

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church  
**Overseers Update to the Congregation**  
January 27, 2013

1. The Overseers met on Tuesday, January 15, 2013. The Chair announced the members of the 2013 Overseers Executive Committee. The Chair serves the second year of a three-year elected term. The Overseers have selected Matt Higgins, Sr., as assistant chair, Beth Ebersole, as treasurer and Nancy B. Yoder secretary.
2. **Financial Report:** Treasurer Beth Ebersole presented the December 31, 2012 financial report and year-end reports. Beth noted that the Charis Center loan was paid in full.
3. **Pastoral Report: Pastor Roger Shenk**  
As I said in December's report, I look forward to 2013 with a fresh enthusiasm for doing whatever we can to *bring people into friendship with Jesus and his Church!* We need to do this by loving them the way Jesus would love them.
  - We need to go out of our way to *include* them into our inner circle of friends.
  - We need to do everything we can to *inspire* them with the hope of the Gospel.
  - We need to work hard to *involve* them in doing something meaningful with their lives.

To do this is to fulfill our mission of “befriending all with the love of Christ through community, worship and service.” This is a good and vital mission. But it is not just Bahia Vista’s mission. It is our personalization of Christ’s Great Commission to his whole Church! And it is not just “the Church’s” mission, it is a personal challenge that I hope each of us responds to this year: *Each one befriend one.*

This mission leads people to faith, and to maturity in their faith. It leads people to love, and to maturity in their love. It gives people what they need most: friendship with Jesus and his Church. That sounds simple but it is the best way to rescue people (and our society in general) from destructive behaviors that so often compensate for the pain of loneliness, emptiness and insignificance—not to mention the eternal consequences of those sins. There is no more important work we can do than bring people into friendship with Jesus and his Church by including them, inspiring them, and involving them in the things of Christ. It is a thorough work of caring community, Christ-centered worship and compassionate service.

As a congregation, I believe we love and care for people best when we keep our efforts and programs aligned under this mission. So, as pastoral staff, we will be evaluating every decision we make, and every activity we plan, by the standard of our mission:

- Is this our best effort at befriending people who are *not yet friends of Jesus and his Church?*
- Is this our best effort at helping people feel *included, inspired* and *involved* here at Bahia Vista?

If we can learn to do this with great solidarity and excellence, and with prayerful obedience to the Holy Spirit’s leading, not only will we fill our congregation with great love and friendships, we will transform our world—even while it is still called Today (Hebrews 3:13)

This year, let's renew our efforts at creating environments and activities that are "befriending" to people of all ages. Let's work hard to create attractive, engaging and moving experiences for young and old alike, according to their respective cultural norms, where people can feel *included*, be *inspired* and get *involved*.

We are continuing to focus on Community Classes as a midweek connection that helps people feel included. We have recently announced the starting of "The Post," a special emphasis for post-high school people that will give them connection points. These will be intentionally open groups, one for those in the pre-family stages of life, and the other for young parents with young children.

In January we invited young adults to provide creative input and direction to the *Family Service*. It has been exciting to see their creativity and engagement at this level. It appears that we are again offering a very engaging contemporary service that people of all ages are enjoying. Our attendance has grown by about a hundred so far this winter season.

The *Traditions Service* continues to provide an engaging traditional/blended service, with several hundred winter residents choosing to attend. We will continue to monitor the trends as people arrive from the north, and are planning to add a third service only if necessary.

A recent service day was a huge success in which people of all age groups worked together to help a lady in our congregation who has difficulty keeping up with her yard maintenance.

Family Promise is being facilitated by people with new roles and responsibilities. It's exciting to see people getting involved in this wonderful ministry.

4. **Finance Committee:** The BVMC Overseer's Policy and Procedure recommends that the Overseers appoint a standing Finance Committee to facilitate the Overseer's responsibilities relating to fiscal and financial matters. The committee shall consist of the Treasurer, one additional Overseer, and three members of the congregations. Non-overseer persons shall serve three-year staggered terms. The Treasurer shall serve as chair, and a recording secretary shall be selected from the members of the committee.
5. **Master Planning Committee (MPC):** Nancy I. Yoder gave the MPC update. Three-sub committees have been formed. The Construction Cost Committee is expecting to receive estimates for the cost of each phase and the total project by mid-February. The Assessing Potential Contributions Committee has met regarding potential contributions, and the Case Statement is being written.

Nancy I. Yoder, Chair  
Nancy B. Yoder, Secretary

