

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church  
**Overseers Update to the Congregation**  
January 19, 2014

1. The Overseers met on Tuesday, January 14, 2014.
2. Wes Oswald will serve as the Overseer representative to the Finance Committee.
3. Master Planning Committee Co-Chair Mike Christner reported that Gene Yoder is waiting to meet with planner Bo Medred to determine next steps in securing the necessary approvals from Sarasota County. This process is expected to take several months.
4. Charis Center was given an extension to vacate the premises by February 28, 2014. In the event Charis Center fails to vacate the Property by that date, BVMC sees no other option but to take legal action to remove Charis Center from the Property.
5. Pastoral Report: Pastor Roger Shenk

As we begin 2014 the tension surrounding Larry's departure is heavy on my mind. Not only is it our opportunity to decide again how we navigate change, but whether we do.

Change is difficult for anyone. When I candidated for this position, I talked with the church about its desire for change. I asked whether the church really wanted change. I acknowledged that most people are in favor of change until it affects "me." I remember your faces looking back at me, smiling and nodding in affirmation. We all knew it would be hard.

It's one thing to accept the "changes" of adding this and tweaking that. It's much more difficult to accept the "Change" of becoming a congregation we have not been before. In 2009 I fell in love with my new church family of "two-hundred seniors" that voted for "Change," to become what we call a "multigenerational, outreach-oriented church." That desire is central both to my call to Bahia Vista, as well as my call from God. It is my passion, and the challenge I still accept from him, through you.

I believe with all my heart that everyone needs to be in friendship with Jesus and his Church! As long as we have breath, we need to minister the gospel to our friends and neighbors of all ages, creating whatever environments and programs we can to effectively befriend them. We need to resolve this year that we will do whatever we need to in order to fulfill that mission. And I believe we are eager to do just that, so I press on. Some decisions are easy; some decisions are hard. Some decisions need many voices to speak into it; others are best discerned by those in the trenches. But for all of us, the decision to lay down our lives of the gospel is both the easiest decision to make, and the hardest to follow through on. We do this best when we do it together. And as one of you reminded me a couple days ago, this is the Lord's church, not ours. God always takes care of his church.

Keep praying Acts 4:29-30 with me. I still believe it is working. And I still believe God wants to do something through Bahia Vista that Sarasota has not yet seen. Amen.

#### **COMMUNITY**

--We have started with fourteen days of prayer, led by different members of the pastoral team. Average attendance has been around ten people a night. Many others are unable to attend, but participate regularly from home.

--We resume 242 Night this week, with a number of new classes.

--Our Sunday morning Winter Residents class is now meeting, with over two hundred in attendance.

### **WORSHIP**

--Our friends from the north are returning and populating both services. Traditions is running roughly 60% of our total attendance, and the Family service is running 40%. This is the inverse of our summer tendons, and very similar to what we experienced last winter.

--In the coming weeks I will be working with the Worship Committee about how to plan Traditions after Larry leaves. My goal is to keep Traditions, and to fill the song leading responsibilities with volunteers where possible.

--Some have suggested that Rodney is being (or should be) considered for the Minister of Worship position, but I don't believe he is the right fit for that, nor is he interested in it.

### **SERVICE**

--For Christmas we blessed foster children this Christmas through with gifts through the Angel Tree program, and provided meals for needy families.

--We continue to have many volunteer positions available in the church: Food and hospitality for 242 Night, Video techs, Ushers, and Children's teachers, to name a few.

--"Sarasota Community Builders" (separate 501(c)(3) with proceeds designated for Bahia Vista) is in full swing remodeling a house in Tamaron.

--It's such a privilege to offer our campus to AA who meets here seven days a week.

### **CHILDREN**

--On December 20 we had twenty-three children participate in our children's Christmas program: "A Classic Christmas Pageant". We had five parents take advantage of our \$10 coupons to several locally owned restaurants. Some restaurants just donated the meals.

--On Monday, January 13th, Kayla leaves for Atlanta with other children's ministers from Abundant Life Church and Sarasota Alliance Church, to participate in their two-day training for the Winshape Camp that we will be co-hosting this July.

### **YOUTH**

--The youth had a Christmas gift exchange on December 18th.

--Zack was available to the students over Christmas break for various get-togethers.

--He continues to focus on 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.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

--Once again, due to the faithful generosity of our members, and the responsible stewardship of our ministry teams, we ended 2013 in the black! We came in under budget on contributions received, but were able to adjust our spending accordingly.

--We have scheduled a BV Community Festival for February 1st.

--The facility usage continues to be busy. It's good to be able to share our facility with others.

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