



Pastor's Perspective — Cleaning House

By Ron D. Lindholm, Senior Pastor

Over the course of the past two weeks, Neita and I have spent several days in my office cleaning house. To most observers my office looked clean. I vacuum it regularly and dust the surfaces in there once every week or so. But I knew the truth. Behind the books on the shelves was nearly thirteen years of dust. Many of the shelves were also overstuffed with books—books on top of books because I had no more room to put them on the shelves. It was the same in the credenza along the back wall. Behind the doors of that cabinet were boxes and more books. There were also pamphlets and various supplies that I had stuck in there looking for quick storage or because I thought that someday I might need them. But what I came to realize was that hanging on to all those things was actually a hindrance to having the things I really needed where I could find them and put them to good use.

So here's what Neita and I did. We took the books off of the shelves, dusted the shelves and flipped them because many of them had bowed under the cumulative weight of the books. As we went through the



books, shelf by shelf, we sorted them. Most went back on the shelves, but some were put in a pile to give away and others that I had never used and no prospect of using were thrown out. Magazines—decades of some subscriptions that I had kept for reference purposes but never used—were discarded, wholesale. We did the same thing with the contents of the credenza. If I had kept something with the thought that someday I might need it or have occasion to use it, but never had, I threw it away. In all, we filled five 40-gallon garbage pails to overflowing—and now, when I walk into my office to study and pray and to do the other work of shepherding this flock, amazingly, I find the whole office feels lighter and more inviting.

Scripturally, there is the need for this kind of house cleaning in our personal lives as well. To run well the Christian life—to run it *with perseverance*—the Bible tells us that we must *throw off everything that hinders*—talking about every habit of life that drags us down and impedes our progress. It's like cleaning house—and I would challenge you to do it. It will be easy. Some things will be hard to jettison, but in the end you'll be glad you did.

Serving Christ in the New Year

Joe Robinson and Ron Wasserstein were elected at the December Annual Meeting to serve as Deacons, joining Pete English, Doug Mount and Ramiro Esquivel in assisting our Pastors as they lead the church. Joe will be serving in the area of Christian Education, and Ron in Church Life Ministries.

Numerous other church members have agreed to serve as Church Officers, Officials and other leaders in this new year. Their appointments will be made official at the January Annual Meeting. We are thankful

for their willingness to serve the Lord and His church. Please pray for each one as they build up the body of Christ through their ministry.

We encourage all of our people to prayerfully consider whether they are maximizing the gifts and abilities the Lord has entrusted to them. If the Lord is calling you to greater service, please speak with one of our Pastors or your Deacon about ministry opportunities at Fellowship.



Strengthening Our Men

A [Men's Breakfast](#) will be held on Saturday, January 31 at 8:00 AM. We will enjoy a homemade breakfast and receive a challenge from God's Word. Don't miss this great opportunity to encourage one another in the Lord and be strengthened as men. Sons and guests are welcome. If you have an interest in helping with Men's Ministries this year, please see Pastor Lindholm or Pete English.



Women's Ministries Activities

Women's Ministries is going to a Wax Museum in Washington, DC on Saturday morning, January 10. It's not too late to join the group. Please call Gina Irving or Tracy English if you would like to attend.

All of the ladies are invited to the annual [Heart Friend](#)

[Party](#) on Friday, February 7 at 7:00 PM. We will reveal our heart friends for 2008 and choose new ones for 2009. Through this ministry are ladies are involved in praying for one another and in encouraging one another in special ways. Please plan to participate!

Missions News

Christmas Missionary Offering: Through the annual Christmas offering, \$4,203 was given for our missionaries, exceeding our goal of \$3,850. This enabled Fellowship to present each family with a gift of about 109% of the monthly support we provide. Thank you for this generous expression of your love for the Lord and for our missionaries who are serving Him in our behalf.

Missions Giving in 2008: A total of \$17,046 was given by our church family through various missions love offerings in 2008. These included funds to sponsor Rose Wasserstein's missions trip to Peru, a gift to help offset Paul and Geri Briggs' shortfall in monthly support, the annual Missions Conference and Christmas missionary offerings, and four love offerings for visiting missionaries. We thank the Lord for the generosity of His people!

Missions Trip: Amy Cuddington has been selected to participate in a missions trip sponsored by The Potters School. Amy and her team will be in Thailand on January 9-20, providing a children's program for missionary families participating in a regional conference and also teaching English to Thai children. Fellowship is helping to sponsor Amy's trip through a love offering on January 4 and 11. Please pray for Amy and her team—that the Lord will accomplish much through their ministry and that He equip them to become better servants of Christ through this experience.



Money Matters

Mortgage Indebtedness: We are thankful for the generous giving to the 50@1 program in 2008, as well as to the Thanksgiving Offering, which allowed Fellowship to make great progress in reducing our mortgage indebtedness. The total 50@1 giving of \$13,215 together with the \$10,184 given through the Thanksgiving offering allowed the church to make extra principle payments in the amount of \$23,399. When added to our regular mortgage payments, this resulted in a total principle reduction of over \$81,600 for the year—the largest reduction the church has made in a single year. With our mortgage principle as of

Mortgage Principle Reduction (per year)	
2003	\$33,910
2004	\$41,895
2005	\$43,475
2006	\$56,747
2007	\$74,008
2008	\$81,637

January 1, 2009 equaling only \$76,548, this means that eliminating the mortgage in 2009 is both an exciting and realistic goal.

Regular Giving: We praise the Lord for His faithful provision in meeting our needs in 2008. At the same time, we have some cause for concern. Average weekly giving shrunk to only \$12 above the weekly need as of November 30, and fell further to below the weekly need by \$45 at the end of the year. As we enter 2009, our weekly need grows from \$5,568 to \$5,689. Therefore, as we strive to eliminate our mortgage and further replenish the Building Fund, it is important to keep in mind the weekly needs of the ministry and prayerfully seek the Lord's supply.

December Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$4,843
Weekly Need	\$5,568
2008 Total General Fund Giving	\$287,225
2008 Total General Fund Need	\$289,561
2008 Total 50@1 Giving	\$13,215
2008 Total Building Fund Giving	\$17,358

Calendar



Jan. 10	Women's Wax Museum Outing(9:30 AM)
Jan. 13	Nursing Home Ministry (2:00 PM)
Jan. 26	Youth Ski Trip
Jan. 28	December Annual Meeting (7:30 PM)
Jan. 31	Men's Breakfast (8:00 AM)
Feb. 6	Women's Heart Friend Party (7:00 PM)

Please plan to attend the **January Annual Meeting** on January 28. We will be approving the Officers and Officials appointed by the Pastors and Deacons, as well as reviewing the annual reports of the various church leaders. We will also be considering an important matter concerning one of Fellowship's missionary families.