Musings from Mike:

How much bad news does it take to help us to see the urgent need our world has to receive the life altering Good News of Christ?

The predatory Harvey Weinsteins of the world take what God intended as sacred and beautiful and turn it into exploitative and self-gratifying filth. Religious radicals looking for spiritual assurance from gods and religious systems upon whom and upon which they cannot rely blow themselves and others to smithereens to achieve martyrdom rumored to be the only way of assuring that they may at last find eternal favor with their whimsical deity. Confused and angry snipers plot and plan revenge, lashing out at innocent church and concert goers with pent up rage that kills and injures brutally and indiscriminately.

“The solution,” declare many, “is stronger legislation of one type or another.” Others cry out for various types of reform. Still others point to some group or party and declare that they are the problem because they have either done too much or not enough!

I recently learned a new word! The corporate world uses the term to describe the group process of sitting around figuring out, not the solution to problems, but whom to blame for their existence. It is called “blamestorming!” The sentence in the urban dictionary demonstrating the word’s use went like this: “I just got out of a three-hour blamestorming session with IT (internet technology) about the server failure last week. Someone’s going to end up in unemployment over this.”

Blame rarely fixes anything! It’s most frequently an exercise in futility that leads to very little of anything. But the blame game is one that is frequently played. And it is usually played by individuals looking for easy answers to complex problems or as a means of shifting responsibility from themselves to someone else.

There are no easy or simple answers to dealing with the difficult problems to which I alluded at beginning of this article. That is, there is no easy answer from a purely human standpoint. My faith tells me that until I look to God as the Source in our churches so many times; the lyrics that go like this:

People need the Lord, people need the Lord
Laughter hides their silent cries, only Jesus hears.
Every day they pass me by, I can see it in their eye
Do you remember the words to that song we have sung in our churches so many times; the lyrics that go like this:

Every day they pass me by, I can see it in their eye
Empty people filled with care, headed who knows where.
On they go through private pain, living fear to fear
Laughter hides their silent cries, only Jesus hears.

People need the Lord, people need the Lord
At the end of broken dreams, He's the open door
People need the Lord, people need the Lord
When will we realize people need the Lord?

We are called to take His light to a world where wrong seems right.

What would be too great a cost for sharing life with one who’s lost?
Through His love our hearts can feel, all the grief they bear
They must hear the words of life only we can share.

The world is counting on us, even if they do not know it! There IS Good News for our world. Let’s share it regularly!

With urgency,

Mike
Heart Felt Thanks! Blessed by the Fairmount Memorial Family!

On Sunday afternoon, November 5th, a large gathering convened with Fairmount Memorial Baptist Church for their final Celebration Service held at their old location now occupied by Speaking Spirit Ministries led by Pastor Fred Wyatt. The meeting and dinner fellowship following were anything but funeral for a congregation that was ending a formal chapter in their history as Fairmount. I watched a celebration of ministry and of cheerful giving such as I have rarely witnessed in more than four decades of ministry!

During the celebration Fairmount Memorial gifted a number of ministry partners including missionaries with whom they have maintained special relationships for decades. Among the recipients of their generosity was the River City Faith Network of the Richmond Baptist Association, receiving $250,000 to be directed toward the RBA, its three centers and Camp Alkulana. This gracious gift will be invested in a way that will memorialize for decades into the future the good work, excellent partnership, and outstanding heart for missions of the Fairmount Family during the entirety of its affiliation with the RCFN!

Words alone cannot express River City’s gratitude for such exemplary graciousness! But in the words of Fairmount Memorial Baptist Church as they closed their final service of celebration singing “Victory in Jesus,” our God is an awesome God! He truly is and Fairmount has been an awesome partner! Many of their membership will continue to serve God and missions by combining their numbers with those of Shalom Baptist Church in the process of relocating off of Walnut Grove Road in Mechanicsville. With thanksgiving hold them in your prayers for strength and joy during their time of transition!

Fairmount, we thank God for you! Thank you for blessing us so richly!

Mike Robinson, Executive Director

At the 3rd RCFN Annual Meeting on October 22, our Stewardship Committee Chair, Dr. Philip Turner recognized the following churches for their faithful investment in the missions ministries of the RCFN. Join in congratulating them. Aspire to reach their level of investment by the end of this year!

**Greatest Annual INCREASE in missions giving to RCFN from 2016 over 2015:**

- Bethlehem Fairmount: 863% increase  
  Dr. Victor Davis, Pastor  
- Pine Street: 150% increase  
  Dr. Philip Turner, Pastor  
- Gravel Hill: 120% increase  
  Rev. Louis Jones, Pastor  
- Woodland Heights: 90% increase  
  Rev. Heather Tiller, Assoc. Pastor  
- Leigh Street: 56% increase  
  Dr. James Colvin, Pastor

**Largest Contributors by Dollar Amount to RCFN Ministries:**

- First Richmond  
  Dr. Jim Somerville, Pastor  
- Huguenot Road  
  Dr. Bob Lee, Pastor  
- River Road Church  
  Dr. Daniel Glaze, Pastor  
- Derbyshire  
  Dr. Jeff Raymond, Pastor  
- Skipwith  
  Dr. Cecil Chambers, Pastor

**Churches Who Gave MORE than 4% of Their Undesignated Receipts:**

- Leigh Street  
  Dr. James Colvin, Pastor  
- Skipwith  
  Dr. Cecil Chambers, Pastor  
- Huguenot Road  
  Dr. Bob Lee, Pastor  
- Carlisle Avenue  
  Rev. Howard Germany

**Churches Who Gave MORE than 3% of Their 2016 Undesignated Receipts:**

- Southampton  
  Rev. Tom Ficklin  
- Stockton Memorial  
  Rev. Bill Duganne  
- Chamberlayne  
  Rev. David Peppler

Every gift to God through RCFN is strategic to the on-going health of our city and its under-resourced. Many thanks to every church for faithfulness and partnership in serving Him and them.
The Church Hill Wellness Center

Christmas Store @ Bethlehem Baptist Church,
1920 Fairmount Ave. (on the opposite side of Fairmount Ave.
from the Wellness Center in Mount Tabor Church)

Saturday ♦ December 9            8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Gifts are needed for children ages birth through 10 years old. Suggestions: Clothing (jeans, sweaters, sweatshirts, sleepwear, socks, underwear, coats, hats, and gloves in regular and large sizes); Games; Toys; Books; Bicycles (and helmets). Please go easy on stuffed animals, Barbie dolls, Candy Land and Chutes and Ladders Board Games. Please purchase gifts that you would want your own children or grandchildren to receive. Please do not wrap anything; parents need to see what they are selecting. Please leave price tags on items so that less expensive items can be distinguished from more expensive ones.

Deliver your gifts to Bethlehem Baptist Church, 1920 Fairmount Avenue, across the street from Mount Tabor; December 6 and December 7 (Wednesday and Thursday), between 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 to 3 p.m. Volunteers are needed to help with set-up on Friday, December 8, starting at 10:00 a.m.; as shopping assistants on December 9 starting at 8:00a.m., and to assist with clean-up on Dec. 9 from 2 p.m. until. If you can volunteer, call Glinda Ford

South Richmond Baptist Center & Oregon Hill Baptist Centers’

Christmas Store

December store in South Richmond Center, Saint Paul’s Belt Campus, 700 East Belt Blvd.

Thursday & Friday ♦ December 7 & 8
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Gifts are needed for children ages birth through 12 years old (Shortages reported for the 7 to 12 year olds). Suggestions: Clothing (jeans, sweaters, sweatshirts, sleepwear, socks, underwear, coats, hats, and gloves in regular and large sizes); Games; Toys; Books; Bicycles (and helmets). Please go easy on stuffed animals, Barbie dolls, Candy Land and Chutes and Ladders Board Games. Please purchase gifts that you would want your own children or grandchildren to receive. Please do not wrap anything; parents need to see what they are selecting. (Donations of small amounts of wrapping paper will be appreciated.) Please leave price tags on items so that less expensive items can be distinguished from more expensive ones.

Deliver your gifts: Monday, December 4 and Tuesday, December 5 between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. and on Wednesday, December 6 between 9:00a.m. and noon. Bring gifts to the rear of the gymnasium at Saint Paul’s Belt Campus. Volunteers are needed to help sort and set-up each delivery day; help as shopping assistants on Store days; be interpreters for Spanish speaking shoppers; and help pack-up leftover items on Friday, December 8. If you can volunteer, call Jennifer Turner, OHBC, at 648-1353 / 908-6905 or Wesley Garrett, SRBC, at 232-0174.
Christmas store is in South Richmond Center, Saint Paul’s Belt Campus, 700 East Belt Blvd.
Thursday & Friday • December 7 & 8
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Gifts are needed for children ages birth through 12 years old (Shortages reported for the 7 to 12 year olds). Suggestions: Clothing (jeans, sweaters, sweatshirts, sleepwear, socks, underwear, coats, hats, and gloves in regular and large sizes); Games; Toys; Books; Bicycles (and helmets). Please go easy on stuffed animals, Barbie dolls, Candy Land and Chutes and Ladders Board Games. Please purchase gifts that you would want your own children or grandchildren to receive. Please do not wrap anything; parents need to see what they are selecting. (Donations of small amounts of wrapping paper will be appreciated.) Please leave price tags on items so that less expensive items can be distinguished from more expensive ones.

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CAMP ALKULANA

October we received the official notice that Camp Alkulana's accreditation through the American Camp Association has been renewed!

ACA accreditation is a voluntary process that we choose to take part in to show that we are meeting industry-accepted and government-recognized standards.

ACA is the only independent accrediting organization reviewing camp operations in the country. ACA’s nationally recognized standards program focuses primarily on program quality, health, and safety aspects of a camp's operation. ACA’s accreditation is administered through a peer-review process. ACA collaborates with experts from other agencies to assure that current practices at the camp reflect the most up-to-date, research-based standards in camp operation.

Beth Wright Camp Director (329-1701 ext 114) Anna Tuckwiller Camp Registrar (329-1701 ext 112) For more of what’s happening at Camp Alkulana go to www.alkulana.org
River Road Church, Baptist warmly welcomes the Reverend Marnie Fisher-Ingram as their new Associate Pastor for Youth & their Families and the Reverend Daniel Ingram as their new Minister of Administration. Anticipated start date is early January 2018.

Thank you so much!!!

Business & Non-profit Sponsors:
Anna Julia Cooper Episcopal School
IBEW Local Union
J.A. Heisler Contracting Co.
Law Offices of Terry Marsh
Baptist Theological Seminary of Richmond
Nelsen Funeral Home
Woody Funeral Home
Hodgman’s Inc.

Church Sponsors:
Huguenot Road Baptist Church
Welstead Sunday School, Tabernacle Baptist
Reflections Sunday School, Derbyshire Baptist
Connectors WMU, River Road Church, Baptist
New Horizons Class, River Road Church, Baptist
Discovery Class, River Road Church, Baptist

Individual Sponsors:
Bev & Richard Martin, The Reddish Family
Laura Lee Chandler, Bill & Deb Gray, Russ Collins
Charles & Susan Phillips, Ed & Lynda Leslie
Tom Kirkup, Parker/ Snipes Family
Fields/ Seal Family
Jane Lewis, in Memory of Roy Lewis
Rhonda Mann, in Memory of Chris Duncan

Spanish Interpreters Needed for many of the families coming to the South Richmond and Oregon Hill Christmas Store. Call Rev. Wesley Garrett for details. Thank you!
November 23–24, 2017
Thanksgiving Holiday (RCFN office closed)
November 28, 2017 @ 7:00PM RCFN Board of Directors’ Meeting 3111 Moss Side Ave., Richmond, VA 23222

December 3–10, 2017
Week of Prayer for International Missions (Lottie Moon Christmas Offering)

December 1, 2017
• Gayton: Jazz Nativity 7:00—9:00 PM

December 2, 2017
• Gayton: Jazz Nativity 4:00—6:00 PM, 7:00—9:00 PM

December 3, 2017
• First: Hanging of the Green 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM
• Gayton: Jazz Nativity 4:00—6:00 PM, 7:00—9:00 PM
• River Road: ADVENTure Lunch for families 12:10 (Fellowship Hall)

December 4, 2017
• OHBC & SRBC: Christmas Store Drop-off 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

December 5, 2017
• OHBC & SRBC: Christmas Store Drop-off 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM
• CAST Mtg: 6:30 PM (RBA Bldg, SCR)
• TRANSFORMED Deadline for January newsletter

December 6, 2017
• OHBC & SRBC: Christmas Store Drop-off 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
• CHCWC: Christmas Store Drop-off 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon; 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

December 7, 2017
• OHBC & SRBC: Christmas Store 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM
• CHCWC: Christmas Store Drop-off 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon; 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

December 8, 2017
• OHBC & SRBC: Christmas Store 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM
• Derbyshire: “What Sweeter Music: Canticles and Carols,” 7:00 PM

December 9, 2017
• CHCWC: Christmas Store 8:30 AM to 2:00 PM
• LIC: Christmas Set-Up 2:00—5:00 PM (RBA Bldg)
• Derbyshire: “What Sweeter Music: Canticles and Carols,” 7:00 PM

December 10, 2017
• LIC: Christmas Store 9:30 AM—3:00 PM (RBA Bldg)
• Derbyshire: “What Sweeter Music: Canticles and Carols,” 4:00 PM and 7:00 PM
• First: Carol & Keyboards 100 voice choir with 4 grand pianos in the church sanctuary
• Gayton: Children’s Christmas Musical 4:00—5:00 PM
• River Road: E. carl Freeman Concert Advent/ Christmas Choral Concert 7:30 PM (Sanctuary)

December 11, 2017
• LIC: Christmas Store 10:00 AM—2:00 PM (RBA Bldg)

December 13, 2017
First: Joy Singers and Children’s Musical 6:00 PM

December 17, 2017
• First: Youth Christmas Pageant 6:00 PM Sanctuary
• Huguenot Road: Christmas Musical—“Let the Christmas Spirit...Sing” 6:00 PM
• Mount Tabor: Christmas Concert 3:30 PM
• New Canaan: Christmas Reception 1:00 PM
• Swift Creek: Christmas Choir Program 9:30 & 11:00 AM; Kids Christmas Party 4:00 PM
• Tabernacle: Christmas in the Fan (Tabernacle Choir with Richmond Concert Band & Meadow Street Band) 4:00 PM
• Woodland Heights: Christmas Music Program 11:00 AM

December 18, 2017
• LDC Planning Team: 10:00 AM (RBA Bldg, SCR)

December 19–21, 2017
• Huguenot Road: Christmas VBS 9:00 AM

December 21, 2017
• Skipwith: A Live Nativity 6:30—8:00 PM (Church Lawn)
• Southampton: “Blue Christmas” Service 7:00 PM

December 22–30, 2017
Christmas Holiday (RCFN office closed)

December 24, 2017
• Bethlehem (Penick): Christmas Eve Service 5:00 PM
• Chamberlayne: Christmas Eve Service 5:00 PM
• Derbyshire: Christmas Eve Service 5:30 PM
• First: Christmas Eve Services 5:00 PM and 11:00 PM
• Gayton: Christmas Eve Services 10:30 AM, 3:00 PM, 4:15 PM and 5:30 PM
• Ginter Park: Christmas Eve Service 5:00 PM
• Huguenot Road: Family Service and Children’s Pageant 11:00 AM, Candlelight Communion Worship 11:00 PM
• Mount Tabor: Christmas Eve Service 10:00 AM
• River Road: Christmas Eve Family Service 4:00 PM, Candlelight Service & Holy Communion 11:00 PM (Sanctuary)
• Southampton: Special Christmas Eve Service 11:00 AM
• Swift Creek: Christmas Eve Service 4:00 PM
• Tabernacle: Christmas Eve Candle Light Service 5:00 PM
• Woodland Heights: Christmas Eve Service 5:00 PM

December 25, 2017
HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS! MERRY CHRISTMAS

• Leigh Street: Happy 164th Anniversary

December 31, 2017
• Huguenot Road: Christmastide Worship 11:00 AM
• Mount Tabor: Watch Night Service @ Asbury 10:00 PM

January 1, 2017
New Year’s Day Holiday (RCFN office closed)
Pray for the RCFN of the RBA Churches seeking a PASTOR

- Deaf Mission Chapel - FBC
- Derbyshire Cambodian
- Hatcher Memorial
- The Mount Carmel
- Woodland Heights

Pray for the RCFN Church of the Week

- Dec. 3.....Swift Creek
- Dec. 10.....Tabernacle
- Dec. 17.....Trinity
- Dec. 24.....United for Christ
- Dec. 31.....Westover

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective! (James 5:16) NIV

2017 RCFN Budget Report

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Camp Alkulana Offering

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Writers' Block is a new periodic feature in the “TRANSFORMED!”.

It is designed to give exposure to Christian authors related to the RCFN whose work sometimes goes virtually unknown. Inclusion in this column is in no way an endorsement of the viewpoints or opinions expressed by the author. Authors are encouraged to submit their information. (See the RCFN website: www.richmondbaptist.org)