

The people in, and work out of, a space is more important than the building will ever be.

You've created an enchanting space filled with grace, love, and safety.



It's been just over a year since you completed renovations to Bridge City Community's location in Clifton Hills. Since then the space has hosted numerous community events resulting in unique and special experiences.

Watch the video "Old BCC Tour" to see all the beautiful changes you've made compared to <----- the picture on the left <-----
@ bridgecitycommunity.com/videos

Completed renovation and beautification of the interior space of BCC's building which has been utilized more than we even anticipated!

[DISCLAIMER: THIS WILL BE A DIFFERENT UPDATE THAN YOU'RE USED TO!]

Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you and I hope you're not alarmed by that bright red, bold, ALL CAPS introduction to the newsletter this quarter. Like it says though, this will be a different update than you're accustomed to receiving because it will focus on the space you've created at BCC. Not the lights, chairs or artwork -- not the kitchen or the deck -- not even the seasonal decorations that may already be up in your house! The reflections shared with you below are the direct result of the atmosphere you've created partnered with the Holy Spirit to demonstrate the mysteriously wonderful presence of Christ in his Church. Additionally, what you will read stems specifically from a very powerful experience you hosted in late September addressing the history of pain and trauma suffered by Latinos and Latinas in our community and in your communities.

"WE NEED A SPACE THAT IS IN THE COMMUNITY, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RESIDENTS, AND NOT DOWNTOWN LIKE EVERYWHERE ELSE THESE TRAININGS ARE USUALLY HELD."

... was the request by the organizers of the latest round of Racial Equity Institute workshops to be offered in Chattanooga. These two-day workshops are sponsored by a couple of the philanthropic foundations in town and participation is by invitation only. To date, you've participated in a few trainings but never hosted one. The opportunity to host numerous influencers and advocates from across the city was presented and it was a unique situation too good to pass up. With a little bit of self-

BCC agreed to be Latino Challenges" for the hesitation is perspective we just of the facilities of represented. And because you are

"I can feel something special here. What an enchanting space"

- Mariá I. Reinat-Pumarejo

you have a prime location downtown, not because you have state of the art technology at your fingertips, not because you have more than one restroom(!), but because you have credibility and respect. You have a reputation of being rooted in the community and always positioned to support community members. You are respected because you will do whatever it takes to protect your members and your neighbors. You were chosen because you set a precedent that people are the church -- not the building.

conscious trepidation the location for the "REI workshop. The reason that from an amenities can't compete with some the larger organizations yet, you were selected trusted -- not because



Residents, non-profit employees, foundation officers, and social workers participating in the “Latino Challenges” workshop hosted by the Racial Equity Institute.

You set mood for the next two days with a Café con Leché playlist from Spotify, the garage door wide open allowing the sounds of the park to make an appearance among the conversations of the early arrivers, and the sun to peek through under the awning of the deck. After the chairs were arranged the way the facilitators -- María and Raúl -- requested them to be, after Luís added the final paprika-red dash of Tajín to the avocado toast being served for breakfast, and after the final cups of coffee were poured we sat down in a big circle. As with most events like this the first activity is to go around the circle for introductions to who you are, what you do, why you're there, etc. When everyone had responded María paused to thank Daniela, Sarah, and Felipe for organizing everything and then said something that caught me by surprise and almost brought me to tears. “What a beautiful, intimate setting for our time together. I can feel something special here. What an enchanting space.”

WHAT AN ENCHANTING SPACE... Let those words ring in your ears, settle into your mind and onto your heart. How are you feeling? Sarah and I were brought to the brink of tears when we heard them. Not out of pride but out of gratitude and thanksgiving to God that the Holy Spirit moves like the wind breathing grace, love, and safety into the space you created and inhabit. Daniela, one of the organizers and fellow participant, shared during the training that this was the most time she'd spent in a church since she left Chile as a teenager. Felipe, a self-professed atheist, came to worship a few weeks after the training. Look at the doors God opened through your hospitality!

I sat down with Daniela and asked if she would elaborate on her experience at BCC during the training. Here's what she shared with me and gave permission to share with you... “In so many churches around town the space doesn't feel safe” -- safe to be vulnerable, safe to share, safe to suffer, safe to lament, safe to share. Daniela felt safe, though, at Bridge City because you stand in solidarity with the suffering and those with past traumatic stress no matter the cause. “In so many churches around town I don't feel welcome because I grew up as your mission trip” -- as a native Chilean woman, Daniela shared how each summer groups from the US would come to her home town and treat her as a mission project even though she was a Christian. I wish the words on this page could accurately convey the sadness in her voice as she explained how dehumanizing those experiences were for her and her neighbors. And yet, Daniela expressed how warm, welcome, hospitable, and humanizing you've made the BCC space to be. More than this her exact words to you are that Bridge City Community exudes grace, love, and safety for all people, no matter who they are, where they come from, if they believe or not. Thank you. “In so many churches around town the space feels judgmental and cold” -- Bridge City Community is filled with grace and love, not just for its members but for its neighbors too. **You've created an enchanting space filled with grace, love, and safety -- not with wifi and craft coffee but with your love that is not boastful, prideful, envious, easily angered or dishonoring but love that is patient, kind, always protecting, always trusting, always hoping, always persevering.**



YOUTH MINISTRY



COMMUNITY ORGANIZING



EDUCATION

Your Year-End Contribution will Build Capacity in 2020

What an enchanting 2019! Last year was meaningful for so many people because of the investment you made to create a hospitable, loving, and grace-filled space at Bridge City Community. As we look at the doors you opened this year we are excited about furthering our impact next year. I'm not talking about adding space or physical upgrades. I'm talking about people! You have the opportunity to build capacity in the leaders of BCC enabling them to invest more time, energy, and attention to ministry. **Here's how your year-end contribution will build capacity in 2020 and beyond:**

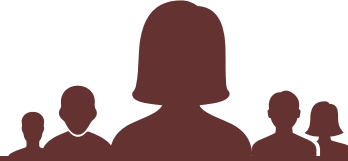
YOUTH MINISTRY Over the course of 2019 you've gathered more than 40 students on average to youth group each Wednesday. With that many youth each week we have not only maxed out the space at BCC but can't offer the holistic programming they need to address their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs. Not yet, at least! We have big plans for growing our youth ministry even bigger with the potential for lifelong impact in the lives of our young neighbors. What does this mean? You'll have the opportunity to reach more youth more days of the week. **Specifically, over the next couple of years our goal is to move from programming one day per week to five days per week!** In order to do this Mark's capacity needs to be increased. He has the skills, relationships, and ideas to push BCC youth programming far into the future but is unable to spend any more time or energy right now because of his current full time job. Our goal is to transition Mark into full-time youth ministry over the next 36 months. **Will you support Mark?**

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING Just last week you were on a conference call with The Bail Project because they want Chattanooga to become one of their national sites for criminal justice reform. How exciting to be invited to join the exclusive ranks of only 18 other sites nationwide! They recognized your work with the Hamilton County Community Bail Fund and took notice when you launched the Immigration Bond Fund late October. You're hard work over the last few years is being recognized and positioning you to organize around broader issues for deeper impact moving forward. **Can you imagine what you will achieve in the coming years organizing around economic mobility and education reform?** From the moment Sarah moved with her family to Chattanooga she jumped right in to building relationships with community members and expressing a desire to be trained in order to support and empower them. She developed key relationships that played a significant role in the launch of the Immigration Bond Fund and is eager to pursue reform in the broken education system here in Hamilton County. In order to do this Sarah's capacity has to be increased. **Will you support Sarah?**

EDUCATION Education has been part of the BCC DNA since the beginning and been successful because of your investment. Just to highlight a few examples you grew the Summer Intern Program from 2 participants to 40 participants in just three years: you piloted a program with Calvin Donaldson Elementary that taught students culinary skills while providing opportunities for them to serve their peers; you launched ARCC (Anti-Racism and Cultural Competency Training) to equip people locally and abroad with the knowledge and skills to live anti-racist lives. **You can build capacity so that BCC can offer ACT Prep and S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) opportunities non-existent for students in South CHA and diversify the ARCC portfolio of training opportunities.** Pastor Josh will be exploring new ways to disciple and educate members of BCC in the faith with specific focus on the youth. Between Mark and Sarah there is HUGE potential in the future of BCC to further intersect ministry, community organizing, and education. So what's stopping us? What's slowing us down? Capacity. Thanks to your partnership and commitment Pastor Josh is full-time. However, we cannot reach our goals on his time and energy alone. **Will you support Mark, Sarah, and Pastor Josh by building the capacity of BCC?**



YOUTH MINISTRY



COMMUNITY ORGANIZING



EDUCATION

You're Not Alone in Building Capacity in 2020

Your generous investment since our launch in 2013 has positioned Bridge City to approach significant funders in Chattanooga in order to reach our goals for 2020 and years to come. Why? THREE separate conversations with THREE different individuals all resulting in ONE message to you: **People recognize the impact and value of your ministry.** People know who you are, people are talking about you, people recognize your work, people want to fund you to continue to do that work. How exciting to see how you've positioned BCC to capitalize on greater and more diverse funding opportunities. Through your support we will be finalizing details on a multi-phase plan based on the descriptions of identified funding areas above and present them to individuals and foundations in Chattanooga. Also, we have identified upcoming grant opportunities that will serve to accelerate the plans should we be selected as recipients. More than this St. Philip Lutheran Church has agreed to allow us to use their fellowship hall to host youth group during the week because you MAXED OUT BCC's space! **Here is a snapshot of what your capacity building investment will accomplish:**

PHASE ONE - \$85,000 50 Students EVERY Wednesday being disciplined spiritually, offered educational advancement, and provided a safe place for social engagement; 5 ARCC (Anti-Racism & Cultural Competency) Trainings for the community; launch ARCC podcast; take on responsibility for Latino Challenges follow-up moving in 2020; continued organizing around criminal justice & educational reform, economic mobility.

PHASE TWO - \$160,000 100 Students THREE days of the week M-W-F being disciplined spiritually, offered educational advancement, and provided a safe place for social engagement; establish a Youth Council and launch a youth-run podcast for their peers; 10 ARCC (Anti-Racism & Cultural Competency) Trainings for the community.

PHASE THREE - \$212,000
200 Students FIVE days each week M-F being disciplined spiritually, offered S.T.E.A.M opportunities, community organizing skills, and provided a safe place for social engagement; freedom schools, elongated summer camps and potential to offer/facilitate retreats.



WILL YOU BUILD CAPACITY WITH US?



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