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January 2009

# Bell Tower

*Flagstaff Federated Community Church*  
United Methodist ♦ Presbyterian USA ♦ Community

From Pastor Jed ... *THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS*

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers,  
To make music in the heart. AMEN!

Howard Thurman, in *The Mood of Christmas*

Simple words ... and a poignant reminder. When I first read them, they were striking. It's so easy to think of the *work* of Christmas as coming before hand — the preparations and all that goes along with them. But the real *work of Christmas* does come along *afterwards*, does it not? After all, the Nativity of Christ celebrates the incarnation—the embodiment—of God in human form. And Christ revealed God's passions in a very up-front way. Finding the lost, healing the broken, feeding the hungry, releasing the prisoner, rebuilding the nations, bringing peace ... these are all ministries of Christ's followers.

I'm reminded of that old joke that made the rounds a few years ago. Question: What do you have when you combine a couple of Jehovah's Witness with a couple of Unitarian Universalists? Answer: Two people standing at your front door with nothing much to talk about. But the work of Christmas gives us not only plenty to talk about, but lots to do, too. Finding, healing, feeding, rebuilding, peacemaking, merrymaking—all part of God's work and God's call. Let's be determined that those ministries are of utmost importance to us this year. It's work that faces us as much now as ever before, and finds us shoulder to shoulder.

As we move into 2009, the *Strategic Planning Team* chosen by the Board of Trustees begins its work, too. Discerning God's Spirit at work in our midst, discerning our strengths and direction for the near-term future is their charge. It's work that includes all of us, as we help them understand who we've been, who we are, and who we want to be. I trust you will answer the call to assist in this process!

What a joy and privilege to be sharing the work of Christmas with all of you in 2009. This is a time fraught with both challenge and much hope. Let's make the most of it together!

May God's rich blessings of grace, mercy and peace be ours together in the coming new year and beyond!

Faithfully yours,  
*Pastor Jed*

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## Organ News!

Our organ is now all back in it's chambers. Over the summer and fall, Grahame Davis our organ technician, removed the top and bottom keyboard pipes from the organ. He has worked in his shop re-leathering and restoring the pipes and the wind chests (air boxes where the pipes rest.) Grahame also did work in the chambers, the area behind the choir loft where the organ pipes reside.

The Federated organ consists of four sections the swell, great, choir, and pedal. We have now had the two largest sections (the swell and choir) restored. The second phase of the project is set to begin late next spring or early summer and will be completed by Christmas 2009. This phase will consist of restoring the great and pedal sections.

Thank you to all who have pledged and/or donated to the organ campaign. We now have over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our needed \$99,000 for the entire restoration. Please consider a donation to keep our organ vital. A donation made be made in honor or memory of someone, as a tax deduction, or an existing pledge can be extended for a third year.

Check the bulletin board in Rees Hall for photos of the work and more information.



This is a picture of Grahame, the organ technician.

**The Parish Nurse Is In:**

Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, Room 14, 11:00 to 1:00 pm.  
Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, Rees Hall 9:30 to 10:30 pm.

**OUTREACH & SOCIAL ACTION TEAM**

We would like to thank all the people who purchased Angels for the children to help with their Christmas.

Thank you to Carmen Johnson, Deb Gaither, Brenda Hooser, and Cindy Pickett for your help in delivering Angel Tree gifts.

Thank you to everyone who contributed food to the Flagstaff Family Food Center.

**Follow Up Opportunity to the Petrucci Calligraphy Workshop**

Enjoy a STUDIO TOUR with 2 hours of a Calligraphy Experience at Jan Petrucci's Studio: 3070 South Surrey Lane, Flagstaff, AZ.

DATE: Saturday, January 24th

TIME: 1:00-3:00

RSVP: 928-214-7377

COST: \$15.00 Supplies provided. Please call early to reserve your space and allow time to create a packet ready for your enjoyment!

**Rummage Sale!!**

The youth are raising money for the summer mission project. Hopefully this summer we will be sending our Sr. High to Honduras and our Jr. High on their own adventure yet to be determined.

In order to raise money we are planning to put on a church wide rummage sale sometime in the spring. So please hang on to all your rummage sale treasures if you want to donate them to the youth rummage sale.

If you are interested in volunteering to help with this event please contact Jennifer Wytaske at 602-538-7349 or Laura Rambikur at 928-533-7092.

Thanks!!

## Stewardship Tip #3 by Arnold Brown

### “Strangers Who Help and Strangers Who Need Help”

I have had a special relationship with people of each of these kinds of strangers. The one with the first kind of “stranger help” happened on my way home from a conference in Pennsylvania when I lost my billfold. Before I even arrived back home I learned that a stranger had found it and was sending it at no cost to me. He was a perfect example of a helping stranger.

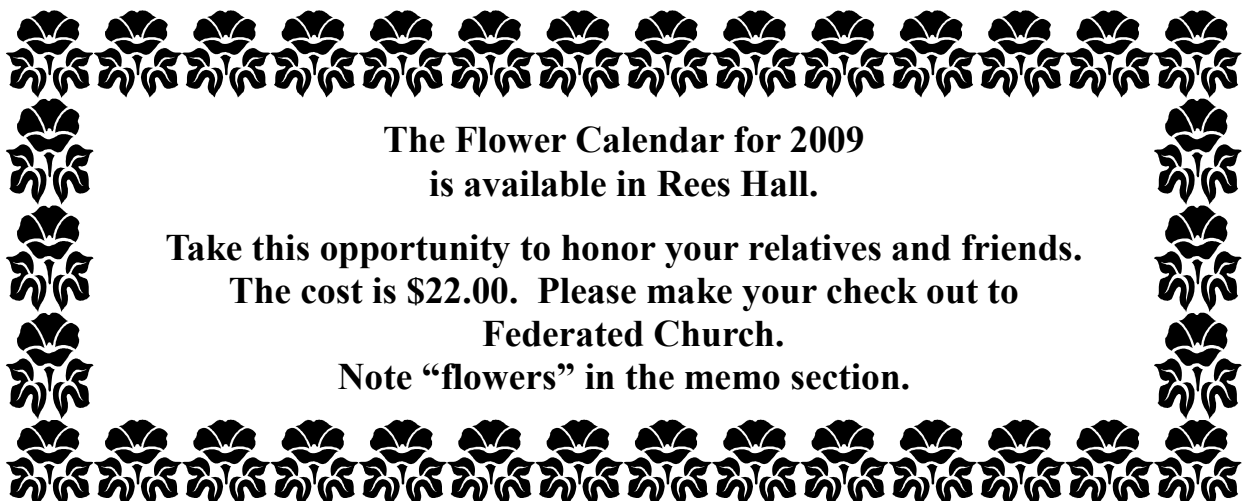
My relationship with a “stranger in need” took place at a highway rest stop north of Phoenix, where a young man asked me for a ride to Sedona. When I replied that I was going to Flagstaff instead, he said that that was really where he would rather go. Therefore, I agreed to give him a ride. As we visited, he told me that he had just been released from prison and was on his way home. That bothered me some, but our trip went fine, and I felt good that I had helped him. That form of helping a stranger in need has its risks, but there are safe ways of doing that, and all of us should be willing participants.

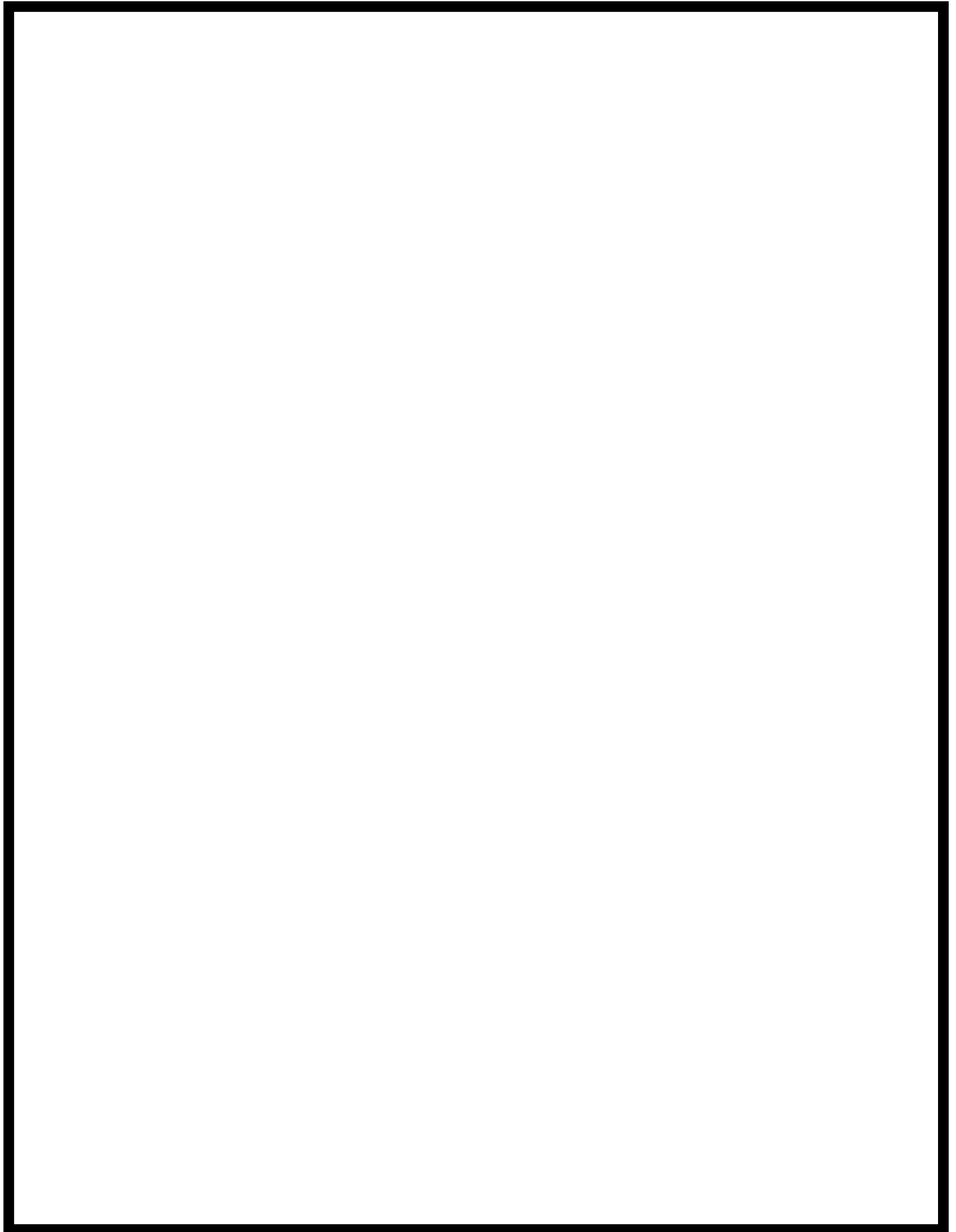
**The Christian Living Class** will begin a five week study of "Three Simple Rules" by Rueben P. Job on Sunday, January 18th.

The title of the study comes from three rules  
for living developed by John Wesley:

1. "Do no harm"
2. "Do good"
3. "Stay in Love with God"

They meet in Room 9 of the Christian Education Building  
between services at 9:45 am. For more information  
Please contact Rick Miller or Mick Henry.



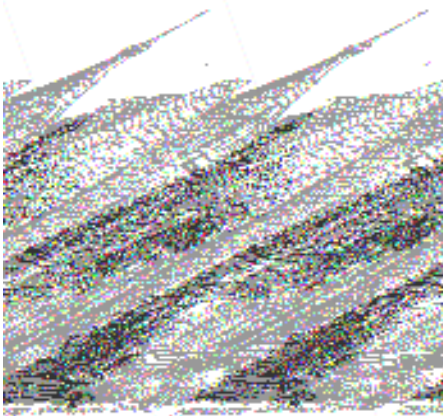


Rick and Ann Miller would like to thank the congregation for their prayers.

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"We believe your prayers have made a real difference; in Rick's Mom during her recovery from her stroke, in the great results from Ann's recent surgery, and in Rick's recovery from knee surgery.

Thank you,  
Rick & Ann Miller



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Community Church**

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*Return Service Requested*

Please submit articles for the Bell Tower no later than the 15th of the month, preferably by e-mail to:  
zzweber@juno.com

Photographs should be accompanied with descriptive text. You also may leave items (including who, what, where, when, why and how) in the Bell Tower basket in the church office. Copy provided in PC Word format is appreciated. THANKS!