The TRANSFORMED! is created a month in advance so you have time to plan and prepare for Missions and Events. With that being said, today we do not know what “Back to School” will even look like this year. We must follow the guidelines of the churches who so graciously share their facilities with our Community Missionaries to do the work of the Lord. We so appreciate them. Therefore the dates and times for our ministries are tentative until we get closer to school opening. We are hopeful for a smooth and healthy start to the new school year.

**SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR “BACK TO SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS”**

*BACKPACK (sturdy, large enough for notebooks and textbooks*)

- Items to be included in each backpack are listed below.
  - 1 three-ring binder and divider tabs
  - 1 or 2 packs loose-leaf paper (wide or standard rule)
  - 4 black-and-white composition books
  - 2 one-subject notebooks
  - 1 three- or five-subject spiral notebook
  - 5 to 8 No. 2 pencils (no mechanical)
  - 5 to 8 black or blue ink pens (erasable/no gel)

**POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL ITEMS (DO NOT PUT IN BACKPACKS)**

- 2” three-ring binders
- pocket folders (with or w/out brads) in solid colors
- rulers (12 inch/metric)
- colored pencils
- crayons (pack of 16 or 24)
- highlighters
- markers (washable, 8/10 pack, wide/thin)
- 3 x 5 lined index cards & file box
- pencil boxes
- pencil sharpeners (small hand-held)
- protractors, clear
- Elmer’s glue-4 oz.
- scissors (pointed or blunt, metal)
- erasers, pencil top & block
- glue sticks
- red pens
- zippered pencil pouches for 3-ring binder
- hand sanitizer, regular size

**THESE ITEMS ARE SUGGESTIONS BASED ON PREVIOUS YEARS**

**PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR ASSIGNED COMMUNITY MISSIONARY REGARDING THEIR NEED IN THIS UNCONVENTIONAL YEAR.**

- **Backpacks**
- **School Supplies**
- **Underwear**
- **Socks**
- **Toiletries**

A Christian bookmark or something similar, appropriate for children
The desire for the church to gather becomes stronger and more important with each passing day. Restrictions are decreasing and individuals are becoming more comfortable leaving their homes and ending months of quarantine.

With this being the case church leaders must deal with some very significant considerations. Members and friends need to be given good reasons for assurance that their church’s plans have fully considered their safety.

Dr. Thom Rainer, founder of Church Answers, poses in a recent webinar a series of questions that are at the forefront of re-opening. His questions are the result of considerable research and numerous conversations that reflect the overwhelming concerns of both church members and leaders.

Among the important considerations churches must address is the question, WHEN WILL ATTENDANCE BE NORMAL? From his research Rainer projects that attendance will only become normal early in the year 2021. The next eight to ten months will see a slow growth in the numbers of those occupying local church seats.

Not necessarily in a particular order, the question of WILL WE SING rises to our attention. It is a poignant question that relates directly to the spread of viruses via aerosolization, the launching of virus projectiles or receiving them as we breathe in or out while sneezing, coughing, speaking, or singing. Certainly sneezing and coughing spread coronavirus contagion through the air for the farthest distances, but singing provides the strongest spread among the common means of communication. Where music rehearsals and singing occur in environments that are not well ventilated, a common situation for most church choirs allowing stale air to remain in a confined space for considerable periods of time, the potential for spread is magnified exponentially. And masks, unless individually “fitted,” do little to mitigate spread. They pose health risks to many of the most vulnerable users due to the rebreathing of carbon dioxide or poor oxygen availability for prolonged periods. In addition, hymnals and song sheets which can transport viruses and are not easily cleaned only complicate the prevention of spread.

Some of you who know me well may have heard me say, “Where there are ten people, there will be at least fifteen opinions on any matter!” While in jest, the next question raises the issue of how to decide right strategy. HOW DO WE RESPOND TO THE DIVERSE VIEWPOINTS? My conversations with various church leaders underscore that this is a genuine issue. Some question whether it was ever right to close. Others wonder why their church has not already reopened. Still others think that their church is prematurely rushing to gather. Sound familiar? It is wise to have a team of those who occupy positions of leadership to prayerfully consult together to make key decisions out of existing trust and maturity. Honor local governmental guidelines and operate as much as possible in concert with other nearby congregations. Moving forward as a community of believers can strengthen confidence that the decisions being made are wise and well thought out.

WHAT ABOUT MASKS? Again, reflect the best of local guidance and CDC wisdom. Remember, as uncomfortable as they may be, the mask is an expression of love and concern for those around you, and who does not want to err on the side of lovingkindness?

HOW DO WE CALCULATE SPACE AND SOCIAL DISTANCING? Six feet is prescribed between family units or individuals. To help with planning accommodations, consider asking persons to sign up for the service options your church is offering. Remain digital for a long while or permanently for those who are new, confined, or apprehensive as well as for those for whom your service times never worked.

WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT VULNERABLE MEMBERS? Continue to provide a digital option and give them time and space to return. Perhaps surprisingly it is not seniors who are so hesitant to return as families with young children; they will probably bring their children into adult worship rather than send them to a nursery where sharing toys and other items is almost unpreventable! And that’s the question, WHAT ABOUT KIDS? Follow the pattern of local schools and daycares for opening children’s programs. And disinfect, disinfect, disinfect! Over communicate with parents your church’s plans to protect their children.

During worship, HOW DO WE DO OUR GREETING TIME? Rainer strongly suggests having a general greeting from a worship leader. Definitely forego handshaking and hugs, as much as we might all miss them. Remember social distancing?

WHEN DOES THE NEW NORMAL BECOME OBVIOUS? Track how various things are being done and how people respond (They will vote with their attendance.) and track their responses with a thirteen week rolling average for a period of six to eight months. If attendance continually drops, you are on the wrong track; if stable or rising, you are beginning to see what is working for your church. Don’t forget your digital attendees, but run separate averages!

Similarly, HOW DO WE GET PEOPLE BACK INTO THE ATTENDANCE HABIT? Without judgment or unkind pressure, be lovingly deliberate in encouraging the return of your people. Listen to the concerns of those slow to return, answer those misgivings with well planned responses where appropriate, and communicate clearly and often how concerns have been addressed.

Thom Rainer has offered insights that can help all of us to move forward effectively. Know that you remain in my prayers as you face these milestones toward new days of vitality.

Prayerfully and with rejoicing,
Mike
All of the above Camp Alkulana Summer Events are subject to COVID-19 Virginia State Phases and re-opening guidelines. If you are interested in scheduling a family retreat, email Beth at campalkulana@gmail.com for more information.

**2020 CAMP ALKULANA SUMMER EVENTS**

**CAMP ALKULANA 2020 MOBILE CAMP**

- **Who:** all campers ages 9-14
- **What:** 2 day camp sessions for each camper group at the Richmond Baptist building on Moss Side Ave.
- **When:** June 21 & 27 (Older Boys), June 28 & July 4 (Younger Boys), July 26 & August 1 (Older Girls), August 2 & 8 (Younger Girls)

**New this year!**
- We’ll bring the Alkulana magic to you in Richmond!
- Food and activities will be outside.
- All activities will be physically distanced.

**CAMP ALKULANA 2020 MINI-SESSIONS**

- **Who:** Counselors-in-Training and 14 year old campers
- **What:** a 3-night camp session at Camp Alkulana to focus on fun and leadership development
- **When:** July 10-13 (Boys), July 17-20 (Girls)

What’s different this year:
- Campers will sleep in individual tents not cabins.
- Meals and activities will be outside and some normal camp activities will not be allowed due to social distancing.
- Campers must provide their own transportation to camp.

**CAMP ALKULANA 2020 ALKULANA ONLINE**

- **Who:** all campers ages 9-14
- **What:** 5 days of virtual camp for each session
- **When:** during the week between your assigned mobile camp sessions

What is virtual camp?
- Campers interact with counselors and their camp friends on live Zoom sessions with games, dance parties, cabin conversations, campfire sing-a-long and more!
- Counselors post videos on Youtube for campers to enjoy, be inspired by, and respond to through an online portal.

**CAMP ALKULANA 2020 FAMILY RETREATS**

- **Who:** camp alumni and staff
- **What:** cabins will be available for camp alumni and staff families to use for a fee
- **When:** weekends during August

What is a family retreat?
- We all need a getaway these days, and our options are more limited. Camp Alkulana has beautiful space available. Use us for your family camping trip.
- Families must bring and prepare their own meals outdoors. Bathrooms are available but no other indoor space.
- No activities will be hosted by staff.

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**BGAV Executive Board Announces Changes to Upcoming 2020 Annual Meeting**

The Virginia Baptist Executive Board, President and Officers of the Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV) have decided to make the 2020 annual meeting of the BGAV a virtual meeting, deferring all matters of business to next year’s annual meeting, which will take place November 16—17, 2021.

To watch a video announcement from BGAV Executive Director John Upton and BGAV President Adam Tyler go to our website www.richmondbaptist.org/News and Events/ and CLICK on the picture.
Devoted Volunteers in the Midst of COV-19

It is a known fact that volunteers are very important to accomplish the ministries of all of the RCFN centers. Due to their ages and health issues, the coronavirus has caused most of the Well’s volunteers to adhere to the strong suggestion to Shelter-in-Place.

However, the Well has two volunteers who continue to show up faithfully to collect food bags that are still being donated by the churches and preparing bags for food distribution. The Well wants to give a “shout out” to my husband, Lee, and his faithful sidekick, David. Lee and David began volunteering for the center many years ago.

They compare their desire to volunteer to the motto of the U.S. Postal Service, “Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of nights stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.” To this motto they have added that they won’t allow the flight of stairs, nor their ages, nor health issues, nor the dreaded mask (safety must come first) to keep them from food distribution.

David and Lee see the Food Pantry as their way to help the Well to meet a small portion of the needs in this community. Too, it’s an opportunity for them to interact with the people.

COMMUNITY MISSIONARY - REV. GLENDA F. FORD
2011 Fairmount Avenue, Richmond, VA 23223
(Located in Mount Tabor Baptist Church)
glinda.ford@rbaonline.org (804-780-0053)

“Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst.”

Regular Hours: Monday 9:00am– 5:00 pm;
Tuesday-Thursday 9:00am–6:00 pm;
Friday – 9:00 am–2:00 pm

At the Oregon Hill Baptist Center

Jennifer needs:

Individual small bottles of hand sanitizer for program participates.

Surgical or homemade masks for the homeless and other program participates.

Please contact Jennifer for any other needs that she may have at this specific time. jennifer.turner@rbaonline.org

COMMUNITY MISSIONARY - REV. JENNIFER TURNER
400 South Pine Street Richmond, VA 23220
(Located in Pine Street Baptist Church)
jennifer.turner@rbaonline.org (804-648-1353)

It is with great pride that we recognize our OHBC High School & College Graduates!

CONGRATULATIONS!!

Bryan  Joy  Ashley  Sade’  Charlotte  Dorcas

As we are all aware, 2020 has been an unusual and stress filled year so far! We are so proud of these young adults and their perseverance to push on to the goal of graduation!! Please say a prayer for each of them by name as they move on to college and/or the work world.

During the month of June we celebrated each one with a special gift and a “Drive By Graduation Parade” which included the others from our youth group, leaders, and parents riding by in decorated cars and shouting out their approval!!
Families near Wesley's South Richmond Baptist Center are in need of household items, dishes, silverware, microwave ovens, kitchen cabinets, etc.

CAMP ALKULANA

State protocols for reopening, CDC guidelines, and American Camp Association recommendations have made it clear that we cannot have camp in its usual form this summer. We have, however, come up with an alternative plan to “do camp” that will allow our campers to participate at whatever level feels safe to their families.

Camp Alkulana takes the health and safety of our campers very seriously. We will be practicing social distancing and the sanitizing of hands and surfaces in all of our programming. We will also follow all of the current guidelines for the use of masks.

Camp will happen for our campers in 3 primary ways this summer:

- 1 MOBILE CAMP
- 2 ALKULANA ONLINE
- 3 MINI SESSIONS.

See page 3 for more information.

We will continue to pay attention to recommendations and restrictions from state and local authorities and may change these plans accordingly. But for now, we are already working to put these plans into effect as safely as possible so that we can invest in the lives of Richmond's children this summer. We are all disappointed that we can't have camp as usual, but this plan will bring Alkulana to our campers in a way best suited for our times. Our children need camp now more than ever. Camp Alkulana's mission and work continues. I hope you'll join us.

As noted on page 3, Camp Alkulana will also offer FAMILY RETREAT opportunities for camp alumni and staff. For a nominal fee families can spend time away from Richmond in the beautiful Allegheny Mountains during an August weekend, bringing and preparing their own outdoor meals. Only bathrooms will be available. No other indoor space will be accessible. While no staff hosted activities will be provided, an August weekend at Camp Alkulana can still be a restful and memorable occasion long cherished and remembered. Email campalkulana@gmail.com to learn more!
The RCFN button gives you the choice of donating to Church Hill Christian Wellness Center, Oregon Hill Baptist Center, South Richmond Baptist Center and River City Faith Network. The Camp Alkulana button also has the option of donating and/or paying for Golf Tournaments, Silent Auctions, etc. at scheduled times. (You will need to scroll down past the logos.)

Thank you so much!

A hyperlink is attached to the DONATE box on our website. This is an easy way to give to the RCFN ministries. Website: www.richmondbaptist.org

ANNOUNCING THE 2020 RECIPIENTS OF THE CAMP ALKULANA WESTHAMPTON SCHOLARSHIP

CONGRATULATIONS

DANIELLE AFOlayan
KAIA HADNOTT

AMBER GUTIERREZ
KATE WAKELAND

IMANI JEFFERSON
SABRINA SIMMONS
MADDY Farrow
Oak Forest Baptist Church is looking for a part-time Director of Music:

5101 Courthouse Rd, Chesterfield, VA.

Please send resume to Rev. Kirby D. Smith, ksmithofbc@verizon.net or for more information please call (804) 276-6547.

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The following was on my Facebook stream May 27, 2020. I thought we can all benefit from these words.

Hebrew scripture contains a story about a military commander named Naaman who contracts the contagious skin disease known as leprosy (2 Kings 5). He is highly offended when the prophet Elisha instructs him to wash seven times in the Jordan River to be healed. Naaman expects a more impressive process to bring about his cure and initially refuses to follow Elisha's simple directions.

Naaman's underlings, however, counsel him with these words: "If the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it?" He reluctantly reconsiders and, against his better judgment, does what Elisha has told him to do. 2 Kings 5:14 reads, "...and he was clean." Following simple directions proves to be to Naaman's benefit and to the benefit of those around him.

Medical science has offered us three simple actions that we as individuals can take to protect ourselves and to slow the spread of COVID-19. They are simpler than washing seven times in the Jordan River.

1. Wash hands frequently.
2. Keep a healthy (pun intended) distance from others.
3. Wear a mask in confined or congested spaces.

These are not very impressive, but so far have proven effective.

I will follow these three simple directions from the medical community for two simple reasons:

1. For you
2. For me


Bert Browning
Former pastor of Huguenot Road

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Ministry Positions Available

**Oak Forest Baptist Church** is looking for a part-time Director of Music:

5101 Courthouse Rd, Chesterfield, VA.

Please send resume to Rev. Kirby D. Smith, ksmithofbc@verizon.net or for more information please call (804) 276-6547.

**Walnut Grove Baptist Church** in Mechanicsville, Virginia, is seeking a senior pastor to lead this historic Baptist Church, established in 1841. Please send your resume by July 15, 2020 to pastor-search@wgva.church or mail your resume to: Walnut Grove Baptist Church—P.O. Box 360—Mechanicsville, VA 23111

To learn more: [www.richmondbaptist.org](http://www.richmondbaptist.org)

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**Option #1- LIVE/IN-PERSON** - Only 25 couples will have the opportunity to see Dr. Chapman LIVE in a clean and safe environment. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions, take pictures and receive a personally autographed book from the author. These tickets will sell out fast.

**Option #2- DRIVE-IN** - Hear Gary from your car on the radio as his live show is projected on the side of the building where he will be speaking. At the conclusion of the show, Dr. Chapman will walk outside and give everyone a signed copy of his book. As Dr. Chapman said "love this creative thinking." So pack your car and drive into a great show.

**Option #3- via LIVE STREAM** - If you are not quite ready to be around people, you can LIVE Stream the show and watch from the comfort of your couch from here in RVA or anywhere around the world. Make it a family night you will never forget.

Regardless of which way you choose to see him, get your tickets today. You will be 'SORRY' if you don't!

For a hyperlink to this site go to: [www.richmondbaptist.com](http://www.richmondbaptist.com)/News and Events.
Pray for the RCFN Churches seeking a PASTOR

Bethlehem, Penick
Derbyshire Cambodian
Ginter Park
Monument Heights

Pray for the RCFN Church of the Week

JULY 5.........................................Korean
JULY 12.................................Lakeside
JULY 19.................................Leigh Street
JULY 26.........................The Light Community

TRANSFORMED! is published monthly by the River City Faith Network of the Richmond Baptist Association

Contact: Danette Moen via phone (804) 329-1701 ext.101, email or USPS at the addresses listed above:
- To submit an article: it must be received by the 4th of each month.
- To be added to or deleted from the mailing list, or
- 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 RCFN/RBA 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 RCFN Office is open from 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday through Thursday.

THANK YOU for your continued support of RCFN

2020 MAY RCFN Budget Report
RCFN Monthly Budget Amount: $49,416.66
MAY Budget Receipts: $ 23,114.00
MAY Budget Expenses: $ 37,229.00

RCFN YTD Budget Amount: $ 247,083.30
RCFN YTD Budget Receipts: $ 154,398.28
RCFN YTD Budget Expenses: $ 215,799.30

Camp Alkulana Offering $199,000.00
YTD Budget Amount: $ 82,916.65
YTD Receipts: $ 45,795.55
YTD Expenses: $ 50,769.62

RCFN Board of Directors’ Meeting
JUNE 23, 2020
3:30 PM
Skipwith Baptist Church , Fellowship Hall
1900 Skipwith Road, Richmond, VA 23229

We will space ourselves to observe social distancing. Please wear a face mask. We will plan to limit the meeting to one hour or less.