

Members

Asbury United Methodist
Bon Air Presbyterian
Cathedral of the Sacred Heart Catholic
Church of the Redeemer Catholic
Common Table
Congregation Or Ami
Discovery United Methodist
East End Fellowship
Ebenezer Baptist
Faith Community Baptist
First Congregational Christian Church of Christ
First Presbyterian
First Unitarian Universalist
Holy Rosary Catholic
Mt. Carmel Baptist
New Light Baptist
Sacred Heart Catholic
Second Baptist (Southside)
Southminster Presbyterian
St. Edward Catholic
St. Elizabeth Catholic
St. John's Episcopal
St. Paul's Episcopal
Third Street Bethel AME
Three Chopt Presbyterian
Union Presbyterian Seminary
Unitarian Universalist Community
Unity of Richmond



What is RISC?

RISC – Richmonders Involved to Strengthen Our Communities - is an organization made up of congregations from throughout Richmond, Henrico and Chesterfield. Founded in 2002, we use the power of large numbers of organized people to solve critical community problems. We are not a direct service provider, rather we are a grassroots, direct action, multi-issue organization.

How does RISC work?

RISC follows a yearly process that focuses on building and strengthening a Justice Ministry (Rodef Tzedek) Network at each member congregation. In the Fall, Team Leaders host House Meetings to discuss community problems and engage participants as Network Members. From November through March, Issue Committees are formed to conduct research into the problems, and ultimately come up with specific, winnable solutions. The Nehemiah Action is held in the Spring, where thousands gather to ask public officials to implement these solutions. After the Nehemiah Action, leaders follow up on the commitments made at the Action, and Network Members are invited to invest in RISC.

Justice Ministry (Rodef Tzedek) Network Members Commit to the Following:

- 1. Attend the 4 RISC Assemblies of the year –**
The Community Problems Assembly (October 28, 2025)
The Rally (March 2, 2026)
The Nehemiah Action (March 17, 2026)
The Justice Ministry Celebration (June 1, 2026)
- 2. Bring at least 3 people to the Nehemiah Action**
- 3. Consider an investment of \$200 or more in justice ministry.**

Our Vision for Justice Ministry

Micah 6:8 provides a clear list of requirements for God's people: to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

We believe that doing justice is a core part of our faith traditions, and yet one that is often overlooked. Our vision is to build up the Justice Ministries (Rodef Tzedek) within each congregation such that justice is an integral part of the culture.

In 2025, we turned out 2,278 people to our Nehemiah Action. Our goal is to get to 3,000 people within the next few years. Through building the power of organized people, we believe we will transform the Richmond area, such that justice can and will be realized for all.

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What is RISC currently working on?

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Richmond has been in an affordable housing crisis for years, and it is getting worse. In 2014, RISC got the city to start putting money into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. However, not enough money was put in, and the majority of the funds have not been directed toward building truly affordable housing.

In 2021, we won passage of an ordinance that established a dedicated stream of funding for the Trust Fund, that is projected to grow to an annual allocation of \$17 million by 2033. However, the city administration refused to follow this Ordinance – instead borrowing money through bond revenue to fund affordable housing. While we did work to ensure that this money (\$20 million) was allocated to the Trust Fund, the fact that it is borrowed money means it will cost taxpayers \$35 million in debt service over the next 20 years. Furthermore, the Trust Fund dollars are not being used in a way that addresses the most need. This past Spring, only 13% of the dollars went toward units for households earning \$30,000 and below – despite the fact that this group of people represents 80% of those who are spending more than half of their monthly income on housing.

This year, we are calling on our new Mayor to commit to fund the Trust Fund with non-borrowed revenue by following the ordinance, as well as to use at least half of the funds for families earning \$30,000 and below.

GUN VIOLENCE

Since June of 2020, we have been calling upon Mayor Stoney to bring a proven gun violence intervention program called Group Violence Intervention (GVI) to our city. GVI has been implemented in dozens of cities across the country, and has been proven to cut homicides in half or more.

Mayor Stoney refused to implement GVI. In the summer of 2022, one of our allies – REAL Life – received state and federal funding to implement GVI – simply needing the cooperation of the city to move forward with an implementation. Mayor Stoney remained steadfast in his refusal, despite the fact that it would have cost the city nothing. REAL Life moved on to Hopewell, where GVI was started in June of 2023 and is seeing remarkable results.

We have waited long enough. This year, we are calling upon our new Mayor to implement GVI in 2025.

HEALTHY HOMES

Over 400 families across Richmond are living in mobile homes that are in terrible states of disrepair. These families are enduring extreme heat in the summer, and extreme cold in the winter. Water leaking into these homes is also common, causing mold and causing walls, floors and roofs to deteriorate.

In 2022, we identified a mobile home repair and replacement program as our solution. Over the three years that followed, a total of \$1.6 million was allocated, which will repair a total of 100 homes. While this is good, we are calling upon our new Mayor – Danny Avula - to create a plan to address this problem for good, in 2025.

What has RISC accomplished in recent years?

- ✓ **Group Violence Intervention (GVI) in Hopewell has resulted in a 50% reduction in shootings and homicides** there.
- ✓ **935 units of affordable housing** were developed or preserved between 2015 and 2021, using funds from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund we got the City to fund.
- ✓ **802 units of affordable housing are in the pipeline to be built**, with the bond revenue that that has been awarded to affordable housing developers.
- ✓ **Almost 3,000 families** have been able to stay in their homes, as the result of a **\$6 million allocation to emergency rental assistance** we were able to get Mayor Stoney to make in the summer of 2020.
- ✓ Approximately **500 families a year** receive financial assistance and counseling, and keep an eviction off their record, through the **Eviction Diversion Program** we won in 2019.
- ✓ **Nearly 400** of low-income, job seekers have completed the **VCU Pathways Program** we won (a pipeline to healthcare careers for at risk youth), that started in June of 2018.