

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church
Overseers Update to the Congregation
November 24, 2013

1. The Overseers met on Tuesday, November 19, 2013.
2. The proposed 2014 Ministry Goals (budget) presented by Beth Ebersole and Gene Yoder were discussed and approved for presentation at the Annual Members Meeting on December 8, 2013.
3. Action was taken for the Overseers to appoint a task force to review the SCS portion of the Christian Education Support Program for future planning. The current Christian Education Support Program Policy will remain in affect for the 2014-15 school year.
4. Action was taken to present the proposed Master Plan to the congregation for approval at the December 8, 2013 Annual Members Meeting.
5. Jerome Yoder, Chair of the Pastoral Review Committee, reported on a positive meeting with Pastor Roger regarding his annual review.
6. Pastoral Report: Pastor Roger Shenk

God is honoring his Word among us. The gospel is still transforming lives. I hear almost weekly from people telling me how meaningful this ministry is to them. Some people who have struggled for years are finally experiencing spiritual breakthroughs and finding wisdom for life through faith in Jesus. Likewise many of our mature believers frequently tell me how they are being stimulated to greater understanding and challenged to greater faithfulness. And as our winter residents return, they bring such an appreciation for the ministry they experience here. It is an honor to be serving this church and Sarasota at this time.

But the work is hard--and Satan loves to make it harder. He loves to stir up chaos, hardship, lies, gossip, and harsh criticisms. He loves to get longtime friends to bite at each other. He loves to break up marriages. He loves to lead people back into addiction. But Jesus says not to settle for that.

The work may be hard, but it is worth it. Let's continue to press forward in the Spirit, not shrinking back from sacrifice, or giving way to fear. We have many neighbors who don't know the love of Jesus yet. Some of them were raised specifically to disbelieve. Others went to church but never understood, and they came to believe something less than the life-transforming gospel of Jesus Christ. People all around us need Jesus, and this needs to move us to pray for them, to reach out and befriend them with the love Jesus shows us.

On November 10th I told everyone what God had been telling me. He said: "Love me in front of them and I will draw them to me. Love them in front of me and I will draw myself to them." We took up an offering that day--the second Generosity Sunday of the year--and we brought in \$50,014!

I'm so thankful that God would lead us to support the ministries of Bahia Vista so generously. Hallelujah! And my ongoing prayer is that we would love just as generously in everything we do! I believe we're up for it, and called to it. Keep praying Acts 4:29-30 with me. I believe it's working. Amen.

COMMUNITY

- 242 Night is going well with meals and interactions of multigenerational group and classes.
- We held "GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays" for the community, with 24 persons attending in two sessions.
- We met with a group of people to get feedback on a pilot program we're calling "Section Connectors" designed to be more intentional and coordinated in our efforts at befriending people who come to Bahia Vista as a guest. We will be having additional meetings as well.

WORSHIP

- We have invited the churches that rent space from us to join us for a Thanksgiving Eve Service on Wednesday, November 27. The service will be followed by a time of fellowship with finger foods.
- The Christian Fine Arts Series will present their first event of the season on Sunday, November 24. Kirk and Patti Lytle will tell the story of the early settlers in America as seen through the eyes of William and Mary Brewster.
- OneConcert is scheduled for Sunday, December 1.
- We are working hard on special Advent and Christmas events. In addition to our regular Sunday morning services, we have the "Festival of Lessons and Carols" on December 15, "A Classic Christmas Pageant" (see Children's) on December 20, Andrew Lapp's Christmas Concert on December 22, and a Christmas Eve Service on December 24. We also plan to carol for our home-bound members, and at Pine Ridge Mobile Home Park.
- We continue to work at finding meaningful ways to involve people utilizing the gifts and passions they bring.

SERVICE

- We're hosting Family Promise Thanksgiving week.
- We're building a wheelchair ramp for a resident who is scheduled to be discharged soon from the hospital.
- We will be helping foster children from the local Angel tree program.
- We are planning to provide Christmas meals for those who are in need.
- Someone from the community asked one of our members if they knew of anyone who needed help over Thanksgiving. We were able to coordinate them giving a meal to a grandmother raising eight children whom we helped separately through our Change for a Dollar program. The grandmother is overwhelmed with this kindness being shown her.
- "Sarasota Community Builders" (separate 501(c)3) has made several offers on properties in the last month to remodel. Two are pending. Proceeds are designated for Bahia Vista.

CHILDREN

- We are holding a special children's Christmas program. "A Classic Christmas Pageant" will be open to the community and held December 20. A key part of it is to send the parents of children out on a Christmas date while we create the show in just a few hours of practice!
- We are continuing to transform the children's (north) courtyard.
- We continue to have a need for more teachers and helpers to show the children what the love of Jesus is like.

YOUTH

- We continue to work at showing middle schoolers and high schoolers the value of a relationship with Jesus, and what a relationship with his church can do to benefit that.
- We had our annual Fall Festival on October 30; camping trip November 8-10.
- We will have our annual Thanksgiving dinner this Wednesday the 20th.

ADMINISTRATION

- The facility usage is very busy now through the holidays.
- We are working on an Emergency Response plan for Evacuation in the Event of Disaster, or Lock Down in the Event of Violence. We are gleaning information from Sarasota Christian School and Sunnyside Village to help us in our planning.
- On October 25-26, Gene Yoder, Jeff Shank and myself (Roger) attended Everence's seminar: "Creating Congregational Cultures of Generosity." It was very well done and helpful.
- We are planning a BVMC Fundraiser event, inviting the whole church to get involved, with things like a yard sale, bake sale, youth car wash, pancake and sausage breakfast, coffee donuts, lunch (hamburger, hotdogs, chips, soda) etc.
- On November 17th we held our second Imagining the Future meeting with 111 people present. There was good enthusiasm about the work of the Master Planning Committee.

Nancy I. Yoder, Chair

Nancy B. Yoder, Secretary