

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church
Overseers Minutes
May 8, 2017, 5PM
Green Room

“Befriending all with the love of Christ through community, worship and service.”

Members Present: Danny Remchuk (Chair) Dave Polen
Doug Graber Miriam Nauman
Nic King Renee Krabbe
Dave Kniss

Members Absent: Ben Sprunger (LOA) Karissa Miller

Pastoral Team Present: Pastor Roger Shenk Shirley Good
Mike Christner Kevin Bowder

1. Call to Order: Chair Danny Remchuk declared the meeting open at 5:01 pm.

2. Devotional: Kevin Bowder referenced from Isaiah 58, challenging us to not dwell on the problems of the world, rather be aware that there is a season of new hope coming for our church, praying that Jesus is in this place. He then led in opening prayer.

3. Minutes: Danny Remchuk declared April 18, 2017 minutes approved as distributed. (attached)

4. Open Floor for Members Comments: David Denison shared his thoughts about the recent rebranding discussion.

5. New/Unfinished Business: none

6. Reports:

- a) Pastor Roger Shenk reviewed his monthly report. (attached)
- b) Finance: Mike Christner reported YTD net gain of \$26,994.

7. Committee Reports

- a) Finance Committee: Doug Graber reported that land donated to BVMC some years ago should be part of assets. He will bring this to the Finance Committee for discussion.
- b) Membership Policy Task Force: None
- c) Conference Affiliation Task Force: None
- d) Building Fund Committee: Mike Christner reported that discussions are taking place regarding future renovations of our church building.

8. Recommendation:

- a) That the overseers approve the housing allowance for the New Families Minister, Kevin Bowder. Dave Kniss / Nic King MSA. Approved unanimously.

9. General Session: adjourned at 5:54 pm

10. Executive Session: called to order at 5:55 pm

Pastor Roger shared information regarding the resignation of Rodney Shenk.

11. Executive Session: adjourned at 6:12 pm.

12. General Session: reopened at 6:13 pm.

13. Closing Prayer: Pastor Roger closed in prayer.

14. Adjourned: 6:14 pm.

Upcoming Events:

- Church Family Meeting, May 28, 6pm
- Overseers, Monday, June 19, 5pm
- Mennonite Church USA Convention, July 4-8, Orlando

Secretary, Renee Krabbe

Recording Secretary, Hertha Kornhaus

If you would like a copy of the attachments listed above, please email Danny Remchuk at dremchuk327@gmail.com

PASTOR'S REPORT TO OVERSEERS

May 5, 2017—Bahia Vista Mennonite Church

Befriending all with the love of Christ...

On April 23rd, we baptized five people and dedicated a baby boy. We are also processing eight applications for new membership. God is still reaching out and rescuing people, calling them into his Family! And he uses churches like Bahia Vista who go out of their way to befriend their neighbors, and to tell them about Jesus. May God cause our ministry in Sarasota to be even more fruitful as we are faithful to him.

Rebranding Discussion. On April 30th we had our third Church Family Meeting about removing Mennonite from our name. I clarified again that this is *not* about changing our denominational affiliation or doctrine, or hiding the fact that we are a Mennonite church. It *is* about whether we could be more effective at welcoming community people if we took Mennonite out of our name.

I presented the rationale for changing the name, and concluded by saying that I don't think taking Mennonite out of our name is *necessary* to reaching unchurched and dechurched people. We are already reaching some. But I *do* think having Mennonite in our name is a *barrier* to reaching them. And there are many in Sarasota who need to be reached.

Danny called for a poll of our worshipping community: "Should we remove Mennonite from our name?" The meeting was attended by 83 persons; 56 marked Yes, and 30 marked No. We have now taken three polls over three months, both with and without our seasonal residents. The first two polls revealed that 64% and 67% respectively were enthusiastic about the change. Suspecting that some may have felt constrained by having to register their opinion visually up front, we took the third poll by anonymous ballot. Notably, 67% still said Yes to the change.

We believe this is a good read of the congregation: Two-thirds of our worshipping community want to take Mennonite out of the name. With sympathy for the one-third that do not want it to change, we feel that we should move forward in receiving name suggestions.

Worship. Last week, Rodney Shenk respectfully resigned his position as Modern Music Director, citing differences with key tenets of Christian orthodoxy. He would still value our prayers and friendship. We thank him for seven years of service in this capacity, as well as the various other church responsibilities he's accepted throughout the past three decades. While his decision did not surprise me, it did come unexpectedly, so there was no transition plan in place. But, given the reason for the resignation, we both agreed that it should be honored with the integrity of immediacy. So, I am now planning the services and leading the worship team, using this opportunity to prayerfully develop the worship culture for our second service. Though saddened, the worship team has agreed to continue serving in this capacity. We cherish your prayers.

A number of people are asking for us to try a blended service this summer. Personally I would enjoy having the whole church family worship together. Some of us are able to enjoy either service, but the majority seems to enjoy one or the other. To put it another way, I suspect that the majority of us do *not* enjoy the service we don't attend. But I may be wrong. We invite anyone to speak into it, as we continue to discern it.

Ministries & Operations

Pastoral Care. Longtime member, Edna Bozer, died May 4. Shirley was with the family throughout her brief hospitalization and hospice care.

Community Groups. Some fifteen Community Groups participated in our April 30 fair. We were pleased with this first effort, and will plan another after summer.

Families. Kevin Bowder was affirmed by a 95% vote to be our new Families Minister. He will be working to assist parents and guardians in the faith development of their dependent children from infancy through young adulthood, by overseeing weekly programming, and providing pastoral counsel and spiritual direction. It is a full-time position with office hours, and a 90 probationary period with monthly formal interviews. As a point of clarity, Kevin will not be the "new Youth Minister" or the "new Children's Minister." Instead, he will have the freedom, under my counsel and direction, to do things formerly done by those positions, or to develop volunteers to do it. His responsibility is to make sure it's done well. It is a big job. He has already begun making connections across the spectrum of his responsibilities. But we have prioritized his programming responsibilities so that he will spend his first month focusing on youth, his second month on children, and his third on young adults. He will connect with their parents and guardians throughout.

Youth. I spent the past month with the youth, and began a teaching series which Kevin then completed. As of this week I have officially handed over supervision of the volunteer youth ministry team to Kevin, but I will continue to be involved through supervision of him.

Children. Kevin is working with Kathy Cydrus, our Interim Children's Director, to meet an immediate need for volunteers.

Young Adults. The Gathering will continue to meet every 1st and 3rd Sunday evenings. Kevin will begin making connections with our young adults.

Seniors. "Living Joyfully and Aging Well" will continue throughout the summer. Recently, Dennis Bontrager and Nancy B. Yoder met with Shawn Otto of Bethel, and Vernon Zook of Abundant Life to open our seniors ministries to their churches as well, even considering opportunities to meet on their campuses if desired.

Staff. We give our blessing to Kayla Virkus as she and David plan to open a home daycare business this summer. She will fulfill her dual positions of Office Manager and Special Events Director through June 30, so we have two months to find her replacement(s). The positions are administrative and will be hired by Mike Christner as Executive Minister.

It seems to be a season of unusual change and transition. And yet it's a season of considerable peace and joy. One thing I've learned is that *God always takes care of his Church!* We will surely find his abundant blessing in this season. (2 Peter 1:2)

With faith and hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ross".