What’s Inside...

- Church plant in Westown takes shape
- BHITC names volunteers and partners of the year
- Arabic ministry expands in 2012
- Tutoring Bowl-a-thon: Help urban student strike out poor grades
- BHITC’s refugee mentoring program heads south to Akron
- Photo gallery recaps a season of Christmas joy
BHITC Volunteers Warm Up the City on a Winter’s Night

In January, BHITC treated its volunteers to an appreciation event at The Rainforest at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. More than 160 people attended to enjoy fellowship, food and help BHITC recognize and honor some of its most faithful and dynamic volunteers and partners.

Special thanks to partner Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for the financial support that made this event a success! The following people and organizations were recognized:

Tutoring Coordinator at Trinity Mary Forsythe was named Volunteer of the Year!

FASTFACT BIOGRAPHY

• Member at Trinity Lutheran Church
• Garfield Heights resident
• Retired public school teacher

Mary founded the Trinity Tutoring Program in 2000 with her late husband, Dave, and BHITC’s Holly Roe. Six students attend the first session. Today, the ministry serves 40+ students each week, and Mary’s leadership has guided the launch of several other BHITC programs.

• Words of wisdom from Mary: “Life is good!”

BHITC named Bay Presbyterian Church (BPC) its Partner of the Year for its long-standing support of BHITC.

FASTFACT PROFILE

• Founded in 1912, 2,000+ members today.
• BPC’s partnership with BHITC spans over a decade. More recently, BPC and its members have hosted Advent Teas and urban ministry trainings, provided leadership for BHITC’s Sisters of the Heart ministry and gifted multiple grants to BHITC for new ministry development.

• In 2011, BPC purchased the campus of Blessed Sacrament, a former Catholic parish on Fulton Road. The now-redeveloping Family Ministry Center will be a dynamic collaborative of urban ministries (including BHITC) that are focused on the spiritual renewal of the Clark/Fulton neighborhood and beyond. Learn more at http://outreachconnections.org/bsfmc.

2012 HopeBuilder Award: Andy Batten, Executive Director, Lighthouse, Inc.

FASTFACT FACT

• Launched in 1981 under the name Heaventrain, Lighthouse is a faith-based mobile outreach center that teaches character building, personal responsibilities, and family commitment to 1,300 youth and children each week in Cleveland’s Central neighborhood.

• Andy Batten has been involved in the ministry since his childhood. His father founded Lighthouse. Andy is now leading the organization through a dramatic reorganization around a vision for community-wide transformation.

• Andy’s vision focuses the future of Lighthouse on four key indicators for personal and community health in Central: Education, social behaviors, economics and spiritual formation.

• To learn more, visit www.urbanlighthouse.org.
Help us strike out poor grades and illiteracy!

2012 Tutoring Bowl-a-Thon

An event to raise support for the BHITC tutoring programs at Trinity, St. Colman, Mt. Calvary and Gethsemane

Sunday, March 11
2:30 to 5 pm
Freeway Lanes
12859 Brookpark Road, Cleveland

Reply using the Sponsorship Card inside this newsletter (or visit BHITC online) and you'll help us give 100+ urban students an afternoon of fun with their volunteer tutor. Want to get even more involved? Come bowl with us!

Sponsorships (come bowl with us for free with a sponsorship of $50 or more!)
$25 — pay the cost for a student to bowl, plus provide needed tutoring supplies
$50 — sponsor a youth-adult tutor bowling team and purchase a “literature kit” for a tutoring site.
$100 — purchase new math games and workbooks for a tutoring site.
$300 — “Perfect Score Sponsors” (300 is a perfect game at bowling!) help underwrite the purchase of a refurbished computer.

Thank You!

This newsletter was produced at a very low cost to BHITC, thanks to the generosity of Akhia Public Relations, which donates all the graphic design services, and RE May, which donates printing expenses.

The result is a newsletter publication that looks far nicer than BHITC could afford otherwise. To learn more about either of these organizations, visit www.akhia.com or www.remay.com.

Photo Gallery

BHITC’s Volunteer Appreciation Event

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WESTOWN CHURCH PLANT SEES NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES!

“Send me to the city, that I may rebuild it” –Nehemiah

What you see depends on your perspective. One person can look at a neighborhood and see increasing crime and neglect, disconnected neighbors and urban blight. Another person looks at the same neighborhood and sees God at work everywhere!

“When I’m in Westown, I see nothing but ripe fields,” says BHITC’s Rev. Jeff Johnson, who is leading Trinity Lutheran Church to plant a satellite campus in Westown by Easter 2013.

Westown is a Cleveland neighborhood, defined roughly from West Boulevard to West 130th street, and Berea Road to Puntas. It’s a diverse community of more than 23,000 residents, but very few growing congregations.

When Pat Massey, a Westown resident and member at Grace Church-Middleburg Heights, learned of Trinity’s plans, she knew she wanted to play a role. “God is at work here,” she says, noting that when she moved into her neighborhood 30-plus years ago, Westown had a stronger sense of community. “But, for years I watched my neighborhood become fallow ground. Businesses, schools and churches all closing their doors.”

Massey admits that the community was starting to look desolate. But now, she sees signs of new life, thanks, in part, to BHITC and Trinity’s efforts. “Their team of workers have stepped outside the walls of their own church. People are now out praying as they walk these streets, sharing meals and studying God’s Word together in local restaurants. It’s all bringing new life and hope.”

Trinity began its efforts in 2011 with a couple key strategies:

- **Community Leadership Engagement** – Meetings with city, public school and community development representatives in the community have put the church planting team in touch with many “people of peace” in Westown.

- **Prayer, Prayer, Prayer** – Trinity started the project in intentional prayer, enlisting more than 100 people who committed to intercession. Additional prayer teams continue to walk and/or drive Westown neighborhoods regularly.

BHITC supports the efforts in Westown with additional staffing, as well as ministry and outreach support. The organization will focus a significant portion of CitySERVE 2012 in Westown with multiple service projects that tie to the church planting effort. Moreover, BHITC’s Urban Mission Developer Chet Beetler is working alongside Johnson to develop relationships inside Westown.

“Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven to a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds, but when it is full grown, becomes a great tree,” says Beetler. “Our work in Westown follows that same principle. We’re engaging now in acts of generosity, love, teaching and creating new relationships. Our plan is not to ‘start large’ but to focus on relationships. We believe that these ‘small acts’ will eventually grow into a mighty church that will glorify Christ in Cleveland.”

How can you support this effort?

- **Send a group on a service project in Westown** – We’ve discovered many needs that the People of God can address! From cleaning up abandoned lots, to helping local residents with home repairs and so much more.

- **Attend a Westown Bible study** – They meet on Sunday mornings and Monday nights. Learn more, including when and where, by calling 216.281.4673.

- **Volunteer for outreach ministries** – Children’s and family ministries will start this summer.

- **Pray for these efforts** – Ask the Lord for His blessing, protection and direction for our leaders. Better yet, join us for an upcoming prayer walk/drive and see the neighborhood for yourself.

- **Give to the church plant** – You can now designate financial gifts to the Westown plant on BHITC’s website. Your donations will help fund outreach activities in 2012.

To learn more about any of these opportunities, call BHITC at 216.281.4673.
NEW ONLINE TOOL PROVIDES INSIGHT FOR CHURCH PLANTERS

Is leading or serving on the core team of a new church plant something God has been placing on your heart? If so, further discovery and encouragement are just a mouse click away.

BHITC’s website (www.buildinghopeinthecity.org) now features a link to an assessment tool for potential church planters, which can help further clarify the skills, experiences and spiritual maturity needed to lead a church plant.

Taking the first assessment is free and open to anyone, says Rev. Jeff Johnson, who is leading a BHITC-effort to see multiple new churches started in the coming years. “BHITC exists to support and resource leaders who are going to change our city neighborhoods from the inside out,” he says. “The online assessment is great starting point for a conversation about what God may be speaking into your life as a leader.”

The BHITC link also includes access to a second, more in-depth assessment tool that costs a planter $89 to complete. For planters working directly with BHITC, that fee can be reduced or waived. To learn more, call Rev. Jeff Johnson at 216.281.4673. Better yet, take BHITC’s free online assessment, and he’ll call you!

NADIA’S NEST!

BHITC’s Arabic Ministry sets up a welcoming “home away from home” for local families.

BHITC’s Nadia Abuamsha knows what it feels like to live in a new city and culture and have few connections outside of your own immediate family.

“It can be a very lonely place for these women,” says Nadia, “especially if their family system or culture is attempting to keep them away from other people. You can become very distrustful, fearful and depressed and not even realize it.”

That’s why much of Nadia’s ministry since she’s arrived at BHITC in 2007 has been about first addressing the relational needs of Arabic-speaking women. Her Ask-A-Nurse sessions give women culturally-sensitive health information. English classes and tutoring for the U.S. citizenship test prepare women for greater independence. Transportation and interpretation assistance help complete the chores of daily life with a little less stress.

“I want these women to know they are not alone, and that God loves them,” Nadia says. “My faith is what has helped me survive my difficult times. And I know the Lord wants to do the same for everyone.”

Nadia’s efforts begin a new chapter in 2012, with the launch of a new weekly site-specific ministry for Arabic-speaking women and their children at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church in Cleveland. The Thursday night ministry will be a combination of tutoring/mentoring for school-aged Arabic students, while mothers receive assistance, care and fellowship.

The new family-oriented sessions grew out of Nadia’s Sisters of the Heart ministry, which gathers small groups of American and Middle Eastern women regularly throughout the year for fellowship, prayer and mutual learning about other cultures. It’s a relational-based support system, for women and by women.

Want to know more or get involved with Nadia and her crew? Call Amy Mitchell at 216.281.4673 to learn more about opportunities to minister to school-aged children and women.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Make a date with urban ministry!

To RSVP for any of these or get more information, call BHITC at 216.281.4673.

February 25
BHITC Volunteer “Bootcamp Training Day”
Trinity Lutheran Church

Sign up for one or more of these training sessions:

Refugee Mentor Training
9am to 1 pm

Strategies for Tutoring Children
10 am to Noon

How to Teach ESL
1 to 3:30 pm

Cross-Cultural Communication Training
1 to 3:30 pm

March 13 and April 12
New Volunteer Orientation Sessions
5:30 to 6:30 pm
Trinity Lutheran Church / BHITC

March 17
Cross-Cultural Women’s Morning Tea
10 am to 1 pm

Calvary Chapel
6770 Brookpark Road, Cleveland, 44129

“Understand Poverty” Workshops with Building Hope in the City

March 24 @ John Knox Presbyterian Church, North Olmsted

March 31 @ Grace Church -CMA, Middleburg Heights

9 am to 2:30 pm
$10 registration fee

April 28
BHITC Christian Leadership and Ministry Networking Event
9 am to 1 pm
Indiana Wesleyan University - Conference Center
4100 Rockside Road, Independence

$20 registration fee, which includes lunch

May 5
CitySERVE 2012
Starts at Lutheran High School West
8 am to 4 pm

June 15
BHITC Golf Outing and Steak Roast
12 noon shot gun start
Bob O’Links Golf Course, Avon

$75 per person
JOY TO THE WORLD!

Christmas season brought people together in the city for laughter, food and more!

The celebration of Christ’s birth was cause for much jubilation in the city this year. December was a month packed with ministry and gatherings. Check out these pictures for a recap!

Women’s Cross-Cultural Advent Tea

More than XXXX women of diverse cultures, languages and faiths gathered at Grace Church-Middleburg Heights for BHITC’s annual Advent Tea. New friendships were formed. Women explained what Advent and Christmas meant to them personally. And there was a whole lot of eating and dancing!

Did you miss this Tea in December? If so, you’ve got another chance to get in on the food and laughter! BHITC is planning a follow-up cross-cultural women’s event for March 17! Contact Luanne Bole-Becker at luanne@buildinghopeinthecity.org to learn more.

African Refugee Birthday Party Celebration

On January 1, BHITC threw one of the city’s biggest birthday parties for 100+ refugees from various African nations, including one family from Congo who had just been resettled in Cleveland for Christmas. The “mass birthday” was appropriate because many of the refugees present at the event happen to all have the same birthday: January 1. It’s not a coincidence. Here’s why: If an incoming refugee to our country can’t document their date of birth upon arrival, the U.S. Government automatically assigns them the date of January 1. What better reason for a party?!!

Food and recipes from many cultures and traditions brought together new friends.

Who’s ready to dance? A Lebanese performing troupe led the way!

BHITC’s Luanne Bole-Becker explains the meaning of Advent and Christmas.

BHITC’s Eileen Wilson (pictured far right) with a group of new Clevelanders.

Happy birthday to you, and you, and you, and you, etc!

BUILDING HOPE’S WISH LIST

If you can donate toward any of these needed ministry items, contact Brian Upton at brian@buildinghopeinthecity.org.

- Two refurbished computers
  Need for office and ministry administration ($400 for computer, $200 for software).

- Campus Signage
  People repeatedly tell us it’s hard to locate Building Hope’s offices on Trinity’s campus. A couple outdoor vinyl signs would be helpful ($200 each).

- Tutoring snacks and juice boxes
  We go through a lot of these ($100 would buy snacks for a month for one tutoring site).

- Summer Outreach in Westown
  Our efforts in supporting Trinity to start a new worshiping community in Westown heat up this summer with a summer reading camp for children and other activities. You can give any amount toward the approximate $2,500 we will invest.

- Arabic language Bibles
  Nadia Abuamsha gives these away regularly to those who are interested. $200 would buy a case of them.

- Office Furniture
  BHITC is seeking donations of used office furniture, including desks, workstations, chairs, bookshelves and filing cabinets.
CHEERS TO THRIVENT AND ITS MEMBERS!

A Fortune 500 Company gives away money for free?! Now, there’s a headline you don’t see every day. But, it is true, nonetheless! Thrivent Financial — the Fortune 500’s only nonprofit organization — gives away more than $100 million annually, some of which comes to BHITC through Thrivent Choice. Members of the Thrivent have a “bank” of free Thrivent Choice dollars that they can assign to nonprofit organizations they personally care about. In 2011, BHITC received nearly $12,000 in Thrivent Choice dollars.

Are you a member of Thrivent? If so, you likely have Thrivent Choice dollars you can assign to BHITC at no cost to you. Call 1.800.THRIVENT to assign your gift today! Learn more at www.thrivent.com.

BHITC IS AKRON-BOUND!

Refugee Resettlement in Summit County Enhanced by Refugee Mentors in 2012

Starting in 2012, BHITC is partnering with the International Institute of Akron (IIA) in a year-long pilot project to enhance the resettlement process for refugees in urban Akron.

The project will create a Refugee Mentoring Program in Akron that’s managed by BHITC for newly arriving families, who are being resettled by IIA, which last year managed more than 400 refugee arrivals in Summit County.

“We’re excited to be partnering with Building Hope in the City,” says IIA Executive Director Debbie-May Johnson, who notes that that project was made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Akron Community Foundation. “Building Hope in the City’s expertise and experience with the mentorship program will bring together compassionate volunteers with the refugee community in Akron. Through these efforts, those refugees who are most at risk will receive one-on-one assistance from a BHITC volunteer to be able to thrive in their new home.”

Refugee Mentors work in small volunteer teams with one recently resettled family for up to six months. Typically, mentors visit their families weekly, helping them learn more about American culture and the city of Akron and its services. For example, mentoring often includes showing a refugee family how and where to shop, going through the mail, visiting the bank, post office, library or a public park. It’s a great volunteer assignment for people who enjoy cross-cultural experiences.

Are you an Akron-area resident interested in learning more about this project? If, consider attending one of these orientation sessions:

BHITC Refugee Mentor Orientation Sessions in Akron

Saturday, March 10 or Saturday, May 5
9 am - 1 pm
International Institute of Akron
207 East Tallmadge Avenue, Akron

RSVP for either of these sessions by calling Lesa Hess at 216.281.4673.

TUTORING MINISTRIES EXPAND WITH YOUR HELP

For more than nine years, BHITC has partnered with local congregations to launch tutoring programs as a means of meeting the educational needs in local communities and providing churches with an effective outreach tool. As a result, more than 120 at-risk youth are currently enrolled in one of five tutoring sites in Cleveland and Akron.

In 2012, BHITC is enhancing this ministry in two ways.

Adult Literacy / GED Preparation at Trinity

This winter, BHITC is partnering with Trinity to expand its successful children’s tutoring ministry to meet the needs of adult learners. The Thursday night ministry seeks volunteer tutors who are willing to partner with an adult for one-on-one sessions. Some learners are in need of improving basic literacy skills; others are preparing to take the test for their high school equivalency (GED) degree.

Math Club at St. Colman

A growing number of students are struggling with math skills. And, some tutors aren’t comfortable with tutoring advanced math. To address this need and provide a stimulating environment for students who enjoy mathematics, the BHITC tutoring program at St. Colman will open a Tuesday evening “Math Club” this spring. Volunteers who enjoy math and want to work with 6th to 12th grade students are needed.

To learn more about either of these new urban education ministries, contact BHITC’s AmeriCorps Member Stephanie Sorg at 216.281.4673 or stephanie@buildinghopeinthecity.org.
Go back to school with Building Hope!

Wine school, that is!

A planned giving education event that will uncork all sorts of possibilities!

Sunday, March 18, 2012 | 3:00 to 5:30 pm
Hyde Park Restaurant, 26300 Chagrin Blvd., Beachwood

Join us for an afternoon that includes:

• Discussion and wine tasting lessons with a professional sommelier from The Cleveland Wine School.

• Great food (paired with great wines!) from Hyde Park Restaurant.

• An engaging and timely presentation from Thrivent on the status of our nation’s economic turnaround and the benefits to you and your family in planned charitable giving.

• Updates on urban mission and ministry from Building Hope in the City.

RSVP to Lesa Hess at 216.281.4673 no later than March 12.

ONE GIFT TODAY. MANY BLESSINGS FOR YEARS TO COME.

Giving to the BHITC’s Endowment Fund is a gift that keeps on giving. When placed in Endowment, your gift earns annual interest, which is fruit and fuel for mission. In other words, your one-time gift will give to the Lord’s work for years and years to come!

If your annual gift totals: | You can perpetuate that gift with an Endowment gift of:
---|---
$100 | $2,000
$200 | $4,000
$300 | $6,000
$500 | $10,000
$1,000 | $20,000
$2,000 | $40,000
$5,000 | $100,000

To learn more about giving to BHITC’s Endowment, directly or as part of your estate plan, contact Brian Upton at 216.281.4673.

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---|---
$100 | $2,000
$200 | $4,000
$300 | $6,000
$500 | $10,000
$1,000 | $20,000
$2,000 | $40,000
$5,000 | $100,000

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Building Hope in the City
2031 West 30th Street
Cleveland, OH 44113
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED