer of society and culture Who lives in power and with authority which exercises itself against evil and intervenes on behalf of His friends.

J. R. Woodward in his book, Creating a Missional Culture, tells the story of Mike, a hitchhiker he encountered while driving in Ohio. Mike was standing by the road alternating between holding his thumb out and clasping his hands together as if he were praying. J. R. picked him up.

Mike was a hardcore Aryan (white supremacist) who held onto a passage in Scripture about being “a chosen people.” J. R. helped him to reread the passage in context. As he reached toward the back seat of his car for his Bible, Mike pulled a gun and pointed it at J. R.’s head. Later as they rode together and realizing that Mike had no place to stay, J. R. offered to let him stay with him.

“You mean you would trust me to stay with you after pulling a gun on you?” Mike asked.

“Yes,” J. R. said, “because God has given me a love for you that I can’t explain, and He loves you.”

Mike’s eyes filled with tears.

J. R. made provision for Mike’s overnight accommodations and they talked until 4 a.m. as J. R. told him about the Jesus the apostles wrote about, this Jesus Who had become his hero, his Savior and his example, the liberator of those oppressed, the lover of those rejected and the deliverer of those seduced by consumerism. And Mike responded with tears of surrender.

Later that week, Mike took J. R. to a Chinese restaurant and continued to inquire about Jesus. J. R. told him how Jesus lived His life for the sake of others, how He died so we could live, and how He rose again to show what God was going to do for the world.

As J. R. put it, “Something in Mike changed that evening; he understood in a profound way Who Jesus was and what He had done for him and the world.” As J. R. reflected on his encounter with Mike, it reminded him of two realities: “we live in a messed-up world filled with violence, prejudice, racism, poverty, greed, pride, envy, lust and gluttony; and Jesus has invited messed-up people like us to partner with God in the redemption of the world.”

So I ask you, “Is life a draw?”

I think not! There is an involving, intervening Christ Who loves us enough to accept us as we are, but Who loves us too much to leave us that way! As John puts it, “Greater is He Who is in us, than he who is in the world.” You and I are not left powerlessly on our own, but are indwelt by the greatest Power that has ever existed!

By His grace, life is NOT a draw!

And we are not called simply to manage culture but to create culture so that the church, the body of Christ, can offer a foretaste of the future in the present where the people of God love, exhort, encourage, forgive and live in harmony with one another!

Joyfully,

Mike
It is a pleasure to share with you, the readers of the “Transformed,” a significant letter received in December by our Camp Director, Beth Wright, from the Department of Historic Resources of the Commonwealth of Virginia. As those from Woman’s Missionary Union who dreamed the dream to provide a place of retreat for working girls from the city some one hundred years ago as well those who have served as counselors, cooks, and carpenters to those who have contributed time, talent and treasure to sustain Camp Alkulana for a century, this is the Commonwealth’s letter to YOU!

Because of your faithfulness to the dream and the vision to minister into the lives of children and young adults, Camp Alkulana is being entered into the Virginia Landmarks Register. Additionally, it has also been recommended to be included in the National Register of Historic Places. Together, we can be both proud and thankful that God has chosen to use this sacred sod and the efforts of faithful folks like you to make a difference year after year as each camping session declares the Good News of God’s love and redemption.

Mike

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Historic Resources
Molly Joseph Ward
Secretary of Natural Resources
2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

December 15, 2014

Beth Reddish Wright
Camp Alkulana
3111 Moss Side Avenue
Richmond, VA 23222

Re: Camp Alkulana, Bath County

Dear Ms. Wright:

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia, it gives me great pleasure to inform you that the Board of Historic Resources has placed Camp Alkulana in the Virginia Landmarks Register. The State Review Board also recommended this property for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Following final staff review, we will forward the nomination to the National Park Service, including my recommendation, along with the Board’s, that the resource is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Virginia Landmarks Register includes historic landmarks, buildings, structures, districts, objects, and sites which are recognized as having historical, architectural, or archaeological significance at a local, state, or national level. Camp Alkulana deserves this official recognition as one of the Commonwealth’s historic resources. The responsibility for preserving Virginia’s irreplaceable historic resources rests ultimately with interested citizens like you. While registration does not in itself protect the property, we hope this formal recognition will provide encouragement to your continuing efforts to preserve this important part of Virginia’s history.

The continuing protection and preservation of registered Virginia landmarks is of immediate concern to this office. We welcome the opportunity to serve, and it is our hope that you will inform us if we can be of assistance to you in providing any technical advice on contemplated alterations or sensitive renovations to properties.

Sincerely,

Julie V. Langan
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer
The River City Faith Network partners with First Things First of Greater Richmond and Family Life to promote "The Art of Marriage -- A Valentine’s Weekend Marriage Focus". Hosted by churches, this city-wide DVD initiative "gets to the heart of God’s design for marriage and families!"

WHEN?
Friday evening and Saturday, February 13—14 or alternative dates and times (such as 6 one-hour evening sessions) between now and the end of April, 2015

HOW?
Go to www.firstthingsrichmond.org/aom2015
On the website, at Host Central, you will be able to: COMPLETE THE HOST COMMITMENT FORM, COMPLETE REGISTRATION INFORMATION, DOWNLOAD MARKETING MATERIALS (Including a customizable POSTER, PowerPoint Slides and 30/60 second RICHMOND VIDEOS), and access a HOST GUIDE.

COST?
First Things First, Richmond and Family Life will supply the “Art of Marriage” Kit to the host church at NO CHARGE! (Kit includes the videos and Facilitator’s Guide.) Couples pay $50 online for their workbooks; Individuals: $35. ($10 is returned to the host church for food, snack supplies.)

WHY?
Stability in marriage helps couples to discover and pursue steps to oneness! A good marriage relationship adds to stable families! Stable families add to “stable children” in our homes and society!“ Stable children” are more likely to believe in God and to extend His Kingdom! Stable families are a critical issue in our culture and for God’s calling!

WHERE?
At YOUR church ... because you care!!
Or … send your members to one of 23 partner churches listed on the website.

ACT NOW - MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR DECADES TO COME!
To help church staff and church lay leaders understand and comply with tax laws, the Compensation Planning Ministry of the Baptist General Association of Virginia hosts a series of informative seminars throughout Virginia. The Richmond Seminar will be held on Wednesday, February 18, 2015. The Seminar will begin at 9:00 am and end at 12:00 pm with refreshments provided.

The seminars are designed for church staff and lay leaders who handle taxes and compensation. Attendees will get help with compensation planning for church staff (including retirement and insurance), handling minister’s taxes, and federal reporting requirements for churches. Jeff Cranford, Compensation Planning Specialist, Empowering Leaders Team, BGAV, will lead the seminars.

For information or to register for the seminar, register online at BGAV.org/Tax-Seminars or contact Angela House, GuideStone Administrative Assistant, at 800-255-2428, ext. 5293, or angela.house@bgav.org.

### 2015 IRS Mileage Rates

The Internal Revenue Service has issued the 2015 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating a car, van, pickup or panel truck for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning January 1, 2015, the standard mileage rates will be 57.5 cents per mile for business miles driven, 23 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes, and 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations.


### Now is the time to make reservations for the 2015 Party for People with Special Needs Valentine Social

Friday, February 13
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Monument Heights Baptist Church
5716 Monument Avenue, Richmond

Mr. Billy Walker will be the Square Dance Caller; Mr. John Byrd the featured ventriloquist! Refreshments, Square Dancing and More!!

There is no charge to attend!

RSVP on or by February 9 to:
Mrs. Carol Bowman:
bowmangn@verizon.net
Monument Heights B C:
arusher@monumentheights.org

### December 2014 RBA/RCFN Budget Report

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### 2014 Camp Alkulana Offering

As of 12/31/14

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Are you a leader with the heart of a missionary?

Has attending a Fresh Expressions Vision Day or learning about Fresh Expressions inspired you to dream about what a fresh expression in your context would look like? Are you interested in not just learning about how to start a fresh expression of church but actually want to hit the ground running with one?

The start of our 2015 Pioneer Community is just around the corner!

Over the course of approximately a year, Pioneer Communities meet for two weekend retreats, a few half-day or evening sessions in their local area, and for ongoing connection through coaching. Their unique journey includes an exploration of the theological foundations of fresh expressions, engagement with practitioners, and work alongside those with a similar vision.

By the end of the learning journey our hope is that Pioneers will have developed Fresh Expressions of church appropriate to their unique contexts.

Our kick-off retreat will be held the weekend of February 27-March 1, 2015 at the Roslyn Conference Center in Richmond, VA. To learn more or to register go to www.freshexpressionsus.org/training-and-events.

GRAVEL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
AND OPERATION INASMUCH 2014

In September of 2014 our church participated for the first time in a project known as “Operation Inasmuch.” This effort is based in the words of Jesus Christ found in Matthew 25:40 which states, “And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.” On September 27th Gravel Hill mobilized and went beyond the ‘church walls’ to reach out into the community and demonstrate the love of Christ. We were in hospitality houses, group homes; we were painting and sewing pillows to help those in hospice care and we also made contributions to the Richmond City Justice Center and Sheriff’s Office to help clothe and provide for the incarcerated (male and female). We subscribe to the idea that “It is not the church of God that has a mission. It is the God of mission that has a Church.”

The church employed a total of nine teams which focused on the following projects:
- Sewing for Smiles (sew pillows for children’s hospital)
- Operation Paintbrush (volunteers paint home / shed)
- Free Carwash (volunteers serve)
- Feeding the Homeless (In Monroe Park)
- Hands On Greater Richmond (volunteers organize and scan document at Library)
- Hospital Hospitality House (serve lunch to hotel guest and fellowship)
- Rescue Cookies (deliver cookies to local fire stations)
- Helping Hands (Group Home)

The greatest compensation for our participation in this outreach activity was the joy and enthusiasm displayed by our members who were deeply touched by what they experienced. Even though we missed our participation goal of 60 percent, we surpassed the 80 / 20 standard so often witnessed in our churches and had a rate of forty-seven percent of our membership participate. We have continued to feed the homeless in Monroe Park since operation inasmuch ended and the joy of giving has not subsided.

Louis G. Jones, Pastor

You can make a big difference!

Planning is already under way for the ACCC (African Christian Community Church) to hold a Summer Program for Liberian and other African American children and youth during the summer of 2015. ACCC cannot provide this program alone; your help is needed! You and your church can help in several significant ways by:
- providing a meeting place with 2 to 3 rooms so that age group needs can be adequately served
- providing programming such as BookNet, Vacation Bible School, music, Bible study or drills, recreation, etc.
- providing lunches for between 25 and 30 youngsters daily

The ACCC Summer Program will begin on Monday, June 22nd, and conclude on Friday August 7th. The program will meet daily from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM, Monday through Thursday.

If you are willing to help, please contact Ruth Guill at 745-1655 or email her at mrguill@verizon.net.
BON AIR BAPTIST @ THE VILLAGE will have “Night to Shine” on Friday, February 13 from 6:00 – 9:00 pm. This will be a free evening of fun, food and dancing that is for anyone ages 16 and up with special needs. HUGUENOT ROAD has added a contemporary Worship Service at 8:30 am. Bible Study is at 9:45 am and their Traditional Worship Service is at 11:00 am. The church will have the Women of Faith Simulcast, “Unwrap the Bible” on Friday, February 20 and Saturday, February 21. RIVER ROAD will present a Piano Recital by Vincent Craig on Sunday, January 25, at 3:00 pm, as part of their E. Carl Freeman Concert Series. STOCKTON MEMORIAL will have “Sunday Drive” performing in concert on Sunday, February 15, at 6:00 pm. A Love Offering will be collected for this traveling music ministry sharing the message of joy and hope in Jesus. WOODLAND HEIGHTS will give a Valentine’s Gift to their neighborhood parents by having a "Parents Night Out!” on Friday, February 13, from 6:00 – 9:00 pm.

DERBYSHIRE welcomes Rev. William Deal as their new Minister to Youth and Young Adults. GINTER PARK welcomes Kathy Mahone as their Financial Secretary. HUGUENOT ROAD welcomes Darcie Trexler as their new receptionist. WOODLAND HEIGHTS has called Rev. Tom Lynch as their new Pastor.

HATCHER MEMORIAL is looking for a full-time Senior Pastor. The Pastor Search Committee is accepting resumes at pastorhmbc@yahoo.com. For more information, visit HatcherChurch.org.

LAKESIDE is seeking a Part-time Music Director / Organist responsible for planning, developing and promoting the church music ministry, including serving as accompanist for services and directing choirs. Please send resume to Lakeside Baptist Church, 7401 Woodman Road, Henrico, VA 23228-4314, Attn: Personnel Chairperson.

SKIPWITH is seeking a part-time Director of Children and Student Ministries. Call 804-282-2234 for more info. or go to skipwithbaptistchurch.org.

STOCKTON MEMORIAL, a Southern Baptist affiliated church, has an opening for a part-time Accompanist. Please send resume to 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 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.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

CHURCH NEWS

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Friends,

We believe 2015 will be an amazing year. A New Year. A New You. However, before we jump into 2015, let me update you on our Pack the Christmas Pod event that we had in November and December. Through the partnership of more than 20 businesses, our members, friends, and family, we were able to collect 4,027 pounds of food for FeedMore. We were literally able to “pack the pod” this holiday season.

New Year. New You.

- Dust off that budget or make a new one. We offer small and large group sessions focused on budgeting to help your New Year. New You. experience.
- The Entrust Savings Challenge is a 45-week savings plan that will help you save money throughout the year. It’s pretty simple. Start the challenge by saving a dollar the first week, $2 the second week, and then put away an additional dollar for each week after that. If you complete the challenge, you’ll have saved $1,035, and you could also enter to win $1,035!* The Savings Challenge starts on February 1. Visit entrustfcu.com/save for more information.
- Create for Christ is back and is giving away six $2,000 grants to youth groups for mission trips. Visit entrustfcu.org/createforchrist to find out how your youth group can enter the Create for Christ Video Grant Contest.

Please let us know how the Entrust team can serve and support you this year. Please contact me at jkarrer@entrustfcu.org or (804) 278-4714.

Thank you,

Josh Karrer
Director of Outreach
Entrust Financial Credit Union
**CALENDAR**

February 2 @ 10:00 AM  
**RCFN Staff Meeting**  

February 3 @ 9:00 AM  
**Raceway Ministries Core Team, RCFN**  

February 9 @ 10:00 AM  
**CVBM L15 Planning Team, RCFN**  

February 9-15  
**WMU Focus Week**  

February 10 @ 6:30 PM  
**Camp Alkulana Support Team, RCFN**  

February 13 @ 7:00 PM  
**Special Needs Valentine Social, Monument Heights**  

February 16  
**RCFN Office Closed — Presidents’ Day Holiday**  

February 17 @ 10:00 AM  
**WMU Leadership Team Meeting, RCFN**  

February 18 @ 9:00 AM  
**Tax and Compensation Planning Seminar, at the Virginia Baptist Resource Center**  

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**PRAY FOR**  
**RCFN/RBA CHURCHES SEEKING A PASTOR**  
Bethlehem (Penick)  
Disciples of Christ  
Grace  
Huguenot Road  
Bon Air  
First Union  
Hatcher Memorial  
Westover  

Pray for the RBA/RCFN Church of the Week  

February 1 … **Community of Grace**  
February 8 … **Deaf Mission – First Baptist**  
February 15 … **Derbyshire**  
February 22 … **Derbyshire Cambodian**  
March 1 … **Disciples of Christ**  

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**SAVE THE DATE**—Monday, April 13  
**2015 CVBM Pastor Deacon Conference**  
**Second Baptist Church (River Road)**