

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church  
Board of Overseers  
January 12, Meeting

The Board of Overseers took the following actions at their meeting on January 12, 2015:

- Appointed Karl Hees to replace Sharon Nussbaum. Sharon determined that she would not be able to serve. At the overseers meeting in December the overseers decided to appoint all three of the individuals who were not elected by the congregation. The current Board of Overseers includes:

Wendy Donovan	Doug Graber	Karl Hees
Mitch Helmuth	David Kniss	Renee Krabbe
Wes Oswald	Danny Remchuk	Ben Sprunger

- Determined the terms of the three individuals who were appointed to serve as overseers.

Danny Remchuk	1 year
Karl Hees	2 years
Renee Krabbe	3 years

- Elected officers for 2015

Vice Chair	Danny Remchuk
Secretary	Wendy Donovan
Treasurer	Doug Graber

- Received the Finance Report: the offering and contributions for December 2014 amounted to \$78,322. During 2014 we spent \$56,030 less than budgeted and we received \$111,870 less than budgeted. Net receipts amounted to a negative \$55,840. It was necessary to draw down on the General Fund to make up for the fact that expenses exceeded receipts. We ended the year with \$5,531.76 in the General Fund.
- Pastor Roger reported that the Membership Renewal Task Force continues to meet and work on updating the membership roster and the preparation of membership criteria.
- Danny Remchuk was appointed to serve as Chairman of Pastor Roger's three year contract renewal.
- The Overseers approved a document titled "Clarification of the Overseers Role" which provides guidance on the roles of overseers and staff.

- Renee Krabbe was appointed to serve as Chairman of the newly formed Bylaws Task Force. This Task Force will seek input from various constituent groups with an eye toward amending the Bylaws as necessary to address any issues and concerns.
- Wes Oswald was appointed to serve as Chairman of the newly formed Charis Task Force. The intent of this Task Force is to stay in touch with the Charis Board which has committed to vacate the Charis facilities by July 31, 2015.
- Ben Sprunger was appointed Lead Overseer Delegate and Pastor Roger Shenk Lead Delegate to the MCUSA meeting in Kansas in June/July 2015. Ben and Roger will provide the leadership to represent BVMC's position on any issues and concerns that will be on the MCUSA agenda.
- The overseers adopted a "Statement on Homosexuality" that was prepared by the pastoral staff at the request of the congregation in 2000. This Statement was adopted as a starting point to seek input from the congregation in preparation for our delegates being able to represent the position of BVMC at the MCUSA meeting in Kansas.
- The Overseers affirmed the bylaw provision which stipulates that any individual attending BVMC can attend overseer meetings. To encourage individuals to attend overseer meetings the Overseers approved:
  - Distributing the meeting agenda on the Sunday prior to the overseer meeting.
  - Allowing for time at the beginning of each meeting for individuals to make a brief statement or ask a brief question.
- As provided in the Bylaws the Overseers approved a summary statement of Robert Rules of Order. In particular the Overseers agreed that actions taken in Executive Session will be reported out in open session.
- Overseers agreed to wear name tags identifying themselves as overseers where appropriate and helpful.

# PASTOR'S REPORT TO OVERSEERS

January 12, 2015

## The Gathering Place

As I've said in recent reports and sermons, I think God is calling for 2015 to be a Year of Gathering. As a church it's assumed that we would gather around our love for Jesus, and his love for us. That is our starting point; it makes us "family" together. But I believe that when we really gather around Jesus and begin to understand his love for us, it compels us to extend that love to others. You could even say that, until we have extended his love to people outside our faith, we have not really understood his love, or loved him ourselves.

Jesus said: "The way you treat people who are 'less than' you, is the same way you treat me." That can be either scary or exciting; and we get to decide whether it is good news or bad news! It all depends on how we treat those who have less than we do--be it physically, relationally, or spiritually.

As a church, we have already decided and declared our goal, that we will *befriend Sarasota with the love of Jesus*. That means *loving people like Jesus loves them*. And, as our mission statement reminds us, we have decided to do it "through community, worship, and service." In practice that means each of us learning to personally include disbelieving or disconnected people in our inner circles, inspiring them with the grace and love of Jesus, and involving them in opportunities to give themselves regularly to acts of compassion. Corporately that means doing whatever we can to lower barriers that make such people feel like they don't belong here. As we do this, we become more fully "disciples of Jesus"--and so do they!

**The image of a fountain in a pond is helpful.** Without circulation a pond stagnates and living things die. But if you add a fountain, it draws water in from the edges, shoots it into the air where it is aerated, and blown by the wind to land on top of the stagnancy, stirring it up and bringing it to life.

Sarasota is our pond. The church is the fountain that draws people together in *community* around Jesus and his gospel message. As we respond to his love and grace in community, our lives erupt in various responses of *worship*: praise, obedience, sacrifice, love, etc. As this worship shoots up and out, the Spirit blows across our lives, aerating us and filling us with new life, and carrying us out to the stagnant places of where people struggle to thrive. We land in compassionate *service*, bringing hope to the hopeless, answers to the confused, necessities to the poor, and deliverance to the oppressed.

Then, as Jesus draws us back toward his love, others are drawn to it with us. The "community" grows, it erupts again in "worship," and lands again in "service," in a beautiful circulation of love. And as it does, Sarasota is revitalized.

That picture is compelling to me, and it all begins with people gathering around Jesus. So that's become my prayer and goal this year: to see Sarasota gathered in *community* around the person, teachings, and Spirit of Jesus--and let it give birth to *worship*, and *service*, as the love of Christ always does. This begins to fulfill the our mission and strategy. And I believe that through it we could actually see Sarasota transformed by the love of Jesus in our lifetime.

## Community, Worship, & Service

**Worship Gatherings.** A newly formed Traditional Music Committee has been formed to give leadership and direction to the music of the first service. We are also working at lowering the volume of the second service a bit, in hopes of making it accessible to more people.

**242 Groups.** Our 242 Groups program is our small groups ministry, so named for our desire to cultivate an experience of Acts 2:42 among us. We are adding a couple topical studies, one for men, and another for women. Our Sunday morning Winter Residents class is also meeting, with a little over a hundred in attendance.

**New Members.** The membership process involves meeting with the Pastor, Pastoral Care Minister, and Executive Minister to tell about their faith journeys, and to learn about what membership means at Bahia Vista. Four people are being received into membership soon, with several others in process.

**Fundraiser Concert.** We are combining two annual fundraiser events on February 8th. Our Valentine's Banquet will be held at 5:30 followed by 7pm concert by the Shenk Twins & Friends Bluegrass Band, and New Life Sound Quartet. Dinner tickets, and offerings help us meet our financial commitment to Paris missionaries, Brad & Brenna Graber.

**Christmas Caroling.** We had a wonderful caroling event on December 10th with at least 70 people participating. Sunnyside Village was very appreciative of our ministry to them, as were a number of shut-ins we visited at their own homes.

## Lifestage Ministries

**Children.** On December 14th we held our second annual children's Christmas program: "A Classic Christmas Pageant," with thirty children participating. January 12-14, Kayla is attending the two-day Winshape training in Atlanta, along with other children's ministers, to prepare for July's Winshape Camp being hosted again at Sarasota Christian School.

**Youth.** The Youth Transition Team is scheduled to meet Sunday, January 25th, to actively begin the search process for a permanent youth minister. Nori has indicated her willingness to continue in the Interim Youth Director position for as long as necessary to ensure we find the right person.

**Seniors.** Close to fifty seniors attended the "Lights in Bloom" event at Selby Gardens on December 29th. They have another potluck dinner scheduled for January 28th. It is so encouraging to see the energy and enthusiasm in this group with Dennis's leadership.

Filled with hope for love, joy, and peace in 2015.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis", written in a cursive style.