

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church  
**Annual Members Meeting Minutes**  
December 8, 2013

1. Chair Nancy I. Yoder called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM with 86 persons in attendance. Dawn Graber shared a meditation on Godly wisdom and led in prayer.
2. Nancy B. Yoder, Secretary to the Overseers, reviewed highlights from the December 9, 2012 BVMC Annual Members Meeting. The minutes were accepted as presented. (M/S/C Ivan Kauffman, Matt Higgins, Sr.)
3. Pastor Roger Shenk shared the Annual Pastoral Report for 2013. (See Attachment A.)
4. Church Administrator Gene Yoder presented the Financial Report for January through November 2013 and will provide a full report at the end of the year. The total budget for the current year is \$738,533 with receipts to date of \$641,640. He noted that expenses exceed receipts at this time by about \$1,600, and there are still several major expenditures coming in December.
5. In preparation for the 2013 Annual Members Meeting, the Chair reported that the Overseers reviewed and approved the proposed 2014 Ministry Goals that were presented to the congregation on December 1, 2013 for review. In addition, the Overseers requested nominations for Overseer replacements from the congregation on October 27, 2013 and approved the four names presented on the Notification Letter of December 1, 2013.
6. The Secretary reviewed highlights of the November 17, 2013 Congregational Meeting. The minutes were accepted as presented. (M/S/C Gene Yoder, Rick Jenckes)
7. The Chair reported that the Master Plan presented by the Master Planning Committee (MPC) at the November 17, 2013 Congregational Meeting was well received by those in attendance.

MOTION: The Overseers of BVMC are presenting the proposed Master Plan, as presented to the congregation on November 17, 2013, to the congregation for approval to move forward. (M/S/C Nancy I. Yoder, Ben Sprunger)

After discussion the motion was approved with the vote taken by a show of hands. There was one dissenting vote.

There will be opportunity in the future for the congregation to speak into the Master Plan as it moves forward.

The Overseers have given the MPC approval to secure the necessary documents and drawings for submission of the Master Plan to Sarasota Count Government for approval, which was contingent on congregational approval.

The Overseers also approved, contingent on congregational approval, that the MPC consider appropriate steps for implementation of the Master Plan.

8. Nancy I. Yoder introduced the current Overseers and thanked them for their many hours of work on behalf of the church. She expressed appreciation to outgoing Overseers Beth Ebersole and Jerome Yoder for their service.

The Chair reviewed the purpose and function of the Overseers and the Board Chair as stated in the BVMC Bylaws.

Overseer Wendy Donovan presented the ballot of four candidates, Mitch Helmuth, Dave Kniss, Wes Oswald and Nori Yoder, for the election of two Overseers to serve a three-year term.

Wendy Donovan, Jerome Yoder, Doug Graber and Matt Higgins, Sr. tabulated the online, absentee and paper ballots submitted by BVMC members and associate members for this purpose.

After the tabulation of the ballots, Wendy Donovan reported that Mitch Helmuth and Wes Oswald were elected to serve as Overseers with terms ending in 2016.

9. Church Administrator Gene Yoder presented the proposed 2014 Ministry Goals showing a total budget of \$746,672, which will increase 1.1% over the past year. The following motion was made after discussion of the Ministry Goals.

MOTION: That the Ministry Goals for 2014 be adopted. (M/S/C Gene Yoder, Dennis Yoder)  
Following discussion, the motion was approved by a show of hands.

10. Pastor Roger Shenk led in a closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 PM. (M/S/C Nancy I. Yoder, Doug Graber)

Nancy B. Yoder  
Secretary

## ANNUAL PASTORAL REPORT for 2013

December 8, 2013

What a privilege it is to serve this church. Thank you for the trust you've given me as pastor for this time and purpose.

In last year's report I wrote that I was looking forward to 2013 with a fresh enthusiasm and conviction for doing whatever we can to bring people into friendship with Jesus and his Church. I said that our pursuit of that mission would be seen "in how we take care of people, in how we worship, and in how we show compassion." I said that we would work hard "to line up every effort, every program, and every ministry under that mission." We did work hard this year--in some ways more effectively than others--yet God caused his Word to be fruitful among us.

For this year's report I'll highlight some successes and disappointments for this year, followed by some of the hopes I have for next.

### Successes of 2013

1. **242 Night was birthed in prayer and passion** for bringing the church together around the same devotion the church demonstrated in Acts 2:42. While it sits under the guidance of "community," it also contains wonderful expressions of worship and service, with bible studies and the serving of so many people each week!
2. **Children's Ministry has a courtyard!** We were able to transform the north courtyard from something that mostly got used for Easter sunrise service (and foot traffic) to an energetic and secure play area to welcome children and their families!
3. **Our office entered the electronic age.** We use an online calendar for all scheduling, including facilities and rentals, with information easily accessed from anywhere via the Internet. We also added an e-newsletter that goes out to several hundred people weekly, and helps us to promote special events. We updated our website. We also created a digital record of historical data back to 1983 so that we could see trends more clearly. We also diversified and cross-trained our office staff so things are covered better when someone is absent.
4. **We hosted a contemporary Christian concert** and filled up the sanctuary. The bands were wowed by how our people took care of them. It was a proud moment.
5. **We set eight attendance records,** Sunday for Sunday during the past four years. Peak attendance was on February 24th with 1,310 people--the most in fourteen years.
6. **We added ten new members** and baptized two.
7. **The Family Service came into its own this year** representing 60% of our overall attendance for most of the year. Even during the winter it represented 40%. People from this service are solidly taking positions of leadership and volunteering for other areas of ministry.
8. **Our young adults group, "The Post,"** has been meeting weekly since spring.
9. **This fall we created special Middle School programming** with its own dedicated leaders so that we can provide age-appropriate teaching and activities for the whole youth group.
10. **This year I focused my preaching on the fruit of the Spirit.** In my prayers toward the end of last year God led me to take the whole year to preach through what the fruit of the Spirit would look like if lived out in life. I found it personally meaningful and was glad it was well received.

## Disappointments of 2013

1. **The Mennonite Church USA Biennial Convention was unsettling.** I hoped that it would be good to take our youth to our denomination's convention, but I was embarrassed by it. It's as if the hope of social reform through political activism is our new gospel—while evangelism, conviction about holiness, the need for repentance, spiritual transformation, and faith in Jesus Christ alone, have all become a "shame" that we don't talk about. I believe the current direction of MCUSA represents a decisive shift from "moderate" to "progressive," and is something we need to be prayerfully discerning as a congregation. I was proud of our youth for their undisturbed faith.
2. **I'm sad about what happened at Charis Center this year.** There are different opinions about what has happened or will happen, but what is clear from my perspective is that Bahia Vista no longer has any representation on their board. In light of this it seems best to discontinue the free rent arrangement with them, so we gave them three months notice to find new office space. They're expected to vacate the premises by December 31st. I'm also disappointed that rumors were sown among us in an attempt to discredit the overseers' actions. Your overseers have worked diligently and prayerfully.
3. **People left this year.** There were a few people who disagreed so consistently with the direction of Bahia Vista that they chose to leave. I hear that they are in fellowship elsewhere, and I pray that they have found peace there. Others left this year because they fell away from faith. I continue to pray for them and keep the door open to them. Finally, fifteen left this year to go to their heavenly reward. While we celebrate their gain, we miss their company. It seems unreal that over sixty people have died since I came to Bahia Vista four years ago. This is the reality when half of us are seniors. But as I say to my older friends, I understand aging is difficult, but show us younger men and women how it's done. Scripture reminds us that it's good to think about death while we are still alive, so we soberly count this among our blessings from God.

## Hopes for 2014

1. **I hope to solve some of our space issues.** We would like to move the church offices to the space being vacated by Charis. Then we could repurpose the current office space as a choir room and classroom for the groups currently using Room 11. Then we can dedicate Room 11 as the main meeting area for our children, creating a true children's wing in the back of the church.
2. **I hope to explore how we might create some network relationships** with other congregations who are struggling to thrive, or are looking to join us in our mission.
3. **I hope to continue pursuing the simple things of befriending people in community, worship and service.** It's easy to do lots of things. It's hard to do the best things. We need to avoid "mission-creep" and only do those things which are on mission.
4. **I hope to do what Jesus called "greater things than these."** My prayer and goal for 2014 is that God would pour out his Spirit on us and on Sarasota with such love and power that many, many, many people are brought into friendship with Jesus and his Church.

Amen,

Roger Shenk, Pastor