



2023

January/February
Vol. 57 No. 1

Federation of Christian Ministries



January/February Vol. 57 No. 1

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Sunrise on Crooked Lake

May it shine on all
FCM Members
and thier Families
in 2023

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Chairperson

CHRISTY HOWARD STEELE

New Year, New Opportunities to Serve

“And now we welcome the new year. Full of things that have never been.”

Rainer Maria Rilke

Welcome 2023! It seems the last half of 2022 whizzed by, and here we are at the beginning of 2023. A new year brings new opportunities and renewed hopes. One of my hopes for 2023 is that more of us connect with one another through regional and local gatherings. I am grateful and appreciate the convenience, lower cost, safety, ease and strides we have made in our ability to gather via zoom, but the energy and connection we gain from gathering in person is so much deeper. This year, since our gatherings will be smaller and closer to where each of us live, it is my hope that more of us can gather more often in person.

I also hope we can increase the number of members volunteering in FCM during 2023. As a person working full-time, I understand limited time. But, the more FCM members who volunteer, the less time each volunteer must give. I've listed three positions that need volunteers with a brief description of each position. If you are willing to serve in any of these positions, please let me know by emailing me at chairperson@fcmmail.org.

- **2024 National Assembly Committee** – this committee will do the groundwork to propose the location, theme, speakers, and budget for the National Assembly usually held the 3rd week of July in 2024 in a recommendation to the Circle.
- **New Regional Vice Presidents** – in this first term, persons will be appointed Regional Vice Presidents in the new South-Central and Mid-Atlantic regions. The major responsibilities of an RVP are to represent their regions on the Circle, recommend candidates for commissioning, coordinate commissioning ceremonies, organize regional gatherings, facilitate communication within the region.
- **Historian** – in this appointed position, this person will gather and prepare information to be preserved and archived.

The last hope I have for FCM in 2023 is for every member to donate to the **Endowment fund**. Whether you give a one-time donation of \$5, a recurring donation of \$5 per month, or a different amount at a different frequency, it is important that we all invest in the future of FCM. Building the endowment fund now is a way for current members to create a legacy for the benefit of future members. It is a way to make sure FCM is around for those who need an inclusive community or to be empowered from inclusive ministry in the future.

As we welcome 2023, let us consider and take advantage of these opportunities to gather and to serve by giving of our time and resources.





President

RON DAVIS

A Letter from the President

The beginning of a new year is upon us. I don't know about you, but I find myself full of hope, joy, and peace. God is on the throne, and I know if we continue to live each day in God's will, all will be alright.

The Circle moved forward on the election for the Vice President (VP) of the Great Lakes Region in December. We held this election early so that newly elected VP can be part of the February circle meeting and also have time in the Spring to work with our current Great Lakes VP to gain experience in the role prior to assuming the office in the summer of '23. We've also moved forward on the election for the President of FCM in December with the same hope and purpose in mind.

We're now working toward securing the first VP for the Northwest, South Central, and Mid-Atlantic Regions of FCM. This expansion thrills us as we see several of our larger areas made into smaller groups, enabling FCM members to connect in a more meaningful way for support and in ministry's work. We hope to appoint people to serve as VP in each of these regions and have them in place for the circle meeting in February 2023. In February, the circle will determine when to have an election in each of these new regions. As in the past, we will stagger the elections in each newly developed region so that an equal number of VPs will rotate on and off of the circle.

I reflect back on our July circle meeting, which represented what meetings have been like over the course of 2022. Some members were with us in-person, and some were with us virtually. We were all thankful to be together. Yet, it was much more powerful to be together face-to-face doing this work we value. This holds true for worship, family times and all gatherings of life. We value being together and should never take it for granted.

With 2023 on the horizon, I pray that our new normal will include more face-to-face time with one another; that the circle will gather both in February and July to move our organization forward in all its endeavors; that each of our VPs will deepen their relationships with the membership by holding gatherings and by being a resource to members in need; and that our faith communities will grow and that we will build up new ones.

I pray we will continue to give cheerfully to the endowment fund and that we can give from the overflow to ministries in need. I pray God will be with all of us every day.

God bless you,



FCM Registry

BILL APPLETON - MARYANN CRILLY

New Process for FCM Sacramental Registry

Beginning January 1, 2023 there is a new process for the FCM Sacramental Registry which will be used for Baptisms and Weddings. The Sacramental Registry will now be accessed through Realm. Steps to access the Sacramental Registry can be found below.

Members will complete a separate entry for each Baptism or Wedding.

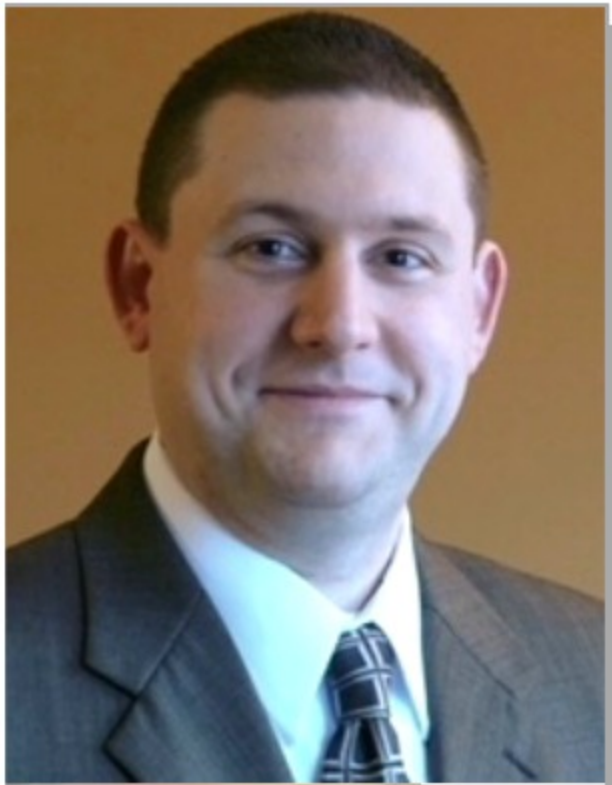
As a reminder- All FCM members presiding at Baptisms must register the Baptism with FCM. We encourage you to register Weddings through the FCM registry in addition to following any state and local process required for your area.

Accessing the Sacramental Registry

- Go to www.onrealm.org
- Log into your Realm profile using your email address and password you created
- Find and click on the "Events" tab on the left-hand side
- Find and click on the "FCM Baptismal Registry (2023)" or the "FCM Marriage Registry (2023)" event
- Click on the "Register By (Date)" button
- On the right hand side you will see a note that shows "Who is attending this event?". Ensure your name is checked and click "Next"
- Complete as much information as possible ensuring to enter information for all required fields indicated with a red *
- Scroll back up to top right hand and click "Next"
- Review your information for accuracy
- Click on "Register" button
- Repeat process if you have other sacraments to register

Should you have any questions about accessing/using the FCM Sacramental Registry in Realm, feel free to contact **Bill Appleton**, FCM Administrator at connect@fcmmail.org or 216-210-0855. Other questions related to the FCM Sacramental Registry can be directed to **Maryann Crilly**, Sacramental Registrar at registry@fcmmail.org or 908-625-9072.

2023



FCM Administrator

BILL APPLETON

Christmas Greetings and Happy New Year!

Dear Fellow FCM Members,

It is hard to believe that it has been a year since I started in the role of FCM Administrator. The rate of the passage of time seems to increase as I get older. It has been rewarding to get to know some of you better while being of service to you. So many of your stories inspire me and I continue to be humbled by the myriad of ways you minister to others. I believe FCM serves a critical role in meeting the ever evolving and inclusive spiritual needs of so many and I am proud to do my small part in helping to make that happen.

As one year ends and another begins, I want to take a minute to express gratitude.

In my role as Administrator, I work with the Circle of Directors and others in some capacity but there are some people that I work more closely with. I am particularly grateful to Carolyn Horvath in our Membership/Central Office, Antoinette Marold, who leads our FCM Communications, and our Chairperson, Christy Howard-Steele. I would not be able to do what I do without their collaboration and support. They work very hard in their respective roles and I am grateful to them. I also continue to be grateful for the assistance of Chris Young in setting up new member profiles in Realm.

This year (especially during the renewal period) we have experienced a number of glitches/issues with Realm. While the vast majority of these have been out of our control, I have worked hard to try to resolve them in a timely manner. I am grateful for your patience and understanding during these occasions. Some of you were kind enough to give a little of your time to go a step further and help me gather more information before reaching out to ACS Technologies (Realm) support team to problem-solve.

Speaking of Realm:

Logging in to Realm- When logging in to Realm, please make sure you are typing in www.onrealm.org directly into the address bar of the search engine you are using. It is important to not have any extra characters and that you do not use the search feature. Realm has informed me that this can cause issues.

Browser Compatibility/ Operating System Updates-

In order to experience full functionality in Realm it is important to maintain updated versions of your operating system and browsers. Not all browsers have the same capabilities and it is well documented that websites can work differently depending on the browser you are using. Not sure you're using the latest browser? Go to whatsmybrowser.org/ to find out. This will also tell you what operating system (i.e. Windows 10, etc.) you are using.

Here is a link from ASC Technologies (Realm) that provides additional information on Browser Compatibility if you are interested. help.acst.com

Updated information- Please make sure when any of your contact information changes that you make the appropriate changes in your Realm profile.

Passwords- If you have forgotten your password please click on the "Forgot your password?" and follow the steps to create a new password. We are not able to reset member passwords on our end.

Unsubscribe- There have been a number of members who have unsubscribed from Realm (either unintentionally or intentionally). Please give careful thought if you have been considering unsubscribing as you run the risk of not receiving important information from FCM. Our Constant Contact distribution list is periodically updated from our Realm database. Any person who unintentionally unsubscribed please contact me directly to initiate a resubscription.

If you are experiencing an issue related to Realm, I encourage you to reach out to me directly by phone or email.

May this new year be filled with love, peace, joy, and good health for you and your loved ones!

In Service,
Bill Appleton, FCM Administrator
216-210-0855
connect@fcmail.org

2023



FCM GRANT

Grant Committee Members

SHANNON QUEENAN - HEIDI TIERNEY - MARY VIDAS

Greetings from FCM's Grant Committee!

It has been a busy time of year for the Community Grant Program with the offer of three live 90 minute "How to Write a Grant" webinars, sending out grant guidelines and receipt of applications from members.

Look for an update from our 2022 Grant Recipients (listed below) and how they have extended FCM's mission, values and service throughout the year.

- * SOLAS CIRCLES ("Circle of Light"): Immigration Outreach Service Center, Baltimore, Maryland
- * Horizon Prison Initiative London Correctional Institution, London, Ohio
- * Hildegarden: Herbal Sanctuary at the Hildegard Haus, The Faith Community of St. Hildegarde, Fairport Harbor, Ohio 44077

Friendly reminder that March 6th is the deadline for all applications (postmarked or sent digitally on that date.) For Circle approval early May, 2023. Funding will be distributed throughout the month of June, 2023.

Send your Grant Application Packet to:

Mailing address:

FCM Grant Committee, c/o Mary C. Vidas, FCM
328 Linda Court

* Lino Lakes, MN 55014

**note Lino Lakes & Circle Pines, MN share the same zip code. OK to send to either.*

Digital Address: grant@fcmail.org

If you have any questions or are interested in receiving a grant application, we welcome your email at grant@fcmail.org.

Blessings to all this new year!

FCM Grant Committee

Heidi Tierney, Shannon Queenan, Mary Vidas

2023



Endowment

TOM CUSACK, ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE MEMBER

An Endowment Question with a Little Answer and a Big Answer

Question: Have you received benefit from your involvement with Federation of Christian Ministries?

You ask: “what does this question have to do with FCM’s Endowment?” Please read on.

Here is the **Little Answer** to the question: If your answer was “yes,” then the **Little Answer** for FCM is: give a little to the Endowment! Start in January. Give a dollar a month to the Endowment. You may think “Oh, that is an embarrassingly low amount to consider.”

No it isn’t! (Luke 21:3 “I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest.”)

Just so you know, you could give more than a dollar a month. It will make you feel better.

Here is the **Big Answer** to the question: If your answer was “yes,” then the **Big Answer** for FCM is: give a lot to the Endowment! All FCM members need to have prepared their own Last Will and Testament in order to benefit their loved ones. If you don’t write a will, the state already has one written for you. It’s called the Law of Intestate. And, you won’t like it. When you make out your own will, consider your answer to the above FCM questions. Then include an amount, any amount, for FCM’s Endowment in your Will. (You are never too young to write a will.)

It’s a lot to think about. One small step to get started. Go to the FCM website and click on donations. Drop down to Endowment and get started.
<https://onrealm.org/fcm/-/form/give/now>



Help FCM Endowment Grow

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Endowment Fund Report

TOM STRICKER, CHAIR

Thank You

VALUE AS OF 10/10/2022
\$106,360.00

Donate to the FCM Endowment Fund
NO GIFT IS TOO SMALL!

Regular Donation

Go to the FCM website www.federationofchristianministries.org or go to your personal account on Realm www.onrealm.org and make your donation.

1. Sign in to Realm or, if in the FCM Website, use the "Donation" button to get there.
2. Click on "Giving" (left hand column) and this will take you to donation page
3. Click on the "+ Give" button
4. You will see a pull down (FCM General Account); click on the pulldown arrow
5. Click on the "FCM Endowment Fund" button

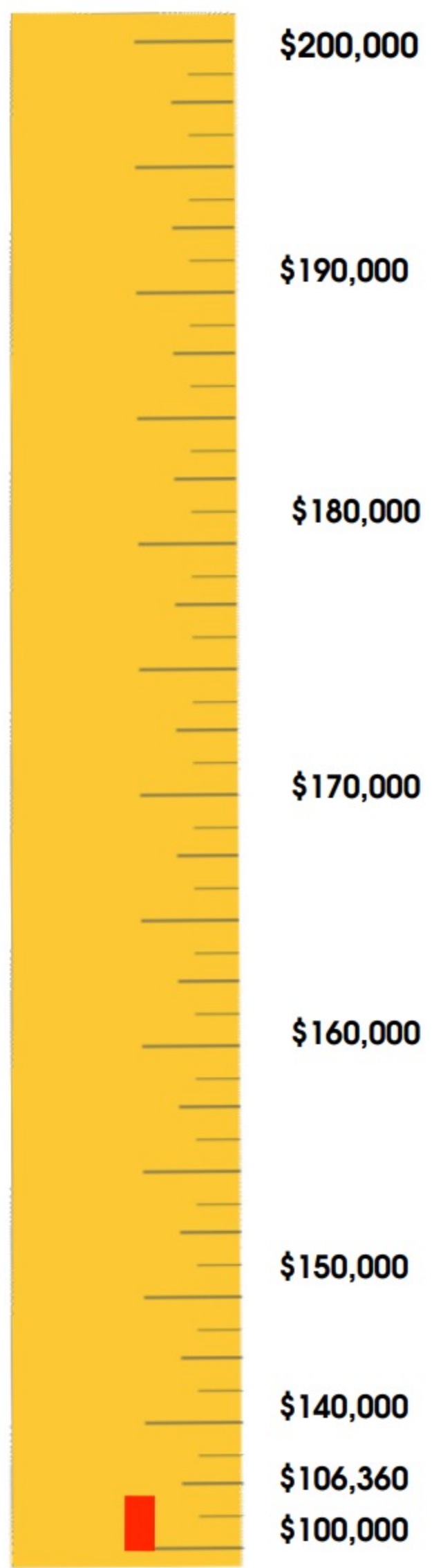
Tribute Gift

Is there a friend, family member, teacher, or mentor you would like to honor on their special day or send an expression of sympathy?

Consider a small donation to the **FCM Endowment Fund**.

A notice of your gift will be sent to the honoree or a member of their family. You will also know that your gift will help ensure that FCM will be able to support future generations of ministers and congregations.

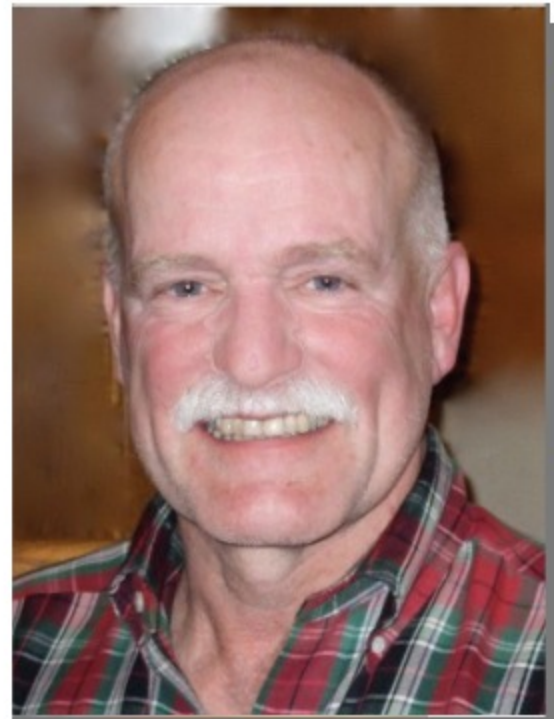
For more information go to the FCM web site under FCM Endowment Fund for the online **Tribute Gift Form** or endowment@fcmail.org



2023

Measuring Our Success

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Faith Communities

TOM STRICKER

The story of
Dignity Dayton, DBA The Living Beatitudes Community. Aka LBC

I want to begin by saying LBC is just one model of a "Faith Community"
Our Statement of Faith: Believing that the Beatitudes are the fullest expression of Jesus' teaching, the Living Beatitudes Community seeks to live this message through an Intentional Eucharistic Community. Our social and ecclesial diversity enhances our respect for each individual's spiritual journey. All persons of different faith traditions are welcome.

We seek the unity of all peoples and respect diverse sources of wisdom and spiritual inspiration. We believe there is more value in questioning than in absolute doctrines. We believe that Jesus gave us the example of a life lived for peace, inclusion, and justice. Through sharing liturgical life and mutual support for one another, our members are strengthened to live Beatitude-inspired lives dedicated to spiritual growth and social commitment.

I would like to give you a bit of the history of our community

DaytonDignity, a chapter of DignityUSA, began in 1980. In the mid-80s they began meeting as a faith community on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month at Holy Trinity Catholic Church. The pastor of Holy Trinity led the service along with Marianist Priests from University of Dayton.

In 1992 DignityDayton sent a letter to the Archbishop urging him to take a stand in the church for same-sex marriage. Two weeks after the Archbishop received DignityDayton's letter they were told they could no longer celebrate in the downtown Catholic church as long as they held that position on same-sex marriage.

Upon receiving that response from the archbishop, the community began to look elsewhere for a place to worship. DignityDayton moved to a local Episcopal Church on the west side of town and continued their gatherings on the 2nd and 4th Saturday evenings of the month, however, after a brief 10 month stay in that particular church, the Episcopal pastor gave them a letter, again requesting them to leave because of their stance on marriage. The good news is that DignityDayton was welcomed by Christ Episcopal Church in downtown Dayton and continued their services on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month. The attendance at that time was approximately 10 to 15 people. Also at this time, they still had Marianist Priests from the University of Dayton leading their services. However, this would soon end.

In July 1994, I was a Catholic priest who then made the decision to marry my wife, Patty. I was invited by a member of the DignityDayton community to be a Presider. My wife and I began to celebrate with that community on the 2nd & 4th Saturday evenings. Once a month I presided over the service and a Marianist priest presided the other Saturday.

However, the winds were changing, and the Marianist leadership at that time began to tell their priests they could not lead services for this all gay and lesbian community. Richard Young, a gay Benedictine priest, and Michael Smith, a married gay priest, joined DaytonDignity and were invited to fill in for the Marianist who no longer served the community.

2023

Faith Communities cont'd

The story of
Dignity Dayton, DBA The Living Beatitudes Community. Aka LBC

TOM STRICKER

You might ask what happened on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month. Well, nothing... SO several of our group decided to gather in homes on those Sundays to hold our service. At first only 3 to 5 people attended. The host served breakfast after the service. Some attendees came from the DaytonDignity community and others came from the Catholic church where they no longer found a home. In many ways, you might say we were all church orphans. Our numbers grew so large, it was no longer possible to meet in member's homes. We did not have enough room, and feeding the continually growing group was difficult.

We held a "visioning day" for DignityDayton and the home church people, many of whom were the same people. We decided to gather as one community on a Sunday. On this visioning day, the name Living Beatitudes Community came into being.


The Living Beatitudes Community (LBC) began in 2003, and we also decided at that time to join FCM and become a FCM Faith Community. Three of our presiders at the time were FCM members.

Today we are officially DignityDayton DBA the Living Beatitudes Community. We have joined forces with Federation of Christian Ministries (FCM), Roman Catholic Women Priests (RCWP) and former members of St. Agnes parish to create an intentional eucharistic community.

Our current membership is approximately 90 with ages ranging from 24 – 85. Our average weekly attendance in services is 50 to 55 individuals in person and on Zoom. We have 5 presiders: a male married priest, a RCWP, a married woman presider whom we lifted up from the community, a gay married priest and an FCM commissioned minister.

We always have a member of the community co-preside at each service. After each homily the community is invited to share their thoughts on the message. We have 14 different Eucharistic prayers that we have collected and re-written, all of which are focused on Creation theology and not sacrificial theology.

Because of our history we are a community very focused on social justice. We collaborate with Christ Episcopal Church on a number of community efforts.



**THE
Living Beatitudes
COMMUNITY**

*A proud member of the Federation of Christian Ministries
and Dignity/USA, and an active supporter of Roman Catholic
Womenpriests*

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

Believing that the Beatitudes are the fullest expression of Jesus' teaching, the Living Beatitudes Community seeks to live this message through an Intentional Eucharistic Community. Our social and ecclesial diversity enhances our respect for each individual's spiritual journey. All persons of different faith traditions are welcome.

We seek the unity of all peoples and respect diverse sources of wisdom and spiritual inspiration. We believe there is more value in questioning than in absolute doctrines. We believe that Jesus gave us the example of a life lived for peace, inclusion and justice. Through sharing liturgical life and mutual support for one another, our members are strengthened to live Beatitude-inspired lives dedicated to spiritual growth and social commitment.

Services every Sunday at 10 AM in the lower level of Christ Episcopal Church,
20 West First Street, P.O. Box 3304, Dayton Ohio 45401
www.livingbeatitudes.org

2023



Faith Communities

MARK BERNECKER, CHAIR

You're Invited!



Faith Communities of FCM

New Ministries for a New Millennium

During 2023, the Faith Communities Committee will offer 6 webinars each during a different month.

All faith communities and their members along with all FCM members are welcome.

The topics will be pertinent to both our professional and personal lives.

Each one hour session will begin at 8 P.M. Eastern Time. Dates are TBA. Below are the topics for February, March, and April. Watch your email for more information and dates.

February

Do we see eye to eye? Different generations have unique concepts of religion and spirituality. How can we minister across the spectrum of these generational views?

March

Inclusivity: It's our mission! - The FCM mission statement calls us to inclusive ministry. As part of this mission, we need to understand and welcome transgender individuals who are often misunderstood.

April

How do we navigate through societal chaos? - Many societal issues bring dissonance. How can we find peace and share hope in the midst of this chaos?

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Communication

ANTOINETTE MAROLD

Wishing FCM Members and their Families Many Blessings in 2023

This being the first newsletter of 2023, I would like to thank our editors, **Sandy Tracy** and **Carole duBois** for their work and dedication on the FCM Newsletter.

Thank you also to our Executive Committee, Regional Vice Presidents, Committee Chairs and FCM members who submit articles for the newsletter.

I've been blessed by working with **Carolyn Horvath** of the Central Office and with Administrator, **Bill Appleton** regarding FCM membership. I also would like to thank **Maryann Crilly** who keeps Baptism and Wedding records. I probably missed some members, so I ask your forgiveness in advance.

FCM Communication includes:

- FCM Website (includes Ministry Listings)
- FCM Newsletter (Past newsletters can also be found on the blog.)
- FCM Blog (Written by FCM members...Send me your submissions)
- Constant Contact & Realm announcements, elections etc.
- FaceBook—Twitter—Instagram—Linkedin

As the old year closes and the new year begins, I often think of customs kept by my family in the past. One of the customs we observed was the blessing of our home on the Feast of Three Kings. I'm sharing this custom in the the hope that you'll be blessed by it too.

The Feast of Three Kings In this ancient ritual, write the following above the entrance door on the inside with chalk: 20+C+M+B+23. The three letters stand for the Latin: "Christus Mansionem Benedicat – May Christ bless this home." The legendary names of the three wise men, Casper, Melchior, and Balthasar, probably created because of the letters of the blessing. The numbers are the numbers of the year.

Home Blessing

*Loving God, Creator of the universe, bless this holy space,
and all who enter and worship here.*

Fill it with hope, peace, joy, love, and the Light of Christ.

*May we put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,
heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience,
bearing with and forgiving one another.*

And over all these may we put on love, that is the bond of perfection.

And let the peace of Christ rule our hearts.

Let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, with gratitude in our hearts to God.

*Fill us with the light of Christ, that our love for each other may go out to all people,
as we see the face of God in everyone, who enters here, and in all those we meet.*

*We ask this in the name of the Christ, the name that each of us bears,
and from whose family we come, who calls us his sisters and brothers;*

and who lives and loves with you and the Holy Spirit, and in us,

God forever and ever. Amen.

20+C+M+B+23

2023

FCM Anniversaries

CAROLYN HORVATH

THE PEOPLE LISTED BELOW HAVE WORKED LONG AND FAITHFULLY TO BUILD FCM TO ITS PLACE TODAY. IF YOU WISH TO CONGRATULATE THEM, SEARCH THEM ONLINE IN REALM (WWW.ONREALM.ORG) OR ON THE REALM APP. NOT SIGNED IN TO REALM? ASK YOUR REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT OR CONNECT@FCMMAIL.ORG FOR AUTHORIZATION.

January/February 2023

25 Years

Richard Weinhagen 1/01/1998 Northeast Region

20 Years

Paul Schleitwiler 1/01/2003 Mts. & Plains Region

Arnold Simonse 1/09/2003 Southern Region

15 Years

M. Anita Jones 2/07/2008 Northeast Region

10 Years

Dennis Bingham 1/26/2013 Northeast Region

Robert Funaro 1/04/2013 Great Lakes Region

Irene Scaramazza 1/28/2013 Great Lakes Region

Sandra Tracy 2/12/2013 Southern Region

5 Years

Kristen Fulton 2/04/2018 Southern Region

Sophia Inclusive Catholic Community 1/01/2018 Northeast Region

Michele Mead 1/10/2018 Mts. & Plains Region

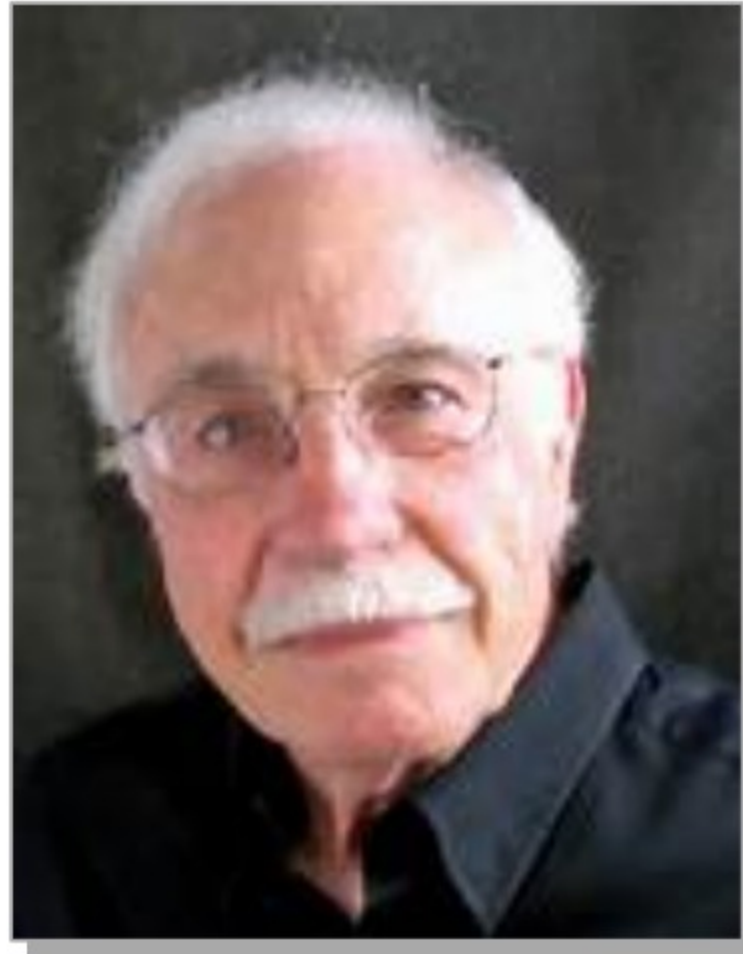
Robert Nolan 1/26/2018 Mts. & Plains Region

Thomas Senegeto 2/26/2018 Northeast Region

Ann Temkin 2/18/2018 Southern Region

2023

With Deepest Sympathy



Eugene Carl Bianchi

We are saddened by the news of the passing of the
First President
of the Federation of Christian Ministries

Eugene Carl Bianchi - Age 92 of Athens, Georgia
May 5, 1930 - December 18, 2022
passed away on Sunday, December 18, 2022

Eugene Bianchi (Professor Emeritus) Emory University.

With a B.A. & M.A. from Gonzaga University and a Ph.D. from Columbia University, Dr. Bianchi has taught at Emory since 1968. Among his books are Aging as a Spiritual Journey, 1982; A Democratic Catholic Church, 1992 (co-edited with Rosemary R. Ruether) and Elder Wisdom, 1994, The Hum of it All, 2019. He specialized in the spirituality of aging, Christian theology and institutional reform, as well as in transtraditional and ecological spirituality. He published, lectured and conducted workshops on these topics.

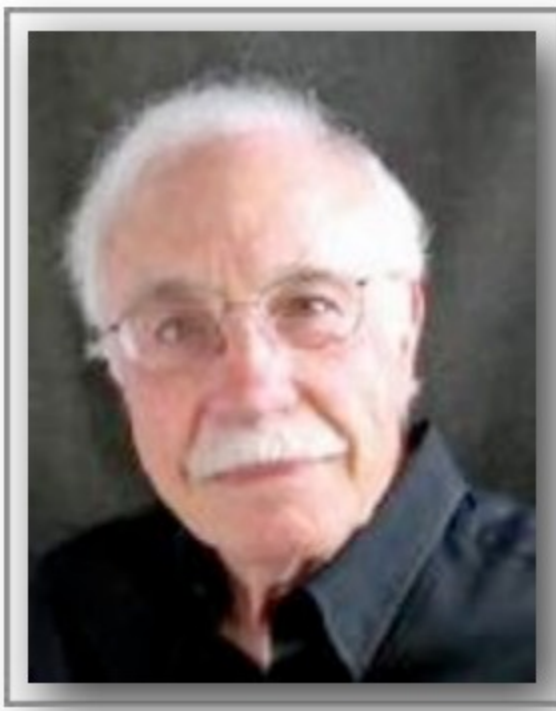
Fond memories and expressions of sympathy may be shared at
www.BernsteinFuneralHome.com for the Bianchi family.

Eugene's contribution to the FCM 45th Anniversary President's book follows.

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FIRST PRESIDENT of SPFM/FCM

Eugene Bianchi 1969 - 1971

I've been asked by Antoinette Marold to reflect in a personal way on my memories of being in the original group of founders. Much of our early history is covered in William Power's *Free Priests* (1992). Also Bill Manseau recently sent out a CD of our earliest documents. And I wrote a memoir *Taking a Long Road Home* (2011) that covers my first involvement with SPFM.

My first Ah-Ha experience about all this was on a bus trip from Manhattan to Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania to give a talk on ecumenism in 1966. I was a young Jesuit priest finishing up doctoral work at Columbia and Union Theological Seminary and serving as an assistant editor of *America*. I was reading Will Herberg's *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* when I had a "vision" that actually moved me emotionally. Yes, quiet tears. Vatican II had ended only a year before and many windows seemed to be opening. I imagined starting a new kind of religious order. Others had done it. Why not me? This order would have men and women working together equally in the spirit of the Gospel. It would be made up of married priests and lay people without the divisions of clericalism.

For the next two years, I taught religious studies at Santa Clara University in California. During that time I had more contacts with Protestant friends at Stanford like Robert McAfee Brown, John Duryea, the Catholic pastor at St. Anne's Parish in Palo Alto and others in campus ministry there like Methodist Barbara Troxell and Donna Myers Ambrogi who would soon marry Tom Ambrogi, a Jesuit theologian and friend. In San Jose I got to know the Grail community and its women ministers, especially Marie Mohr (now Grandstaff) who worked with me to set up a Center for the Study of Contemporary Values at SCU.

The period of the late Sixties and early Seventies was a major transition time for priests and nuns who were wondering about their traditional vocations and new options. Many wanted to continue some form of ministerial service but not necessarily as celibates. For example, the woman who would become my first wife left her order with five others to form a community of their own, called Fides. By 1967 I was questioning the soundness of religious life for me. Another Ah-Ha experience was seeing an older priest in cassock and biretta reading his breviary on the way to breakfast on a foggy morning. I had a powerful sense that I could not or even should not be doing that when his age.

Among the reasons for leaving the Jesuits and the clerical priesthood that I shared in writing with friends was wanting to pioneer new ways of living as a priest. My early

thoughts were to keep on saying Mass and doing other pastoral things even though the official church would disapprove. No doubt the bold spirit of the times was at work in civil rights and women's movements. Acting outside the rules could be interpreted as a kind of civil disobedience and a following of one's conscience. Soon I would write an article in *Commonweal* along these lines; I also developed a column in *The National Catholic Reporter* that kept progressive themes alive.

I heard about the meetings in St. Louis in 1967 that were agitating for some kind of organization of former priests. I can't remember my first meeting with Tom Durkin, a married priest from Philadelphia, who would become the first secretary of SPFM. Tom did very important communication work for the group in its first period. I probably met Tom in the California Bay Area where he and Gail had moved. After our wedding in July 1969, Cathryn and I flew to Boston to pick up my car which had been driven there by a former nun friend from Atlanta. In Dorchester we met Bill and Mary Manseau. Bill was and has remained a remarkable leader in SPFM/FCM, and Corpus. Shortly after we met Gerry and Marita Grudzen in Yonkers; the latter have been well-known, creative persons in FCM.

I recall the organizing meeting in Detroit organized by Pat Best, where I was chosen as President of SPFM and Rocco Caporale became Vice President. Rocco was an Italian Jesuit who taught Sociology at St. John's University in New York City. Rocco was spirited and very capable with a broader view of the Catholic Church. He would eventually marry an actress in NYC. Our main meeting that year was our first convention in a church renewal center in Washington, D.C. I wrote a vision statement for that event which still seems to read well in Bill Power's book, pp. 50-51.

In 1969 at the Washington meeting, we were thinking in daring ways, but not as broadly as we would understand ourselves a few years later when we explicitly opened the movement to women ministers and began the certifying process. In D.C. one could sense the growing exodus of priests from clerical structures, many of them marrying and most looking for jobs. So the first SPFMers had their hands full. Some had difficult issues with their families of origin. Yet stirring new thought was going on at Catholic U with Charles Curran losing his professorship over his stance on birth control. In this context, I wrote:

"The members of the Society understand themselves as living in the historical tradition of Catholicism. They do not separate themselves from this church, but rather they desire to serve humanity through their church tradition in new and creative ways. In a time oftransition....the Society intends to be a source of fraternal support and inspiration to priests, particularly those who elect to minister outside official structures."

Two things were clear at this time. We still thought of ourselves as married and unmarried Catholic priests. We were hoping to open dialogue with bishops and other Catholic organizations. We did have a few meetings with a bishops committee at a national episcopal gathering as well as with the superiors of religious orders of men.

Most of us conducted liturgies in homes and performed other clerical services. I spoke about our movement to the Catholic Theological Society of America and to a national meeting of priests councils, led by Frank Bonnike who would soon leave and marry. On Long Island I met with Cardinal Suenens of Belgium who was one of the great progressives of Vatican II who was sympathetic to a married priesthood. We should also note that when a long range history of all this is written in the future, a time when the RCC will have both married priests and women priests, SPFM will be seen as an inspirational first for all subsequent groups not only in the U.S. but in the world.

We knew that such a major change in the RCC would be an uphill slog. Yet the period of Paul VI was closer to Vatican II and less rigid in its opposition. Vatican II-type bishops were still serving many dioceses. Under John Paul II and Benedict a much more conservative episcopate would dominate the church. A litmus test for becoming a bishop consisted of absolute obedience to the Vatican on all teachings. Another aspect of this opposition came from our original religious orders. We had broken ranks and gone off on our own while giving up on celibacy. In those early years of the exodus, we were often enough seen as quitters or renegades or givers of scandal to the faithful. This attitude would gradually change over the years with our orders of origin even though the official church hardened its opposition. Lay people and nuns were much more open-minded toward "defectors." Nuns have been leading the church in the Gospel spirit for a long time. Certainly since Vatican II.

Here I want to mention someone who was at the Washington meeting and became a great supporter of both SPFM/FCM and later Corpus: Mary Lou Zefuss. Mary Lou was a loveable, bright "original" from the Pittsburgh area who had happy and unhappy experiences with priests in her life. Another very important person in the early movement was Joe Burns, a priest from Brooklyn, whom I may have met in these earliest encounters, but I clearly recall him and wife Audrey at the Berkeley convention in 1970. Joe would serve as secretary after Tom Durkin and also as Vice President. I also remember Vicki and Romeo Di Benedetto at the latter meeting while on their honeymoon. They had also attended the first convention in Washington in 1969. Romeo became a minister at large for the organization and publisher of the SPFM newsletter, "Diaspora," while Rocco Caporale was its first editor.

The earliest years of SPFM/FCM combined hope for serious renewal of ministry with many moments of discouragement. The first members were relatively young priests setting out on major changes of direction. They were marrying and seeking employment with very limited resources. They were starting to raise families. They faced opposition from the official church and sometimes from their own families. When I think back on it, I'm amazed that our group lasted as long as it has, and has changed over the years to better meet new challenges. Two other pioneers in the movement are Charley Sullivan and Pauline Fox. Charley was a priest from Alabama who travelled with Pauline to the first convention in D.C. They volunteered to act as ambassadors at large, driving their old camper around the country and living in great simplicity. They have also spent much of their lives in prison ministry and peace movements.

SPFM/FCM was blessed with leaders who picked up the baton, as it were, when the first leaders were flagging in energy. So it was that Bernie McGoldrick was elected second president for the 1971-73 term. He and wife Cappy attended the Berkeley convention in 1970. Bernie, a former Jesuit and professor of Political Science at Fresno State University, shifted the group's attention from theological considerations to ways of understanding and implementing political change in the church. He also wanted to enlarge the movement in international ways. William Powers called McGoldrick's effort as an attempt at "political convergence," trying to rally groups with similar interests for renewal to act more cohesively.

To my mind, the most important transition in the life of SPFM/FCM happened in 1973 on Staten Island when Bill Manseau and Gerry Grudzen became president and vice president of the organization. The name change to FCM signified an ever broader grasp of ecumenical ministry beyond the RCC and welcomed women to every form of ministry. It signaled also the beginning of our certification program for ministers. Our organization could be seen as a precursor of today's women's ordination movement in the RCC.

Now in my eighties, I feel privileged to have been part of our movement and I have been blessed by it both as a teacher of religious studies at Emory University and in the development of my own spirituality. The latter is expressed in my book of poems, "Ear to the Ground: Poems from the Long View" that will appear shortly. The intellectual and pastoral concerns of FCM are expressed in the poems that often do not use traditionally religious language. Spirituality, east and west, and in nature of which we are a part, is suffused with Spirit waiting to be experienced in our joys and sorrows.

Gene Bianchi
Athens, GA
May 4, 2013

These pages were taken from the Federation of Christian Ministries
45th Anniversary - 2013 President's History Book

The entire book can be found online at
<https://online.fliphtml5.com/qmtb/lywq/>
or at
<https://www.federationofchristianministries.org/about-fcm/fcm-history.html>



Northeast Region

CARL YUSAVITZ, VICE PRESIDENT

Congratulations FCM Northeast Region Members

Congratulations to FCM NE Region Commissioned members **Melanie Cicalese** and **Q Hailey** who were recently granted FCM Endorsement by our Circle of Directors. Both Melanie and Q are healthcare chaplains and minister in New York City.

Congratulations also to FCM NE Region members **Mary Edmonds**, **Grace Newswanger**, and **Alisa Unell** who were recently granted FCM Commissioning by our Circle of Directors.



After completion of her St. Luke's CPE residency (Bethlehem, PA), **Mary Edmonds** accepted a full time position as spiritual care provider at St. Joseph Villa in the Chestnut Hill section of Philadelphia (PA). St. Joseph Villa is a well-respected Catholic senior living community and a sponsored work of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Taught by the sisters in elementary school, Mary was drawn to working with the sisters because of their continued commitment to the mission of service in the world. Mary works primarily on the skilled nursing floors assessing needs and accompanying sisters in their struggles to face the natural decline of aging. Her commissioning by FCM gifts Mary with the recognition and blessing of a community of faith committed to the special work of spiritual care in the health care setting.



After completing a year of CPE residency, **Grace Newswanger** (she/her) now works as a chaplain for two hospital systems in the Lehigh Valley (PA). She cares for patients, staff and family members as a part of a holistic medical team. Working for several different trauma centers as well as two behavioral health hospitals allows her to engage in chaplaincy in a variety of ways from crisis management to advocacy. After researching several avenues of endorsement/ordination, Grace chose FCM because it represents her values, provides an active community to engage with and allows for ministry inside an ethical framework and outside of the confines of a specific denomination or tradition. She is hopeful to continue on to become BCCI Certified with the endorsement of FCM in the future.

2023

Northeast Region cont'd

CARL YUSAVITZ, VICE PRESIDENT

Congratulations FCM Northeast Region Members



Alisa Hovagimian Unell (they/she) currently serves in ministry as a Staff Chaplain at Upstate University Hospital in Syracuse, NY. They count it a joy to work with the team there - providing compassionate care to patients and their loved ones and specific care for all the staff. Alisa notes that the work of hospital chaplaincy is such a distinct and specific ministry that has only gotten more complicated as we all learn to navigate the Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing and arising health crises. They understand their work as affirming the joy, beauty, and resilience she sees around them, holding space for distress, grief, and pain. Being part of FCM helps afford them the ability and support to be able to continue in this work. They find their FCM colleagues in ministry to be a huge help and support for a job which can often be difficult and isolating. They are very grateful to be part of this community of ministers.



We had a small, but engaging, gathering in November in the Lehigh Valley (PA): four of us in-person and four on Zoom. Our host was **Mark Bernecker**, FCM Chair of our faith communities. Sharing centered on how we currently understand our "spiritual work" and how that understanding has changed over the years. We ended our first in-person regional gathering (since Covid-19) with prayers for one another and for those we hold in our hearts. We are still open for volunteers from the NE Region (NJ, NY, NYC, Philadelphia, New England) to host a regional gathering at your home. Please contact Carl, if interested.

Ten regional members joined our monthly Zoom gathering in November. The question we grappled with centered around how we experience "blessedness" in our ministry of spiritual care. Our sharing was deep and everyone wished we had more time!

Next NE Region Zoom - January 14th at 9 AM.

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Congratulations Northeast Member Ginny Cusack

FCM member **Ginny Cusack** receives **“Wisdom of the Elders Award”** from Montessori accreditation organization



On Thursday evening December 8 the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) bestowed their **Wisdom of the Elders Award** on Northeast Region member **Ginny Cusack**. Her own words will explain her work and commitment to help the Montessori education philosophy spread, both in the US and especially to now war-torn Ukraine. Her statement reads:

Montessori training changed my life. Implementing the Montessori philosophy in various settings became my passion and thus my life's most rewarding work. My dream of starting an all-day, year-round Montessori school in Princeton NJ became a reality in 1980. My favorite responsibility was working with new teachers. That love motivated me to be a field consultant and a Montessori coordinator for magnet schools in Yonkers, New York. A crucial opportunity to continue what I love came when Marsha Stencel, head of Princeton Montessori School, asked me to start a teacher training center, Princeton Center for Teacher Education (PCTE) on the site of the school. I enjoyed the creativity of writing the AMS infant toddler and early childhood curriculum, training instructors, enrolling students, and acquiring MACTE accreditation. Soon after, I wrote the EL I and II programs [Elementary Level], and eventually the administrators' course as well. Throughout this process I partnered with Marsha, and we created a remarkable and rewarding synergy between us.

Marsha and I, with three Ukrainian educators, became a formidable time team to lead the American Ukrainian Montessori Project beginning in 1994 and remaining active today, despite the war. The PCTE community helped to train Ukrainian teachers, create a model school, travel to Kyiv, give teacher workshops, assist in establishing the Ukrainian Montessori teacher training Center [UMC] and the Ukrainian Montessori Association, and develop its initial administrators' course. Seeing Montessori education flourish throughout regions of Ukraine has been the highlight of my career. It was and is a journey of collaboration and bonding, challenges and success within a community of friendship and love for which I am most grateful.

Currently I serve as UMC accreditation coordinator, USA; and after receiving my Georgetown University Certificate of Leadership Coaching, I coach Montessori leaders and volunteers as a mentor in the [American Montessori Society Emerging Leadership Fellowship] AMS ELF program.

Congratulations, Ginny, from FCM on making a difference in hundreds of lives.

2023

Northeast Members Celebrate

Happy **50th!** Anniversary

Congratulations to: FCM Members Michaelita and Thomas Quinn,

who were married **August 12, 1972**. Tom and Michaelita are past Northeast Region Vice Presidents and also past Presidents of FCM. Michaelita and Tom planned to recreate the Mass and Ceremony at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore. They would invite family and friends who were with them on their wedding day.

However, some family members could no longer travel, some close friends could not be with them, and some had already gone to their heavenly home. The Jesuit priest who officiated their Wedding Mass could not travel to oversee their Renewal of Vows.

They soon realized that their Wedding Anniversary this year was really for the two of THEM and about the two of THEM. So they traveled to Baltimore on August 12, attended the Friday Mass at 5:30 pm in the Mary Chapel behind the main altar, exactly where they were married 50 years ago.

Following the Mass, they knelt in the first row and renewed their vows out loud in a ceremony which Tom developed. The picture with this article shows them in the Mary Chapel after the Mass and renewal of Vows.

They knew they had just celebrated their Anniversary in a very meaningful and sacred way. Just the two of them. Where it all began.



Congratulations to: FCM Members Donna and Daniel Pellegrin,

who were married **September 10, 1972**. Dan is a past Vice President of the Northeast Region. They celebrated their anniversary with a virtual Mass. The presiders of their Anniversary Mass were married FCM members, Rev. Jean Marchant and Rev. Ronald Hindelang.

(revjean.revnon@spiritoflifecommunity.org) Following is a poem that Dan wrote for Donna.



TO DONNA

Then what, pray tell, comes after love,
When it withers not but so grows,
When it leaps fair high to the sky
And iron-anchored be in Mother Earth
below?

For that is us, my heart
Grown long in love and deep and true;
N'er to part, not now, not then
But evermore entwined in love
and laugh and joy.

We are past love. What word for us?

2023



Southern Region

BETH KNIGHT, VICE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year Friends! In 2023, We are upon a new threshold of many possibilities for ourselves and our varied ministries. In such grace-filled ways we thrive and remain resilient in an ever changing world. As such we celebrate and welcome several folks reflected here in this issue. May we all continue to share Light and Hope with the world... "Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, encouraging one another." ~ Hebrews 10:24-25

Congratulations!

Upon the commissioning of these four members of FCM
All serving as Chaplains (Last Quarter 2022)



JILL STREIBINGER, ARCWP
SOUTH CAROLINA



MICHELLE S. GRAHAM, MDIV.
NORTH CAROLINA



TAMERRA DAVIDSON
FLORIDA



WAIN WESBERRY, DMIN
FLORIDA



Commissioning of FCM member
Rev. Wain Wesberry
Saint Vincents Hospital Chapel
Jacksonville, Florida

A prayerful assembly of peer chaplains and mentors for the laying on of hands.

2023

WELCOME New Members

Leigh Ross, North Carolina
Janyth Bryant, Tarpon Springs, FL
Theresa Nicholson, Georgia
Melissa Malinda, Tennessee

BLESSINGS UPON Transfers to our area...

Daneen Warner, North Carolina
Randy Shebek, Florida
Sara Powell, Virginia
Barbara Zeman, Florida
Alfred Burnham, North Carolina

REGION ZOOM GATHERING

DATE: WEDNESDAY
JANUARY 11, 2023
TIME: 6:30 P.M. EST

Watch for the link and reminder in
January.



Great Lakes Region

SHANNON QUEENAN, VICE PRESIDENT

A View from the Great Lakes

Welcome 2023! Welcome to the new year! More on that in a moment...FIRST- get out your new calendar and write down **“Connect and Reflect”** happening on these dates:

Wednesday, January 11 - Monday, March 13 - Tuesday, May 9

Connect and Reflect gatherings are scheduled through Spring on the above dates. We meet at 7:30 p.m. for one hour of reflection and sharing. Everyone in the region receives an email invite with a Zoom link to join the gathering.

Celebrations! The Circle approved **Agata Wyszynski** and **Jeanne Moore** for Commissioning at our last quarter meeting of 2022. **Susan Loving** was approved at the previous meeting and recently joined Aggie for a shared service at St. Hildegard’s with Pastor **Rev. Shanon Sterringer**.



FCM COMMISSIONINGS COMMUNITY OF ST. HILDEGARD

FROM THE LEFT:
REVS. DONNA CAPUTO
SUSAN LOVING
AGATA WYSZYNSKI
SHANON STERRINGER

A new year always feels fresh and full of possibilities. As members of FCM, each of us has a responsibility to our community. In this new year I encourage you to do two things: **recommit to your ministerial colleague relationship AND pray daily for FCM as a healing agent in the world.** If we connect with each other and pray for each other, we can trust the Spirit will guide and strengthen us in our shared mission.

In this new year, my term as Great Lakes VP will draw to a close. I began as your VP just prior to the pandemic kicking up and turning the world on its head. My time in this role was framed in Zoom “squares” on the computer more than I could ever have guessed. And yet, what I will remember is the grace, love and generosity with which you serve. I appreciate the gentle kindness that you showed to me as together we navigated an unprecedented time.

A Blessing for the New Year:

May there be kindness in your gaze when you look within.
May you never place walls between the light and yourself.
May your angel free you from prisons of guilt, fear, disappointment and despair.
May you allow the wild beauty of the invisible world to gather you, mind you
and embrace you in belonging.

John O’Donohue

2023



Mountains & Plains Region

MARY VIDAS, VICE PRESIDENT

“Every sunset is an opportunity to reset. Every sunrise is God’s way of saying, “Let’s start again” Blessings Be, T. Stocker.

Letting Go, Starting New

I finally made good on my resolution to donate a cherished trumpet I had to a local music program. As I was polishing the well-worn brass, a rush of memories surfaced and I was once again sitting in the brass section of my high school band; and standing in front of me was Mr. Baldrice, our band director whose patience was renowned! Often during rehearsals, he would wave his hands in an attempt to stop the cacophony of sound followed by, “Ok, ok, folks, I’m just not hearing the clarinets as loud as they need to be. And oboes, you need to come in on the downbeat of the third stanza.” After sweeping the room, connecting eye to eye with each “musician” before him, he’d smile, hold his baton high, and pronounce those perineal words, “How about we start over, taking it again from the beginning!” As you can imagine, it was amazing how much better we sounded! Letting go, starting new. I must admit, I was surprised at the emotions and memories this one small act of charity produced. Yet, it felt good to know an honorable transition was about to occur.

As we start this new year, hail new beginnings, fresh starts, and do-overs! Hail to the possibilities, opportunities, and blessings to come! And as February reminds us of the love we carry in our hearts, may we also offer the same to others. And may it be so! Peace, Mary

CONGRATULATIONS! Recent Endorsements

Rev. Annetta Lansdown - Annetta currently serves full-time as a Staff Chaplain at Advocate Aurora Good Samaritan Medical Center in Downers Grove, IL.

Rev. Erlinda Perlado-Mertens - Erlinda is currently a Triage Chaplain with Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis.

Rev. Jennifer Underwood - Jennifer serves as an Oncology Staff Chaplain at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

New Area Representative!

We are pleased to welcome **Rev. Stephanie Johnson** as FCM Area Representative for MN/SD.

Stephanie lives in Arden Hills, MN with her husband (Jake) and their four children (Maizy, Berkeley, Emery and Ivy: ages 14-8). Her first iteration of ministry was in Junior High Youth Ministry for the better part of 13 years. She received her Master of Divinity in Interreligious Chaplaincy from United Theological Seminary, St. Paul, MN and was commissioned through FCM.



Stephanie Johnson and Family

Since then, Stephanie has worked as a Chaplain in both long-term care and hospice. Currently, Stephanie works as a Chaplain at Mercy Hospital part-time. Stephanie shared her appreciation of the FCM community and is excited to connect with FCM members in the Minnesota/South Dakota area.

2023

Mountains & Plains Region - contd.

MARY VIDAS, VICE PRESIDENT

Regional Reconfiguration

As you've heard, the Circle has approved reconfiguring our current regions (former 5) and creating 3 new regions (total 8). Our Mountains and Plains will now be split into 2 regions with the north central states to be called "Lakes and Plains" (8 member states) and the southern states "South Central" (7 member states). New regional vice presidents will also be named soon. For a bit more detail, please see FCM Chair, Christy Howard-Steele's article in the September/October 2022 newsletter.

I look forward to serving as Vice President for the Lakes and Plains Region which now includes: **Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.** And, as our Lakes and Plains Region takes form, here are some of the initiatives we hope to integrate for the benefit of members.

1. Area Representatives to be named and confirmed in each state/geographic area.
2. Strengthen local area membership, support and connections.
3. New Regional Committees to be formed in 2023:

*Creation of **WELCOMING COMMITTEE** led by Area Representative with VP input.

*Creation of **REGIONAL GATHERING COMMITTEE** led by VP & Area Representatives.

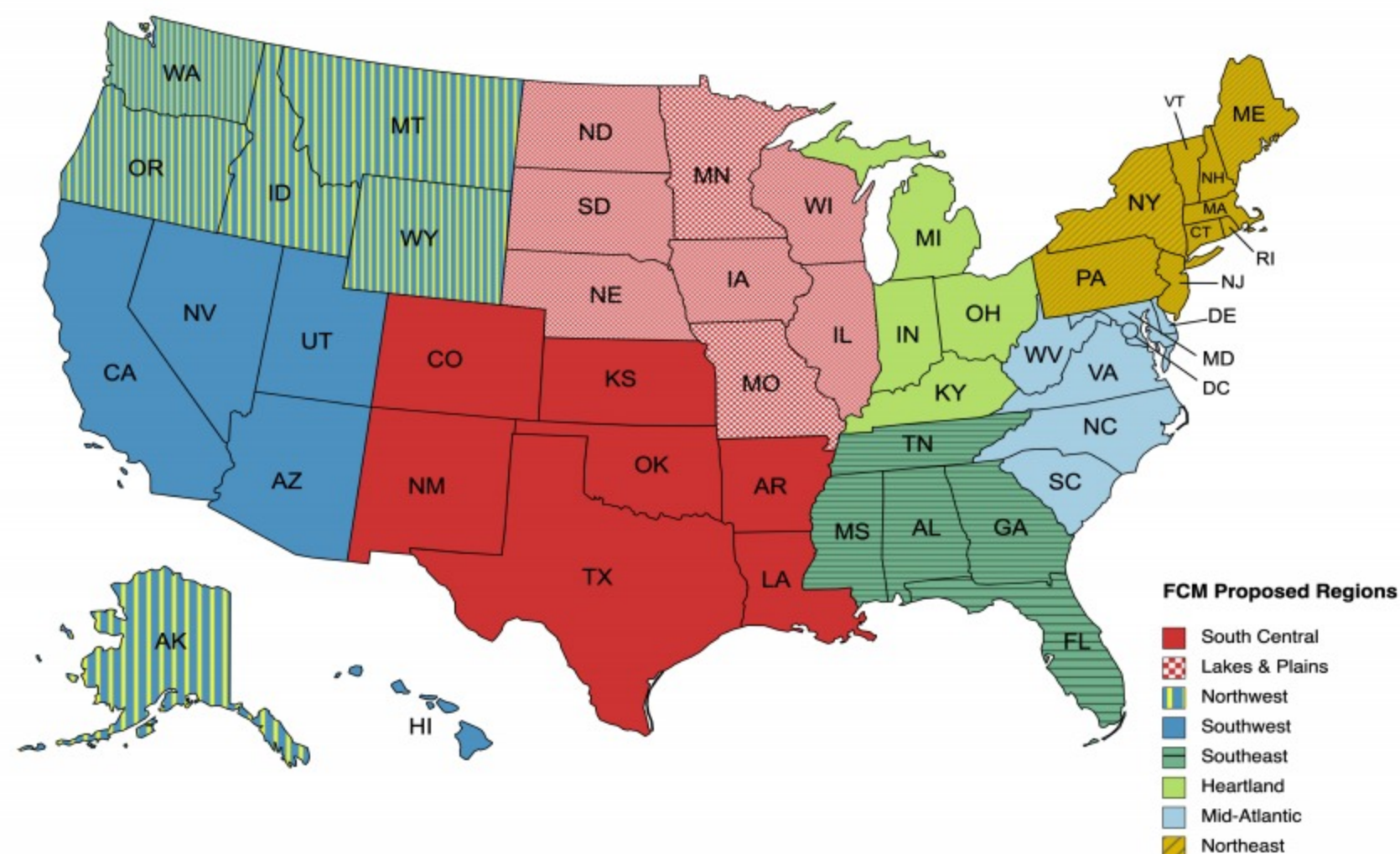
*Creation of **COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE** led by VP with Area Representatives' input offering support and encouragement to Commissioning & Endorsement Candidates.

4. Continue to hold Regional and Area Zoom meetings

5. Host 2023 Regional "In person" gathering of Lakes and Plains members.

Other: For South Central members who have been working with me during the last quarter of 2022 regarding Commissioning & Endorsement, know that I will continue to support you in the process.

This truly is an exciting time for FCM, allowing us to know more than we are capable of knowing by ourselves, as we embody the values of belonging, compassion, empowerment, equity and mindful living!



Created with mapchart.net

January/February
Vol. 57 No. 1



NEWSLETTER EDITORS
Carole duBois
Sandy Tracy

Newsletter Email: newsletter@FCMmail.org

The FCM Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Federation of Christian Ministries, a non-profit religious body. As the informational publication of FCM, its mission is to keep members current with the organization and its activities, to provide ideas to further ministry and to promote community building among local FCM groups and the national organization. All current members receive a copy. Articles and feedback are welcomed and can be sent to : newsletter@FCMmail.org by the 4th of each month (February, April, June, August, October and December). FCM member-submitted articles should aim for 500 words and 2-3 selected photos in MS Word and JPG formats.

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FCM CERTIFICATES

These lovely certificates are available from the FCM Central Office. Please specify your choice: Baptism, Marriage, Holy Union, and the number of certificates you need. Certificates are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Each certificate is printed on certificate weight paper in blue ink; they carry the FCM logo and seal.

FCM Membership & Realm

REALM ADMINISTRATOR & MEMBERSHIP

Emails: connect@FCMmail.org - membership@FCMmail.org

FCM Registry

FCM BAPTISM AND WEDDING REGISTRIES ARE NOW ON www.onrealm.org
Sacramental Registry - Click EVENTS AND FOLLOW DIRECTIONS
for additional help Email: registry@fcmail.org or connect@fcmail.org

Endorsement for Specialized Ministries

Qualified FCM members may apply for "Religious Body Endorsement" for the specialized ministries of Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling, and Clinical Pastoral Education. Such endorsement is required by professional certifying organizations and many institutional employers. The FCM Circle of Directors acts on endorsement applications three times yearly. Endorsement application materials are available for downloading on the FCM website at:

www.federationofchristianministries.org

Inquiries may be made by email at: specmin@FCMmail.org

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GMU offers degree completion programs, certificates, a Celebrant Training Program, and individual courses online. FCM members are eligible for a 5% discount on degree programs. **For more information, visit the web site:**

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