

## 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)*  
*Seventh Street Christian*  
*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*



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## What is RISC?

RISC – Richmonders Involved to Strengthen Our Communities – is an organization made up of congregations from throughout Richmond, Henrico, Chesterfield and Hanover. 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) Bring at least 3 people to the NEHEMIAH ACTION**
- 2) Attend the 4 RISC Assemblies of the year –**  
The Community Problems Assembly (October 28, 2025)  
The Rally (February 26, 2026)  
**The Nehemiah Action (March 24, 2026)**  
The Justice Ministry Celebration (June 1, 2026)
- 3) Consider an investment of \$200 or more in justice ministry**

## Our Vision for Justice Ministry

Micah 6:8 lays out a clear calling for God's people: to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

We believe that doing justice is a core expression of our faith traditions—one that too often goes overlooked. Our vision is to strengthen Justice Ministries (Rodef Tzedek) within each congregation so that the pursuit of justice becomes an integral part of congregational life and culture.

In 2025, 2,278 people turned out for our Nehemiah Action. Our goal is to grow that number to 3,000 in the coming years. By building the power of organized people, we believe we can transform the Richmond area and help ensure that justice is realized for all.

## What is RISC currently working on?

### AFFORDABLE & HEALTHY HOMES

Richmond's affordable housing crisis has worsened for years. In 2014, RISC secured an average of \$1 million annually for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund—an important but insufficient step.

In 2021, we won an ordinance creating a dedicated funding stream projected to reach \$17 million annually by 2033. However, the city administration has ignored this law, relying instead on bond funding that provides less money and must be repaid with interest.

At RISC's 2024 Candidates Forum, Danny Avula pledged to fund the Trust Fund as required by law. Since his election, that commitment has not been fulfilled. We intend to hold him accountable and ensure the law is followed.

Related to our Healthy Homes campaign, 400 families across Richmond live in mobile homes in severe disrepair. Mayor Avula committed to continue funding repairs at our Nehemiah Action in 2025 but reneged on that promise just two days later. We believe these repairs should be funded through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, ensuring that vulnerable families have safe, stable homes and that the city fulfills both its legal and moral obligations.

### GUN VIOLENCE

Since June 2020, we have called on city leaders to implement a proven, evidence-based gun violence intervention program—Group Violence Intervention (GVI), also known as the Gun Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS). Used in dozens of cities, these programs often cut homicides by half or more. In Baltimore, GVRS has helped drive the lowest homicide rate in 50 years.

Former Mayor Stoney refused to implement this solution, even after our ally REAL Life secured state and federal funding in 2022 and needed only city cooperation. REAL Life moved to Hopewell, where GVI began in June 2023 and has cut homicides by 50%. We now call on Mayor Avula to bring this life-saving strategy to our city.

### MENTAL HEALTH

Following a campaign of house meetings where hundreds of RISC members shared personal stories of how they and their loved ones are affected by mental health challenges, over 500 members gathered for the annual Community Problems Assembly in October 2025. There, they collectively voted to begin work on the issue of Mental Health. A committee was formed in December, and we are now conducting research into the many dimensions of this critical problem.

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## 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.
- ✓ **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.
- ✓ **Approximately 500** 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.