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March/April

Vol. 57 No. 2



Federation of Christian Ministries
NEWSLETTER



Federation of Christian Ministries

March/April 2023...Vol. 57 No. 2



Alleluia!



He is risen!



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Final Letter from the President

Ron Davis

It has truly been a blessing to serve on the Federation of Christian Ministries Circle from 2010 - 2022. I enjoyed serving as Great Lakes Region Vice President (2010 – 2019), then as President from 2020 – 2022. Thank you for blessing me with an opportunity to serve our community.

As I step down from leadership in FCM, I have peace in my heart that this is the right time to focus on my work and my family. Ministry begins at home, and my life pulls me in many different directions. I recognize there are challenges at home that need more attention. This led me to talk to the Executive Committee and ask for their blessing as I transition away from FCM leadership.

FCM is going through tremendous growth. Chaplains seek commissioning and endorsement through FCM. Our Vice Presidents and administrators are busy meeting, encouraging and working with them to pursue their callings. FCM's hand of inclusion, grace and diversity is at work in hospitals and other specialized ministries. We've expanded into new regions and welcomed new VPs to serve in them so that we can provide more service to our growing community. FCM has started a second year with our part-time administrator. This initiative has been a tremendous success. We are thankful to have Bill on our team and for the work he does for FCM.

My heart and prayers are with FCM, the Circle and all FCM members. I pray that God will enlarge our reach across America—that we will continue to be a strong, inclusive, life giving organization where people can see the beauty of God and serve one another well. Amen.

Grace & Peace,

Rev. Ron Davis, MDiv, BCC





Chairperson

CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE
CHAIRPERSON@FCMMAIL.ORG

CIRCULAR MOVEMENT

COMINGS...

PRESIDENT



The Circle appointed president-elect **Thomas Cusack** as Federation of Christian Ministries President to complete the remaining term of Ron Davis who was led to step down from his leadership position. Tom, a former Catholic priest, has been a member of FCM since 2000. He has served in various positions on the Circle for 13 years including treasurer and president.

Tom retired from a 44-year career in financial services. He is a member of the of the Endowment Committee where he will continue to serve as a representative of the Circle. In Tom's words, he is committed to the mission of FCM, to its growth and well-being."

Welcome back Tom! We look forward to your leadership and direction in the coming years.

Tom's contact information is:
Email: president@fcmmail.org
Phone: (609) 947-0770

VICE PRESIDENT, MID-ATLANTIC REGION



FCM's Executive Committee appointed **Susan Loving** to the position of Vice President of the new Mid-Atlantic region. Susan has been a member of FCM since 2022. She currently works as a hospice chaplain; a role she says gives her flexibility to serve FCM. Susan is also a teacher of communication skills and Christian education. Susan's vision of leadership is "providing empowerment and affirmation while inviting others to join and offer sacred space to learn, grow, and bloom."

Susan's contact information is:
Email: midatlanticvp@fcmmail.org
Phone: (214) 697-0098

COMINGS...

VICE PRESIDENT, NORTHWEST REGION



FCM's Executive Committee appointed **Zachary Wheat** to the position of Vice President of the new Northwest Region. Zack has been a member of FCM since 2018. Zack currently works as the inpatient palliative care chaplain in Portland OR. Zack "feels energized by community, celebrating folks, and connecting with people who might have missed each other." As VP, Zack hopes to bring his creativity, passion, and expertise to the role.

Zack's contact information is:
Email: northwestvp@fcmmail.org
Phone: (904) 588-5097

GOINGS...

WITH MUCH GRATITUDE FOR YOUR FAITHFUL SERVICE

RON DAVIS - FCM PRESIDENT



Ron has been a member of FCM since 2010. He has served the Circle of Directors for 12 years, first as Regional Vice President for the Great Lakes (now Heartland) Region, and most recently as FCM President. Ron is a father, spouse, and chaplain. He is best known to us who have worked with him on FCM's Circle for his pastoral heart. Thank you, thank you, Ron, for your 12 years of service!!! We wish you well as you move forward.

SALVADOR LEAVITT-ALCANTARA – FCM COMMISSIONING CHAIR



Salvador has been a member of FCM since 2014. He joined the Circle of Directors in 2022. It is a loss to FCM that Salvador has resigned his position as FCM Commissioning Chair due to his family responsibilities and professional demands as a chaplain and manager of Spiritual Care Research. Blessings, Salvador and thank you for your service!



Chairperson

CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE
CHAIRPERSON@FCMMAIL.ORG

News From the Circle Meeting

It is always good to gather with other Federation of Christian Ministries members, and the February Circle meeting was no exception!

On Thursday evening, our group welcomed new and first time in-person Circle members and guests, and checked in with one another. On Friday and Saturday, we worked hard discussing, debating, asking questions, and making decisions for the present and the future. Much of the weekend, we laughed and enjoyed each other's company.

Some of the decisions the Circle made included:

- Appointed president-elect Tom Cusack as president for the remainder of president Ron Davis' term.
- Approved 6 candidates for commissioning
- Approved 4 candidates for endorsement
- Created a committee to recommend an improved process for orienting new members and engaging current members in FCM
- Approved the recommendation by the Endowment Committee to raise the distribution percentage to 35% from 10% of the Annual Accumulated Appreciation.
Note: only the earnings (Appreciation) can be distributed. The principal (donations) will continue to be invested in order to yield earnings.
- Appointed Tracy Peterson to the endowment committee.
- Changed the Commissioning Chair position to the Background Check Coordinator position, a non-Circle position.

Work to be followed up in subsequent meetings includes:

- Volunteers needed for the following appointed positions:
 - o Secretary (term expires 7/2023)
 - o Newsletter Co-Editor (one co-editor is resigning)
 - o 2024 National Assembly Committee - we have 2 members; and need at least 2-3 more.
 - o Ethics Committee members (terms expires 7/2023)

(Please email chairperson@fcmmail.org if you are interested in serving in one of these positions.)

- We continue to lament the number of members who do not renew within the specified timeframe.
- We had a significant discussion around Who We Are as FCM. There is significant concern that the statement on the website does not convey or reflect members' experiences of FCM. A less technical and more wholistic statement is being drafted. Stay tuned for more updates.

New Regions are in effect!





President

TOM CUSACK
PRESIDENT@FCMMAIL.ORG

New Things, Old Things

New Things

Hello FCM, again. I am honored and surprised to take on the responsibilities of Presidency of FCM five months before my term was to begin in July. Despite this surprise, I love this job and I love FCM. So, I am getting into the mix right away.

I met the Circle of Directors members in Chicago at the Circle meeting there. This is a dedicated and dynamic group of people, leading FCM. My thanks to the veteran members with their experiences and to the new members, who are bringing new insights to FCM leadership. The discussions at the Circle meeting are already moving into projects that will affect all of us in FCM.

One new committee is delving into questions of how we in FCM describe ourselves to the public. Words are important as they convey our reality to others. This committee's work is essential at a time of rapid societal evolution. I am confident that the outcomes and decisions flowing from this committee will be of great benefit to us.

A second committee is looking at the ways in which FCM as an institution brings onboard new members (or not) and generates involvement as new members settle into FCM. I believe that this committee's work will have a very positive effect on our cohesion as a faith community. A community requires interaction between its members. We can grow this interaction going forward.

A third committee is working to develop a structured plan of training and support for our new vice presidents. The critical position of vice president is the front-line position for FCM as an organization. Mentoring by experienced members of new vice presidents will be emphasized. Written materials about the operations of FCM and its history will be reviewed. The programs developed by this committee will be ongoing and over time will enlarge so more members become familiar with FCM leadership positions.

Old Things

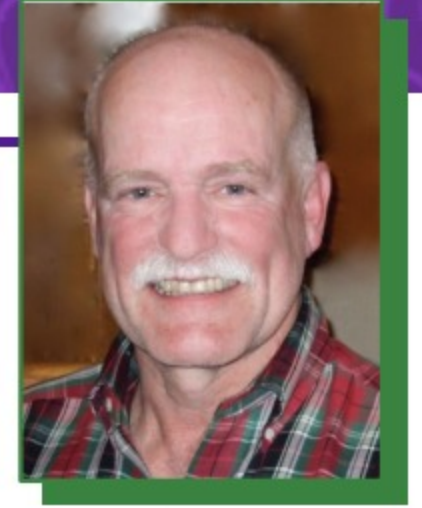
I believe a critical aspect of our community's endeavors is our focus on growing spiritually. I see a necessary part of our FCM work as the personal involvement of each member in their prayer and meditation lives. I recommend structured time to you all for prayer and meditation. I also ask you to carve out some time to attend the FCM Prayer Gathering which occurs every Thursday evening at 8 PM EST. The Prayer Gathering is always led by an FCM member who brings their spiritual expression to the fore. It is always inspirational. Please plan to join the Prayer Gathering at least on a quarterly basis to dip into the ongoing spirituality of FCM and its members.

Finally, please pray for FCM daily along this line: 2 x 2 4 FCM. This little formula can be read as, "two minutes of prayer and two minutes of meditation for the benefit of FCM." With this spiritual generator humming every day through our entire membership, FCM's future will be assured as a glowing example of the presence of Christ among us.



A Report to the FCM Membership and

A History of our Permanent Endowment Fund



TOM STRICKER
ENDOWMENT CHAIR

How far we have come!

We began the discussion about having an Endowment in 2016. When the Circle voted to start an endowment, our first job was to raise more than \$10,000. This was the amount required to start an account with Vanguard. In 2017 we started collecting donations and by 2018 we had the funds to begin. Here is our annual account of the monies we raised.

Year	Donation Amount
2017/2018	\$13,110.00
2019	\$23,839.00
2020	\$14,930.00
2021	\$34,350.00
2022	\$26,560.00

In just the first five years of Our Permanent Endowment Fund, we have received \$112,789 in donations.

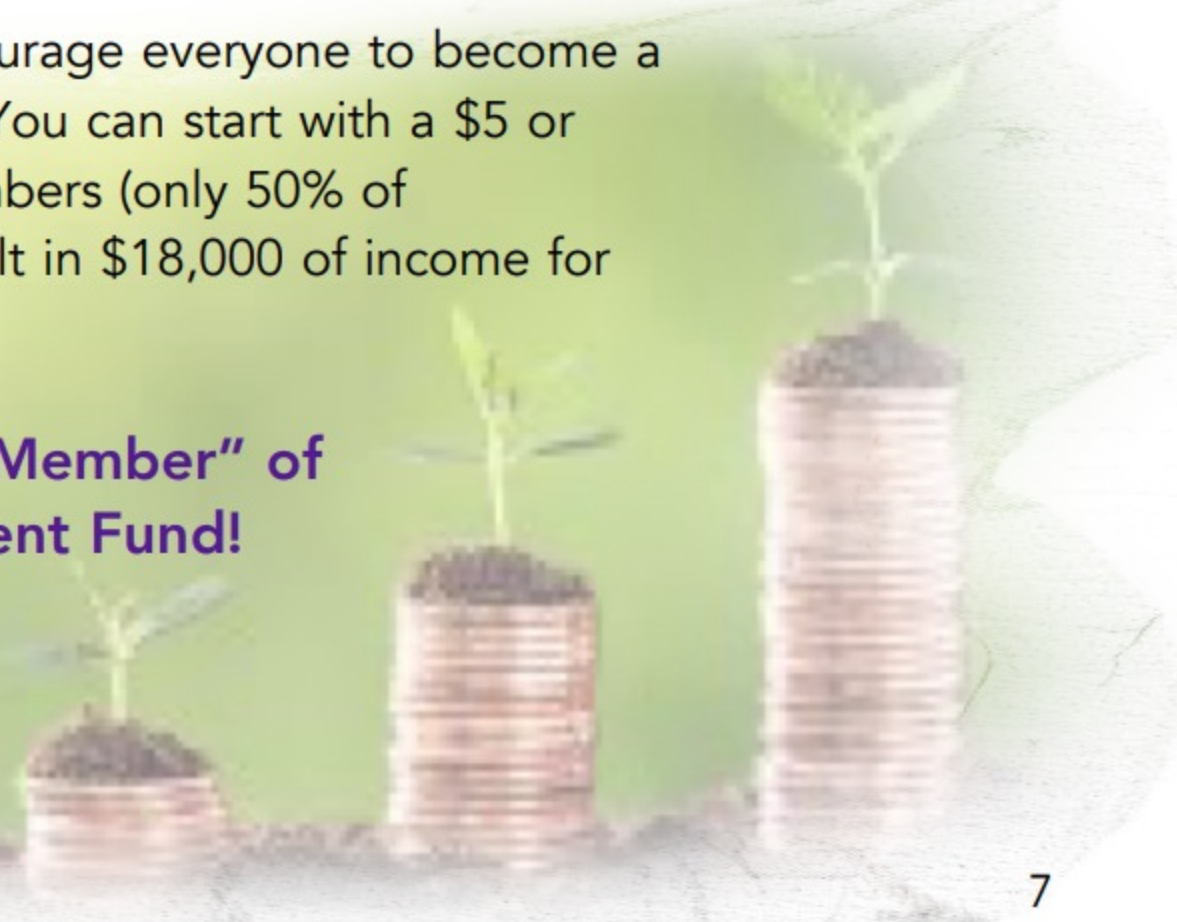
We now have a total of \$121,306 in OUR FCM Permanent Endowment Fund!

We have not lost any of our donations, even with the difficult times we have all faced in the Market. For this I credit Tom Cusack's wise investments.

Our Permanent Endowment Fund Committee is pleased to announce that the following change in the Permanent Endowment Policy was voted by the Circle and passed with a 11-2 vote to change the percentage of Accumulated Appreciation distribution from 10% to 35%.

We, the FCM Permanent Endowment Committee, encourage everyone to become a **"Sustaining Member"** by becoming a monthly donor. You can start with a \$5 or \$10 monthly donation. If we could get 300 of our members (only 50% of membership) to donate \$5.00 a month, that would result in \$18,000 of income for our FCM Permanent Endowment Fund.

**Consider becoming a "Sustaining Member" of
OUR FCM Permanent Endowment Fund!**





FCM Endowment Fund

TOM STRICKER, CHAIRPERSON

Thank You

VALUE AS OF 2/23/2023
\$120,200.00

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

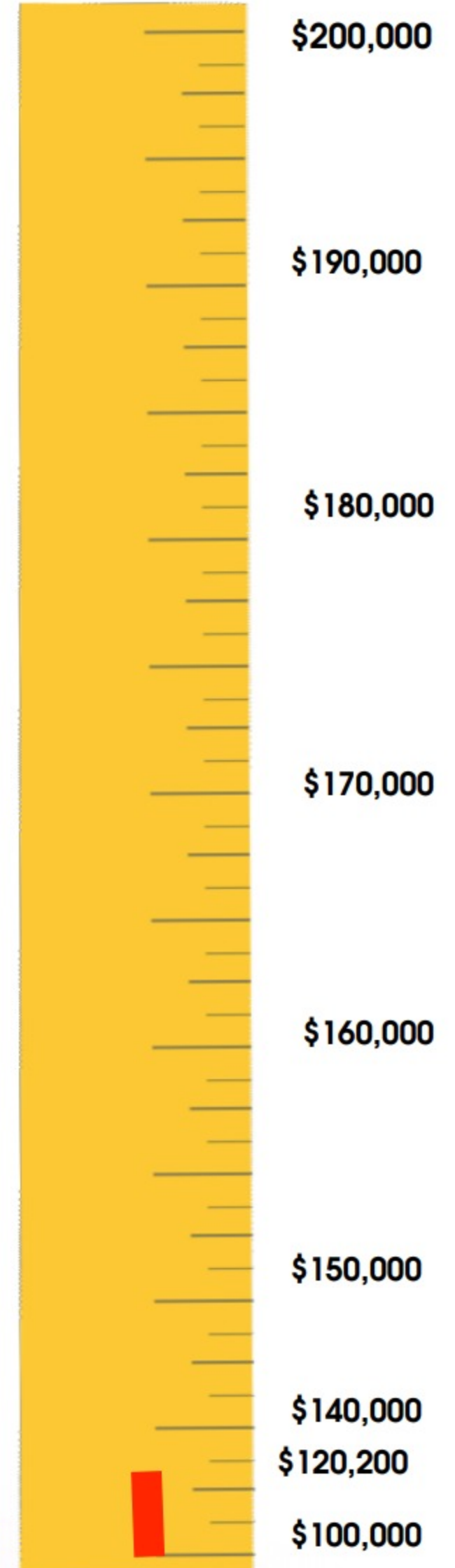
Tribute Gift

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@fcmmail.org



Measuring Our Success





My Journey with the Endowment Fund

by Tracy Peterson

Hi, all, my name is **Tracy Peterson** and I used to be the Pacific Region Vice President. During one of our Circle meetings, we learned about the FCM Endowment Fund from **Tom Stricker** and **Tom Cusack**. During that time, I asked a lot of questions about the purpose of the fund and why should I consider it important. Both of the Toms talked about the importance of leaving behind a legacy for those who would follow and to make a difference in the world around us.

And while I agree that is important, what I felt was more important was the ability to help members who want to further their education, start new church communities or develop new ministries under the FCM umbrella. So, I talked it over with my husband Steve and we decided that we wanted to donate monthly to the Endowment Fund. We've been donating over a year now and the Fund is finally at a point where members can submit grant proposals and the Fund can be used for the exact purpose it was created, to help our members make a difference in the world!

I'm really glad that we have had the opportunity to help FCM make a difference with the Endowment Fund and I want to encourage our members to commit to make a monthly donation of \$5. You would think that \$5 wouldn't make that much of a difference but it does! It all adds up and in doing so, you are committing to making a difference in the world.

I encourage everyone to become "Sustaining Members" by becoming a monthly donor through a \$5.00 or \$10.00 a month donation. If we could get 300 of our members (only 50% of membership) to donate \$5.00 a month that would result in \$18,000 of income for OUR FCM Permanent Endowment Fund.

Become a "Sustaining Member of OUR FCM Permanent Endowment Fund!"



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 min. "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, MD
- ❖ Horizon Prison Initiative: London Correctional Institution, London, OH
- ❖ Hildegarden: Herbal Sanctuary at the Hildegard Haus,
The Faith Community of St. Hildegard, Fairport Harbor, OH 44077

Friendly reminder: **March 6th is the deadline for all applications** (postmarked or sent digitally on that date). Circle approval will take place May, 2023 and funding 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@fcmmail.org

If you have any questions or need assistance in sending your application, don't hesitate to contact us at grant@fcmmail.org. or call 651-303-6005.

Blessings!

FCM Grant Committee
Heidi Tierney, Shannon Queenan, Mary Vidas





Faith Communities of FCM

New Ministries for a New Millennium

MARK BERNEKER, CHAIR

In a number of past newsletters you've gotten a glimpse into the ministry of a number of FCM faith communities. In this issue, I'll try to answer the questions, "What are FCM faith communities?" and "How can I be part of a faith community of FCM?"

What are FCM Faith Communities?

Faith Communities of FCM are defined by the Biblical concept that "where two or more are gathered in Christ's name, God is present." (Matthew 8:20) The FCM Constitution states "like the early Christian communities, we believe that the people of God, whenever and wherever they gather, are church."

All types of FCM Faith Communities join in our common mission of inclusive ministries. In addition, these communities embrace FCM's core values of Belonging, Compassion, Empowerment, Equity, and Mindful Living. FCM Faith Communities are people coming together to find common ground for common good, to grow spiritually, to be inspired, and to be of service to one another and others.

This definition is intentionally broad to include people who choose to gather in unique, non-traditional ways, for a variety of purposes, and a multitude of beliefs. We, the members of FCM, are people dedicated to living out our common mission of responding to the Divine Call by empowering and nurturing those inspired for inclusive ministries. Our faith communities should reflect that common mission.

To read more about FCM Communities go to <http://fcmfc.org>.

Being Part of a Faith Community of FCM

You can become a member of an existing faith community. Currently, faith communities are located across the country. You may find a community in your area that meets in person. Some of these communities meet in person and online, while others meet only online.

To check out our existing communities go to <http://communities.fcmfc.org>.

If you have people in your life who have moved away from traditional churches but are looking for meaningful ways to find spiritual nurturing as well as to connect with others, you might consider creating a community. Size doesn't matter in becoming a faith community of FCM. This type of small faith community is often called a House Church.

An article discussing house churches can be found at <http://files.fcmfc.org/housechurch.pdf>.

To learn more about the benefits of becoming an FCM Community go to <http://fcmfc.org>.

If you are interested in becoming part of a specialized community of other FCM members, there are communities, such as the the chaplain gatherings, that meet monthly online. This initiative started a couple of months ago through Realm. I can help you with that start-up, but you can also set it up on Realm. Just use the FCM group chat on Realm, and every member who has email notifications turned on will receive your invitation.

Contact me at faithcommunity@FCMmail.org for more information or help.

Webinars Sponsored by the Faith Communities Committee

March 13: Inclusivity: It's our mission! - This is an opportunity to understand about and learn how we can welcome transgender individuals. Madeline (Maddie) Marlett will lead this webinar. Leader of the DignityUSA Young Adult caucus, Madeline Marlett is a queer transwoman who is passionate about providing accurate facts and moving stories about the transgender community and their experiences. From being the first person to come out as transgender at her place of work, to volunteering with PFLAG to give corporate trainings and share her story, Madeline hopes to bring the inherent good out of all, leading to greater understanding and acceptance of transgender people.

April 24: Do we see eye to eye? - Different generations have different concepts of religion and spirituality. How can we minister across the spectrum of these generational views?

Patty Stricker will share her research into different concepts of religion and spirituality. Patty is a FCM member in the Heartland Region. She ministers as a Hospice Trainer of Caring Angels and as a honored leader in Dignity USA. She also serves on the Faith Community Committee of FCM and is a leader in Living Beatitudes Community.

God Opened Another Door

SANDRA SCHMIDT, FCM



My ministry has been with the dying for many years. Although hesitant to retire, I heard a soft inner voice telling me to do so. Working with patients at a cancer wellness center partially filled the void after retirement, but that ministry was not the same.

So, I was excited to hear of a comfort care home for the indigent scheduled to be built entirely by donation in Akron. We needed this support for the terminally ill who are alone or without adequate or safe housing.

That care home, **Grace House Akron** was built and is now thriving. This comfort home is grounded in the knowing that there are too many underserved individuals in our community at the end of their life with nowhere to go or without adequate care. Grace House staff administers medication provided by the hospice involved with the resident, and volunteers fill all other roles.

A care home is not a new idea but greatly needed. Chaplains volunteer to sit in vigil with the dying, offer support to the resident and family and to celebrate birthdays. Even pets are welcomed and provide love and support. A cat lovingly cares for patients and staff.

If this story stirs your heart, see if there is a comfort care home near you. Omegahomenetwork.org has a listing of many comfort care homes across the country where you may volunteer.

As one care home resident said, "It just means that God looks after everyone."



FCM Prayer

by Anthony Ercolano, FCM

Dear FCM member,
Please include this as part of your daily
prayer/devotion:

FCM Prayer

Holy One,
Source of all that is,
You marvelously create and sustain all in Being.
We ask you to bless the work of our Federation.
May we be a sign to all of your presence.
May our communities be churches
where we are supported
and where we can offer support to one another -
all while embracing our differences
as well as our common humanity.
And, as we serve in your Name,
may we see and reverence
Your Divine Presence in each other,
In those to whom we minister,
and in all Reality.
Amen!



FCM Anniversaries



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.

CAROLYN HORVATH

March/April

25 Years

John Grossman	4/29/1998	Heartland Region
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15 Years

Louis Mattina	3/25/2008	Northeast Region
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10 Years

Lin Elizabeth Preiss	3/03/2013	Northwest Region
Maryann Crilly	3/10/2013	Northeast Region
Sanctuary of Peace	3/10/2013	Northeast Region
Sandi Schmidt	3/27/2013	Heartland Region
Roxann Nammour	4/05/2013	Northwest Region
Alfred Burnham	4/09/2013	Mid-Atlantic Region
Maureen Collins	4/25/2013	Northeast Region
Christian Williams	4/26/2013	Southwest Region

5 Years

Frank Ferguson	3/20/2018	Mid-Atlantic Region
Susan Iliff	4/02/2018	Northeast Region
Michael Woods	4/09/2018	Southeast Region
Christopher Young	4/16/2018	Heartland Region
Naomi Luderman	4/19/2018	Lakes & Plains Region
Cassandra Wood	4/19/2018	Southeast Region

FCM Faith Community

The Living Beatitudes Community Dayton, Ohio

Our Journey to Understanding why Good People Disagree on Politics and Religion



The Living Beatitudes Community, a FCM member community in Dayton, Ohio, is sponsoring series of three educational programs. "Our Journey to Understanding why Good People Disagree on Politics and Religion",

Feb. 18 "Our Journey to understanding Implicit Bias" and coming up on **March 18 "Our Journey to Understanding Transgender orientation"**.

The first in the series was held January 21, 2023 was led by Dr. Robert Obach, a University of Dayton professor. We had 45 individuals attend the Saturday session. It was an informative and growthful experience with many of the attendees expressing on their evaluation sheets that they gained a new way to communicate, understand and approach family members and friends with whom they have different opinions on issues. We are looking forward to our next two in the series.

FCM Registry

New Process for FCM Sacramental Registry

A new process for the FCM Sacramental Registry which is 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 informatio 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.

Published book explains the important role of interfaith education in alleviating violent extremism in Kenya and the rest of the world

'Burying the Sword' by Gerald Grudzen is set for a new marketing campaign

SAN JOSE, Calif., Feb. 2, 2023 /PRNewswire-PRWeb/ -- Following their time in Nairobi to take part in a major interfaith program, Gerald Grudzen and his wife also met Judy Walter, his wife's life-long friend who is a Maryknoll Lay Missioner working in the largest slum of Mombasa (aka Bangladesh). While they were there, they learned of the interfaith conflict resulting from the incursion of Al Shabab terrorists infiltrating the coastal region of Kenya. Grudzen was asked to give a talk to the Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics on the importance of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims. The chairman of the council asked him to raise money for interfaith education programs in the Mombasa region and he was able to raise funds to start what became a decade long series of education program in Kenya.

Set for a new marketing campaign, "Burying the Sword" (published by AuthorHouse in February 2017) analyzes the historical and political context in which various forms of violent extremism (jihadism) have emerged in the Middle East, Europe, and in Africa since the 911 attacks. Grudzen believes the growth of the jihadism can be attributed in part to the oppressive regimes of the Middle East, which have curtailed the democratic impulses of their youth. For him, alternative youth movements can serve as a source of inspiration and model for renewal of these regions. This book also analyzes the role that technology can play in organizing future youth movements and serve as part of an interfaith educational program that has already been initiated in Kenya. Furthermore, Grudzen stresses the need for new models of interfaith education in public and private school throughout Africa to counteract the growth of extremist ideologies among the youth of this region.

"There is no other book of which I am aware that provides the historical background to conflicts between the two largest monotheistic religions and provides and provides a path forward to improving relations between through interfaith education. This book shares a possible solution to religious and political fundamentalism," Grudzen says. When asked what he wants readers to take away from the book, he answered, "Christians and Muslims can collaborate to build a harmonious society in diverse parts of the world."

The international interfaith conference titled "Walking Together in the Light of Fratelli Tutti and Laudato Si" co-sponsored by Global Ministries University(GMU), The Institute for Interreligious Dialogue and Islamic Studies at Tangaza University (IRDIS) and the Harmony Institute of Kenya in alliance with the UN World Interfaith Harmony week will be held on Feb. 2-4, 2023.

Grudzen is the president of Global Ministries University, which established the interfaith education program in Kenya featured in this book. Visit globalministriesuniversity.org/.

<https://www.authorhouse.com/en/bookstore/bookdetails/755655-Burying-the-Sword>

About the Author

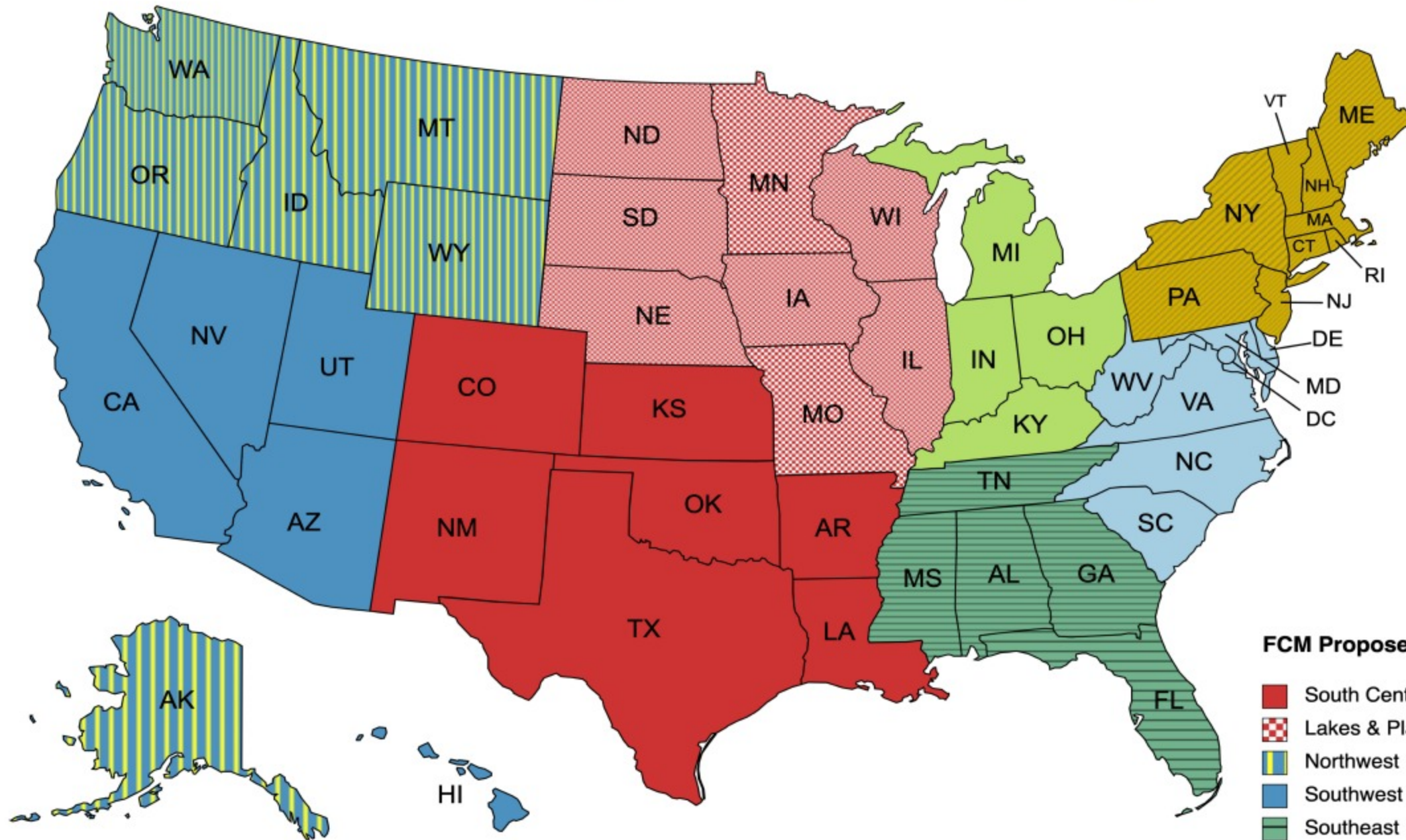
Gerald Grudzen teaches Philosophy, History and Religious Studies for San Jose City College and The University of Phoenix. He has earned three graduate degrees in History and Philosophy from Columbia University in New York. He also has earned Master of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees from Maryknoll School of Theology, Maryknoll, New York.

He is author or co-author of three books on interfaith issues since 2007. He also serves as president of Global Ministries University which is a graduate studies program affiliated with the **Federation of Christian Ministries** and the Buddhist Mahidol University in Bangkok, Thailand.

He received a Templeton Foundation award for research that he did at Oxford University's Ian Ramsey Centre for Religion and Science. This research focused on the transfer of Arabic philosophy and science into the early medieval curriculum of the major intellectual centers in Europe during the 11th and 12th centuries. Grudzen did this research in conjunction with a Bangladeshi scholar, Dr. Shamsur Rahman. It was published as "Spirituality and Science: Greek, Judeo Christian and Islamic Perspectives (Author House: 2007; Revised Edition: 2014).

FCM New Regions

FCM New Regions went into effect January 1, 2023



FCM Proposed Regions

- South Central
- Lakes & Plains
- Northwest
- Southwest
- Southeast
- Heartland
- Mid-Atlantic
- Northeast

South Central
VP Soon to be appointed

- Colorado
- Kansas
- New Mexico
- Oklahoma
- Arkansas
- Texas
- Louisiana

Lakes & Plains
Mary Vidas, VP
lakesplainsvp@fcmmail.org

- North Dakota
- South Dakota
- Nebraska
- Minnesota
- Iowa
- Missouri
- Wisconsin
- Illinois

Northwest
Zachary Wheat, VP
northwestvp@fcmmail.org

- Alaska
- Washington
- Oregon
- Idaho
- Montana
- Wyoming

Southwest
Daniel Windham, VP
southwestvp@fcmmail.org

- California
- Nevada
- Utah
- Arizona
- Hawaii

Northeast
Carl Yusavitz, VP
northeastvp@fcmmail.org

- Pennsylvania
- New Jersey
- Rhode Island
- New York
- Connecticut
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- Vermont
- Maine

Heartland
Shannon Queenan, VP
heartlandvp@fcmmail.org

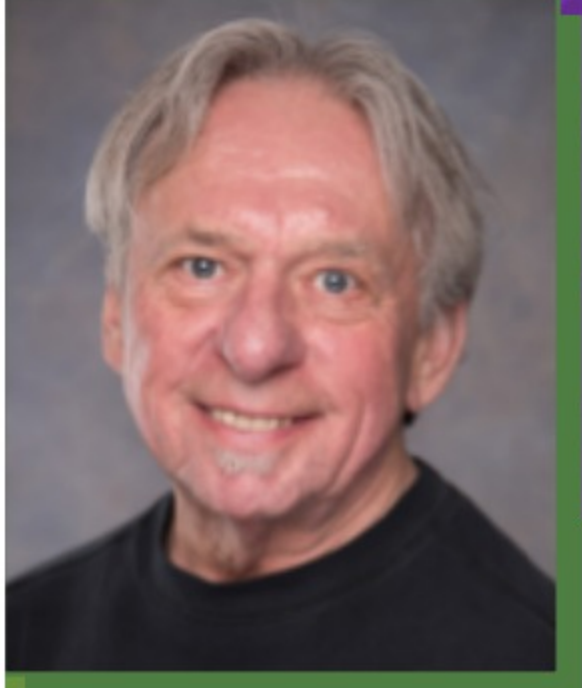
- Michigan
- Indiana
- Ohio
- Kentucky

Mid-Atlantic
Susan Loving, VP
midatlanticvp@fcmmail.org

- West Virginia
- Virginia
- Delaware
- Maryland
- Washington DC
- North Carolina
- South Carolina

Southeast
Beth Knight, VP
southeastvp@fcmmail.org

- Tennessee
- Mississippi
- Alabama
- Georgia
- Florida



Northeast Region

Carl Yusavitz, Vice President
northeastvp@FCMmail.org

Congratulations to Federation of Christian Ministries Commissioned members **Grace Newswanger** and **Alisa Hovagimian Unell** who were granted Endorsement at our February Circle of Directors meeting in Chicago. Grace is a chaplain in Lehigh Valley, PA and Alisa is a chaplain in Syracuse, NY.

Congratulations also to FCM member **Alicia Ware** who was granted FCM Commissioning at the FCM Circle meeting. Here are Alicia's words:



"I am a lifelong native of Newburgh, New York. I was born into a family with blended faith traditions. My mother is a Baptist, and my father was Catholic. My parents allowed me to explore several faiths, which allowed me the opportunity to gain an understanding and respect for other spiritual beliefs. My baccalaureate studies were at Mount Saint Mary's College, Newburgh, NY, and I did graduate work at Liberty University where I received an M.A. in Theological Studies in 2020 and an M. Div. (concentration in Healthcare Chaplaincy) in 2022. In 2020 I completed the Master Teacher Program through the United States Military Academy Center for Enhanced Performance. I also successfully completed the University of Vermont's Death Doula program in 2022. I'm currently taking my second unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Vassar Brother's Medical Center, a level one trauma hospital.

I've served in several leadership roles including as Children's Ministry Director and Youth and Young Adults Ministry Director. I currently serve as the Youth Director at Transformation Church in Middletown, New York, where I also provide premarital counseling to couples and offer a Bible study to staff and faculty. I've been married to Duane C. Ware for twenty-four years. We are a blended family with seven children, seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren."

We continue our monthly regional gatherings via Zoom, averaging just under a dozen participants. Besides checking in with one another, collegial feedback on a particular topic always proves valuable. At our January meeting we discussed the growing number of people who come to FCM seeking Commissioning and/or Endorsement, but are "MIA" afterward. Since we are essentially a voluntary and collective convention of churches and depend on each other to "bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6: 2), we hope more members will become involved in sharing their gifts with us.

We are planning in-person FCM gatherings in the Northeast Region this spring and summer. We have a volunteer for a gathering in the Philadelphia area and one for Southern New Jersey. If you would like to host a gathering at your home, please contact me. Thank you!

The next regional Zoom gathering is March 11th from 9AM to 10AM.

As usual, a Zoom invitation will be sent to you.





Southeast Region

Beth Knight, Vice President
southeastvp@FCMmail.org

Hello friends. It was my privilege and joy to spend three days in Chicago recently at the Circle of Directors meeting. Being together, in person, and sharing meals at table plus spirit-filled conversations with folks I have known mostly through Zoom was meaningful. We are a convention of churches and ministers who value shared communion and community.

Speaking of gathering at table, would you like to meet, get better acquainted and eat a meal with a group of FCM folks in your geographical area? Please let me know, and I will support you to find a way to assemble in a way that does not require much effort at all.

Here are three in-person gatherings we want to highlight:



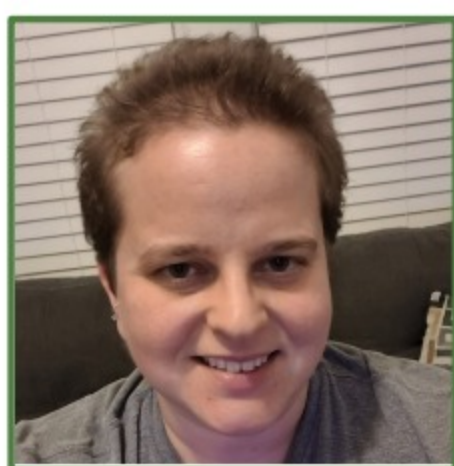
1) Central Floridians met January 26th outside Orlando in Winter Garden at Urban Flats. This was our 3rd time in the past year. Rev. Beth Knight is the contact for future gatherings in that area.

Photo of January 26th Gathering Winter Gardens, FL

2) Gulf-side Floridians met at Clearwater on February 18th at an Olive Garden. Chaplain Janyth Bryant is the contact for future gatherings in that area.

3) Two commission/ordination gatherings are being planned. One will be in Georgia and one in Florida. If it interests you to attend or help in any way with those special gatherings, please let me know.

ONLINE: Our next **REGION ZOOM GATHERING** will be Wednesday evening, March 15th at 7:00 pm. Please watch for the link and email reminder in early March.



SPOTLIGHT

This is a new series that will be a chance for us to acknowledge one of our region's ministers, their passion and calling, as well as savor the diversity of God's gifts and graces among us.

It's with much warmth of heart that I share with you our first spotlight member: **Butler Vin Cole**, who is a commissioned/endorsed FCM member and a staff chaplain at the VA Medical Center Memphis, TN.

Butler also ministers to homeless persons, officiates weddings and provides pulpit supply for three area churches. Most importantly Butler is an advocate for mental health. Please take a moment and read an excellent article that was recently featured in the Memphis Magazine, in which Butler was interviewed and quoted: <https://memphismagazine.com/the-darkest-place/>

REGION EVOLUTION NEWS! Our Southern Region has grown large. This is a testimony to FCM's thriving mission. Consequently, we are one region that has been **officially reconfigured into two areas** for better ease of pastoral care for our members, administrative matters and gatherings. **Here is a reminder of what Region you are now in:**

Southeastern Region = these states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee. I, Beth Knight, will remain your VP for these states and look forward to supporting you.

NOTE: in our SE Region we are proud that Chaplain Sue Levy will be part of the 2024 Convention Planning Committee.

Mid-Atlantic Region = these states: South-Carolina, North-Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and District of Columbia. Please join me in a blessing of WELCOME to Chaplain Susan Loving, as the new VP for the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Also, in your area, please **WELCOME!** your region's newest member: **Jada Williams** of Wake Forest, NC who is a candidate for dual degrees in JD and MDIV, with an awesome calling relevant to these dual degrees. Please reach out to Jada Williams and say hello!

NOTE: I will miss being more directly involved with those of you that are now in the new Mid-Atlantic region and have been blessed to know you. However, I am sure we will see each other at Thursday evening prayer meetings on Zoom or at one of the chaplain small groups on Zoom or the next in person convention in 2024.

Godspeed to you all.

"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, encouraging one another."
Hebrews 10:24-25





South Central Region

Guest Contributor: Mary Vidas, Vice President - Lakes & Plains

*May we hear God saying once again, "See, I am doing something new!
Now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? Isaiah 43:19*

In terms of our spirituality, we hold many inexplicable truths in our heart. We are a diverse membership having come from many faith traditions. Acknowledging the experiences that shaped our lives, I often hear from members how FCM's welcoming, and inclusive spirit, as well as FCM's values, principles and ethics are the touchstones that ground us in common intention and practice. Together, we rediscover the sacred, what moves our heart and where we are called to be eucharist for one another and the greater community. And as our new regions take shape, we once again begin to awaken to the Aliveness that exists through our connections, networking and journeying with one another.

As shared, the former Mountains and Plains region consisting of 15 states has been divided into two new separate regions. The seven states that make up the new South Central Region include: Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas. As Local Area representatives are identified and a new regional Vice President named, members in South Central Region will have opportunities to gather in support of one another and their various ministries. It has been suggested that there are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it. Watch for the bright light of the South Central Region to take its place among our dynamic FCM community!

COMMISSIONINGS



**Reverend Michael Penner
Dallas, TX**

Michael currently serves as a Staff Chaplain at the VA Hospital, Dallas, TX.

Congratulations Reverend Michael!



**Reverend Shawn Seguin
Austin, TX**

Shawn is completing his CPE Residency at At Dells Children Medical Center, Dallas, TX.

Congratulations Reverend Shawn!

ENDORSEMENTS



**Reverend Shane Ward
Dallas, TX**

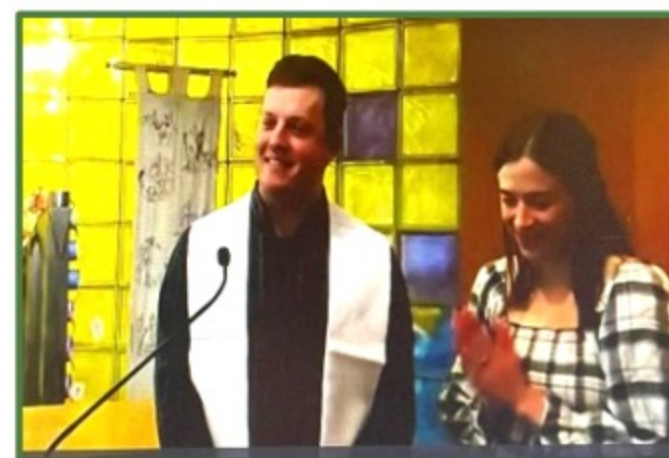
Shane currently serves as a Staff Chaplain at Children's Medical Center, Dallas, TX. .

Congratulations Reverend Shane!

*Some journeys are direct, and some are circuitous;
some are heroic, and some are humble.
But every journey, honestly undertaken, stands a chance of
taking us toward the place where our deep gladness meets
the world's deepest need. Parker Palmer, Center for Courage & Renewal*

ORDINATIONS

It was with great joy and celebration, that family, friends, and chaplain colleagues attended the ordination of **Rev. Shane Ward**. The ceremony was held in the hospital chapel at Children's Medical Center where Shawn serves as a staff chaplain. In-person attendees and online guests shared their blessings for Shane. Special thank you to the hospital's technical team for their support as well!



Rev. Shane expressing his gratitude and his spouse Brienne.
Children's Medical Center-Dallas, TX

South Central Regional Gathering The Gift of Gathering!

Plans are underway for setting a date, time, and location for the South Central Regional Gathering. Held every other year, regional gatherings provide an opportunity for all regional members to come together in celebration, prayer, and community. Often included are educational seminars, along with spiritual and personal growth workshops. Families are welcomed with children's activities available. New this year, regional leadership will be looking to incorporating CEU's for chaplains and certified members (as determined). Watch for additional details and information to come!



Heartland Region

Shannon Queenan, Vice President
heartlandvp@FCMmail.org

Hello friends! There are so many positive changes in Federation of Christian Ministries! You'll notice we have a new name. We were known as the Great Lakes Region for as long as I can remember, but due to our growth, a proposal was made that we add three new regions. See the current map on page 17 of this newsletter:

Our former Pacific Region split into Northwest and Southwest. The former Mountains and Plains split into Lakes and Plains and South Central. The former Northeast and Southern (now Southeast) Regions each shared a bit to create the Mid-Atlantic Region. There were two changes to our region: we lost western Pennsylvania and had a name change from Great Lakes to Heartland. We now have more people in leadership to help guide us on the path to living our Vision, Mission and Values! **During the Circle meeting in early February, Leadership reviewed and reaffirmed our Mission, Vision and Values:**

Mission Statement

The Federation of Christian Ministries responds to the Divine Call by empowering and nurturing those inspired for inclusive ministries.

Vision Statement

FCM envisions a future in which inclusive ministry transforms society.

Core Values:

- Belonging
- Compassion
- Empowerment
- Equity
- Mindful Living

I hope that you will take a few moments, now as you read this to reflect on our shared Mission, the Vision that guides it and the active and practical values that support this path. What are the spiritual practices that you use to help ground you in your ministry and relationship to the Divine?

Please also take a moment to consider how you connect with FCM, and the ways in which you support the Mission we all share!

Connect and Reflect gatherings continue to provide regional members with opportunities to meet and support each other. We meet at 7:30 for one hour of reflection and sharing.

Everyone in the region receives an email invite with a zoom link to join the gatherings:
Monday, March 13
Tuesday, May 9

Congratulations x2: The Circle approved Nancy Harbron in Indianapolis for Commissioning at our first meeting of 2023 AND thanks to all of you who voted in the recent elections. I am excited that Peter Wolf, a longtime member in Detroit, will be my successor as Heartland VP beginning in July. He and I are already working together to make sure that the transition goes smoothly.

Regional Retreat: scheduled for October 27-29 at Maria Stein, OH. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. More information will be coming out soon!

Winter feels like it has hold of us right now, and Spring feels far way. I offer a closing blessing for deep peace, whatever our circumstances:

Blessing in the Chaos

Jan Richardson

To all that is chaotic in you,
let there come silence.

Let there be a calming of the clamoring,
a stilling of the voices that have laid their claim on you,
that have made their home in you,

that go with you even to the holy places
but will not let you rest,
will not let you hear your life with wholeness
or feel the grace that fashioned you.

Let what distracts you cease.
Let what divides you cease.
Let there come an end to what diminishes and demeans,
and let depart all that keeps you in its cage.

Let there be an opening into the quiet
that lies beneath the chaos,
where you find the peace you did not think possible
and see what shimmers within the storm.



Lakes & Plains Region

Mary Vidas, Vice President
lakesplainsvp@FCMmail.org

As March takes its place at nature's table with April soon to follow, I eagerly await the first 'spring markers' of crocus, hyacinth, and snowdrops in the garden. And with spring, comes the official launch of FCM's Lakes & Plains Region. Included in the Lakes & Plains Region are the following eight member states - Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin. It is my joy to continue to represent you as Vice President.

Here are some of the upcoming initiatives for our region:

1. The inclusion of Local Area Representatives who have offered to welcome new members, support local membership connections, and expand networking opportunities.
2. Continuation of Regional and Local Area meetings, online or in person. (now quarterly).
3. Incorporation of CEUs (as determined) for chaplains, ministers, and certified others via webinars and gatherings in support of ongoing ministerial, professional, spiritual, and personal development.
4. Hosting of Lakes & Plains Regional Gathering this Fall, 2023. (Details will follow!)

A wise teacher once shared... "The question, 'Whom will we be to each other?' is one to contemplate indeed. However, the process of asking it and talking about it with others often becomes part of the answer. Let's keep the conversations going! Looking forward to connecting soon! Blessings, Mary



COMMISSIONINGS



Reverend Thomas Angland
Duluth, MN

Thomas currently serves full-time as a Staff Chaplain at Essentia-St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth, MN.

Congratulations Reverend Thomas!

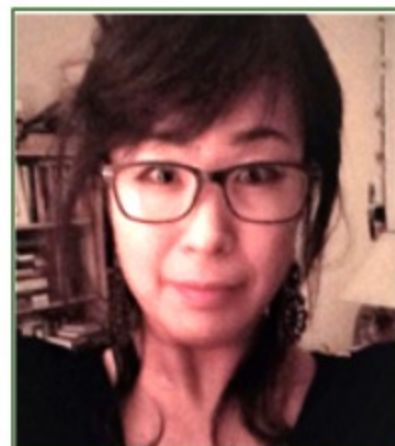


Reverend Dianna K. Lyons
Chicago, IL

Dianna recently completed her CPE Residency at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago, IL.

Congratulations Reverend Dianna!

ENDORSEMENT



Reverend Meg JungEun Park-Landis
Chicago, IL

Meg currently serves as a full-time Staff Chaplain at the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital, Chicago, IL.

Congratulations Reverend Meg!

ORDINATIONS

Congratulations to **Rev. Leslie Deslauriers** and **Rev. Susan Loving** on their ordination and the beautiful ritual affirming your commissioning with FCM and call to ministry. A special thank you to the family members, friends, colleagues, and FCM members who participated in our online Ordination Service.



Reverend Leslie Deslauriers & husband Adam

Leslie currently serves as a hospital chaplain in Colorado Springs, CO.



Reverend Susan Loving
Charlottesville, VA

Formerly a member of the Mts. & Plains region, Susan serves as a Hospice Chaplain in Charlottesville, VA area. Susan is the newly appointed Vice President of the Mid-Atlantic Region.



Photo:
Susan shared scripture reading

ANNOUNCING – LAKES & PLAINS AREA REPRESENTATIVES

A special thank you to the following FCM members who have offered to step into the role of Local Area Representative for the Lakes & Plains Region. Know that we appreciate your talents, gifts, and welcoming spirit!

STATE	AREA REPRESENTATIVE	CONTACT INFORMATION
Iowa/Nebraska	Claudia Dorsch	claudia.dorsch@garrett.edu
Illinois	Annetta Lansdown	annettaldown@hotmail.com
MN/Dakotas	Stephanie Johnson	johnson.stephanie.lynne@gmail.com
Missouri	Mary Beth McBryan Paul Viincent Reithmaier	Coordinator: mbmcbpriest@yahoo.com Secretary: p.reithmaier@att.net
Wisconsin	Ian Butts	ian.butts92@gmail.com

LAKES & PLAINS REGIONAL ZOOM MEETING

To leave room in your schedule to attend local FCM membership events, weekly FCM Prayer gatherings, and additional offerings to come, our Regional Zoom meetings will now be held quarterly.

Mark your Calendars! The next Regional Zoom Meetings will take place on

Wednesday, March 8th, 2023 @ 7:00 pm (Central)
and **Wednesday, May 10, 2023 @ 7:00 pm (Central)** Note: recurring

link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86076030205?pwd=YnFYLzdPQklzRnNuY2thQlorWXZ5dz09>

Dial by your location: 1 646 931 3860 US 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

*The present moment is the only
moment available to us, and it is
the door to all moments.*

-Thich Nhat Hanh-



Southwest Region

Dan Windham, Vice President
southwestvp@FCMmail.org

“...a convention of individuals, faith communities, churches and organizations...”

Grace and Peace Southwest Region!

The Circle of Directors met in February, and we had much to discuss. One theme from this weekend is an ongoing discussion concerning Federation of Christian Ministries’ core identity and changes in our membership. Our membership has seen a trend toward interfaith chaplains. This is consistent with FCM’s origins in church reform, inclusivity, ecumenism, and interfaith dialogue as articulated in the FCM Constitution:

“Rooted in the tradition of universality and inclusiveness of the gospel message, we expanded the vision to include people from all religious traditions and to affirm women as equals and partners in ministry. We are a meeting ground for people of varying faith traditions and spiritualities. Within this community, we foster ecumenism and interfaith sharing which enriches all.”

In accordance with the FCM Constitution and the ideals expressed, I want to affirm y’all and the work y’all are doing to advance the FCM’s mission and vision:

“To respond to the Divine Call by empowering and nurturing those inspired for inclusive ministries.”

And

“To engender a future in which inclusive ministry transforms society.”
We are, indeed, a new ecclesia, and it is wonderful to watch it unfold. As we move into 2023 I hope to arrange gatherings in these 4 four areas of our region:

- Hawaii**
- Northern California/Nevada**
- Southern California**
- Arizona**

Be on the lookout for emails and notifications around these events. I hope that each individual member, organization, faith community, and church will respond affirmatively and make every effort to gather, as we are able, in an effort to strengthen our connection in the FCM.



See y’all soon!
Peace,
Dan



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.



FCM Central Office

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FCM Blog: fcmblog.org

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@fcmmail.org or connect@fcmmail.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

GLOBAL MINISTRIES UNIVERSITY

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:**

www.globalministriesuniversity.org Email:

info@globalministriesuniversity.org

Phone: 866 419 8020 toll-free

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Email: prayersupport@FCMmail.org

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