

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

1. The Overseers met on Tuesday, November 11, 2014.
2. **Finance Committee**
The proposed 2015 Budget/Ministry Goals presented by Executive Minister Mike Christner was reviewed and approved for presentation to the congregation at the Annual Members Meeting on December 7, 2014.
3. **Membership List**
Pastor Roger reported on the updating of the Church membership list. The appointment of the Membership Renewal Task Force is in process.
4. **Master Planning Committee (MPC)**
Executive Minister Mike Christner gave a MPC update. Bo Medred will conduct a neighborhood meeting on Nov. 18, 2014 to discuss the proposed additions to the existing church facilities, after which the plan will be presented to Sarasota County.
5. **Overseer Policy and Procedures Manual Updates**
A revision to the Election of Overseer and the Chair Policy and the addition of the Mennonite Organizations Appointee Policy for the Overseers Policy and Procedure Manual was approved.
6. **Annual Congregational Meeting**
The Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for December 7, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Agenda for the evening includes:
 - Election of Overseers, Chair of Overseers
 - Presentation and approval of the 2015 Budget/Ministry Goals by Mike Christner
 - Master Planning Committee Update by Ben Sprunger
 - Pastoral Yearly Report
7. **Pastoral Report (attached): Pastor Roger Shenk**

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

PASTOR'S REPORT TO OVERSEERS

November 10, 2014

Planning for a New Year

Since this is my last report before the congregation makes key decisions that affect next year, i.e., the selection of new overseers, and the passing of the budget, I think it's good to remind ourselves of a couple things.

1. The church is people gathered around faith in Jesus, loving others like he does. I made this point a couple weeks ago in my sermon titled "Is the Church Corrupt?" We are first and foremost a spiritual body. We are a gathering of faith. I think God wants us to be defined more by our prayers than our plans, more by our worship than our bylaws, and more by our love than our polity. Let's help each other keep this in mind. I really believe God will judge our love more than any other thing. And our faith in him is nothing if not also love for him.

2. We have a cause worth organizing around. As I noted in my sermon, we too often see churches as 501c3 corporations with bylaws, boards, budgets and buildings, with members and employees. Church is definitely more than that. In fact, it doesn't even *need* any of that to *be* "church." Of course, if any group of people wants to do something worthwhile together, it's good to organize themselves. I think we did well when we decided several years ago to organize ourselves around befriending people in caring community, Christ-centered worship, and compassionate service. When done well, this is discipleship and evangelism.

As we turn our attention to selecting overseers and planning our resource commitments for coming year, let's keep the above two statements in mind. They call for wisdom and faith, prayer and great love.

Community, worship, & service activities of note

New Worship Service Times. Our new gathering times of 9a and 10:45a have been well received.

242 Groups. Anabaptist teacher Bruxy Cavey says, "It's not church until the chairs face each other." 242 groups are where the chairs face each other, where people are developing spiritual friendships, and being church. Recently we saw this when a group pooled their resources to help one of their own. That's church.

Visitation Team. We continue to have a wonderful group of volunteers who visit our shut-ins, bringing CDs and bulletins to them so they can be a part of this church family.

Music Concerts. We have secured national recording artist Johnny Diaz for December 13th.

Memberships. In the past month we've added eight new members, for a total of 19 this year. We have also honored requests for transfer or removal of membership by ten individuals this year: four to Bethel Mennonite (Sarasota, FL), four to churches out of state, and two local without a new church named. A number of others, prompted by the effort underway to update records, have expressed interest in becoming members here as well, so we are in process with them.

Mennonite Music Festival. Our traditions acoustic band of 15 people led five songs during the recent district festival at Bayshore on November 2nd. It was an exciting time of togetherness, and introduced a number of our newer people to our extended “family.”

Thanksgiving. We are hosting a the “4041 Thanksgiving” party named for each of the churches that meet at this Bahia Vista Street address. It will be held on Wednesday night, “Thanksgiving-Eve.”

Salvation Army. We have committed for the first time to be responsible for two weeks of bell ringing this Christmas season at Winn Dixie (Fruitville at Honore), from November 28th to December 12th.

Lifestage Ministries

Children. The kids continue to join us for worship in the second service, and Kayla has been dismissing them each week with an explanation of what they will be studying. We’re doing this so that the parents and other adults have a sense of what their kids are learning and experiencing. We still need nursery help on Wednesdays so Kayla visited several 242 Groups recently to see if any could help.

Youth. The youth had a fall festival costume party at Mike and Betsy Christners on October 24th that was well attended. They will be finishing up the Alpha series this week. The group is still primarily middle schoolers, but some high schoolers attend as well.

Seniors. Dennis has formed a seniors ministry team which is planning a Seniors Visioning Potluck for November 14th. He and Shirley have also begun to meet with different people who appear to have a special need for pastoral care.

Administration & Facilities

Front planter. Thanks to those who donated time and money to transform our south median area into a beautiful space, and to eliminate the tripping hazards that were being caused by old tree roots.

Library & Office Space. Dennis and Kayla both have offices in what was the library, and the Library committee is creating a prayer and reading room in what was room 12, off the Fellowship Hall.

Budget. We have worked hard on preparing a budget, and reduced planned expenditures by quite a bit, while making sure we are not crippling our mission.

I am thankful for good, hard, productive work, in the name of Jesus, in the spirit of Colossians 1:28-29. It’s a privilege to be part of this church family gathered around faith in Jesus, and learning to love others like Jesus loves us.

