

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church
Overseers Update to the Congregation
June 16, 2013

1. The Overseers met on Tuesday, June 11, 2013.
2. Pastoral Report: Pastor Roger Shenk

Two days ago I performed the marriage ceremony of one of our young couples who has been attending our congregation for a couple years. I was wonderfully surprised that, even while their reception was still going on, they told me that now they're ready to become members at Bahia Vista. What a joy that was!

But what a contrast of emotions it was for me that, just the morning before, I sat here in my office with the family of David Ray Miller, planning his memorial service. What a surprise his passing was. And what sorrow it is to say goodbye to a friend who has served in so many vital leadership roles at Bahia Vista.

Recently I prayed with someone to be delivered from a bondage they have been living with for years. By the time I was done praying, the person felt a clear release, like they could breathe again. The headache they had lived with was even gone. God is good, loving and powerful.

Such things remind me that "church" is not essentially about programs, facilities, policies, affiliations, associations, teaching styles, learning styles, music styles, youth groups, small groups, seniors groups, men's or women's groups, activities for the kids, or any of the things most people would look at to see "what kind of church" we are. As good as it is to apply ourselves to wisdom in those, I am still convinced that being church together is about worshiping the all-powerful and sovereign God, by following Jesus, and by loving each other deeply in the power of the Holy Spirit.

[We] are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that [we] may declare the praises of him who called [us] out of darkness into his wonderful light...

The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that [we] may pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of [us] should use whatever gift [we] have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, [we] should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, [we] should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 2:9; 4:7-11)

On June 23rd we have a congregational meeting to talk about the vision for Bahia Vista. It's also a time for me to listen: What has God given us faith for? What has he called us to? The decisions we make these days are more than just an experiment in wisdom or common sense; they are the declaration of our faith for tomorrow. Let's continue to pray Acts 4:29-30.

In faith, Pastor Roger

COMMUNITY

- The Sidewalk Prophets/Jason Castro concert was a success. We had a team of about thirty volunteers who worked from six to eighteen hours that day. The band and their crew were very appreciative of the hospitality and extra care shown to them.

- We continue to give our guests gift bags, and we follow up with them by email or other preferred contact on Mondays.
- We are planning the first of what we hope to be a monthly Newcomers' Get-Together.

WORSHIP

- Overall May attendance was down 14% from the same period in 2012. The Traditions service was down 38% from last year. The Family (contemporary) service was up 17% over the Innovations service last year.
- Last week we redecorated the sanctuary to condense the smaller crowds since the "habit" seats were feeling a bit spread out. This also increases our friendliness to new people as they enter.
- Larry is currently in Kenya and is scheduled to return next week.

SERVICE

- Another family was added to the Family Promise program so we will now be hosting three families next week, June 16-23.
- Dennis will be returning this week from a three-week absence.

CHILDREN

- A family pool party is scheduled for BV Kids and their parents on June 22, from 6:00-8:30 pm.
- VBS is scheduled for July 22 through 26.

YOUTH

- The youth have reserved space for 25 of our students to attend the Consecrate Conference this week, June 13-15.
- The youth will leave July 1, 2013 for the Mennonite Church USA convention in Phoenix. They will be accompanied by: Zack and Kristin Morris, Shirley Good, Kayla Miller, and Roger and Wendy Shenk.

ADMINISTRATION

- With our newly completed office staff we have been updating Facility-Use contracts and other records.
3. Gene Yoder presented a Mennonite Church USA convention update. A total of 16 persons are planning to attend the convention, including: nine youth, Zack and Kristin Morris, Kayla Miller, Shirley Good, Roger, Wendy and Rebecca Shenk. The Bahia Vista delegates are Kayla Miller, Shirley Good and Pastor Roger Shenk.
 4. The updated Sabbatical Leave Policy was approved. It is planned that Larry Diener will take his sabbatical in 2014 and Pastor Roger will take his sabbatical the following year, in 2015.
 5. Wendy Donovan and Rachel Hershberger were appointed to serve as BVMC representatives to the Sarasota Christian School Corporate Board, September 1, 2013- September 1, 2016.
 6. Kayla Miller presented a prayer and a painting by Ashley Cheshire of her vision for the Consecrate Conference to be held June 13-15, 2013 at the Church of the Rock. The painting will be placed in the prayer room at the Consecrate Conference and then returned to BVMC.

Nancy I. Yoder, Chair

Nancy B. Yoder, Secretary

