

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church
Overseers Update to the Congregation
February 16, 2014

1. The Overseers met on Tuesday, February 11, 2014.
2. The Overseers approved the recommendation of the Master Planning Committee (MPC) to hire Bo Medred, an independent land-planning consultant, to secure the necessary approvals from Sarasota County for the Bahia Vista Master Plan. This process may take up to six months.
3. Wes Oswald reported on the February 10, 2014 Overseers meeting with Larry and Doris Diener and their guests, Lloyd Kauffman and Nathan Overholt, to review the rationale and background for Larry's resignation.
4. Chair Nancy I. Yoder and several Overseers met with Attorney Moore to discuss steps to secure a signed agreement verifying the date Charis Center will vacate the Bahia Vista Church property.
5. Nancy I. Yoder led the Overseers and Pastoral Team in a concert of prayer in the sanctuary for the Bahia Vista congregation. Nancy reminded us of Pastor Roger's words in his Pastoral report that " God wants to do even more through us than HE ever has."
6. Pastoral Report: Pastor Roger Shenk

This past sermon series called us to "stretch" out our hands to give Hope, Answers, Necessities, and Deliverance to a hurting world--that by so doing we would see the "signs of love, and wonders of transformation." I believe God wants us to live out his love in our areas of giftedness, and trust his Spirit to make it effective. In some ways we are already seeing that effectiveness:

- A couple approached me Sunday, with tears of thankfulness, to say that they are ready for membership. This feels like home.
- Recently, another lady and her daughters came to Bahia Vista for the first time. She told me afterward that the message was exactly what she needed to hear.
- Last week a lady told me about how she had gently shared the love of Jesus with a young man she had just met at a bowling alley. Beautiful.
- Last week God spontaneously healed one of our members during worship.
- A couple weeks ago I got a card from a stranger telling how our generosity lifted her out of a desperate situation.
- Last week I met several winter residents who said Bahia Vista was full of joy and love.

But I believe God wants to do even more through us than he ever has. Please continue to pray with me for that. Amen.

In the interest of hospitality to our many visitors, I have chosen not to speak in our worship services about the "family tensions" we are experiencing around Larry's leaving. But here in my monthly pastor's report it is helpful to do so.

I know some of us continue to be very distressed about Larry's leaving. I also know that others are distressed about ugly comments they've heard. We have not always worn our grief or objections with grace and dignity, but I continue to have hope. I have done my best to listen and answer with grace, and what I have heard is that people just want to be included in the conversation, even if they can't

have all the information. That's a difficult balance, but I genuinely want to do better at that, as it really is my nature to be transparent, and my desire to be a "servant leader."

To that end, I met last week with eight retired pastors who make Bahia Vista their home (some seasonally). I asked them to teach me. Their comments and wisdom have been helpful. Of course, one thing I learned is that there is no "one right way" to handle such a situation. We all have our opinions, and this Bahia Vista context is especially unique. But the conversation yields wisdom for which I'm thankful.

I keep hearing much misinformation in the church and I believe it is keeping tensions alive that do not need to be. There is still much that needs to be discerned, but for now I would like to correct the most persistent misunderstanding by reiterating that we plan to keep a traditional worship service. I would ask the congregation to help us dispel any rumors to the contrary.

May God give us peace and grace for each other.

COMMUNITY

- We held fourteen days of prayer with less people involved than we had hoped. But we still prayed. I believe this was a good thing to do.
- 242 Night is back under way. So far the winter residents have not shown up as we had thought, but we are encouraged that the year-round church is enjoying the fellowship.

WORSHIP

- We continue to find inspiration in both traditional and contemporary musical expressions.
- Our series with Myron Augsburg was well attended and much enjoyed.
- Our next "OneConcert" is March 2nd.

SERVICE

- We will host an evening concert on February 23 to focus on our support of Brad and Brenna Steury-Graber, missionaries to Paris, France.
- We host Family Promise the week of February 23 and, as always, are dependent on volunteers to make this happen.

CHILDREN

- Kayla enjoyed the Winshape training earlier this month and looks forward to the summer camp here in Sarasota, in which we will partner with Abundant Life and Sarasota Alliance. Registration opens February 23rd.

YOUTH

- Youth continues to host its middle and high school groups on Wednesday night.
- Zack is working to encourage more Sunday morning participation, but it is difficult when most of their families do not attend church.

ADMINISTRATION

- We held our first BV Winterfest on Saturday February 1st.
- Generosity Sunday is February 23rd.

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