

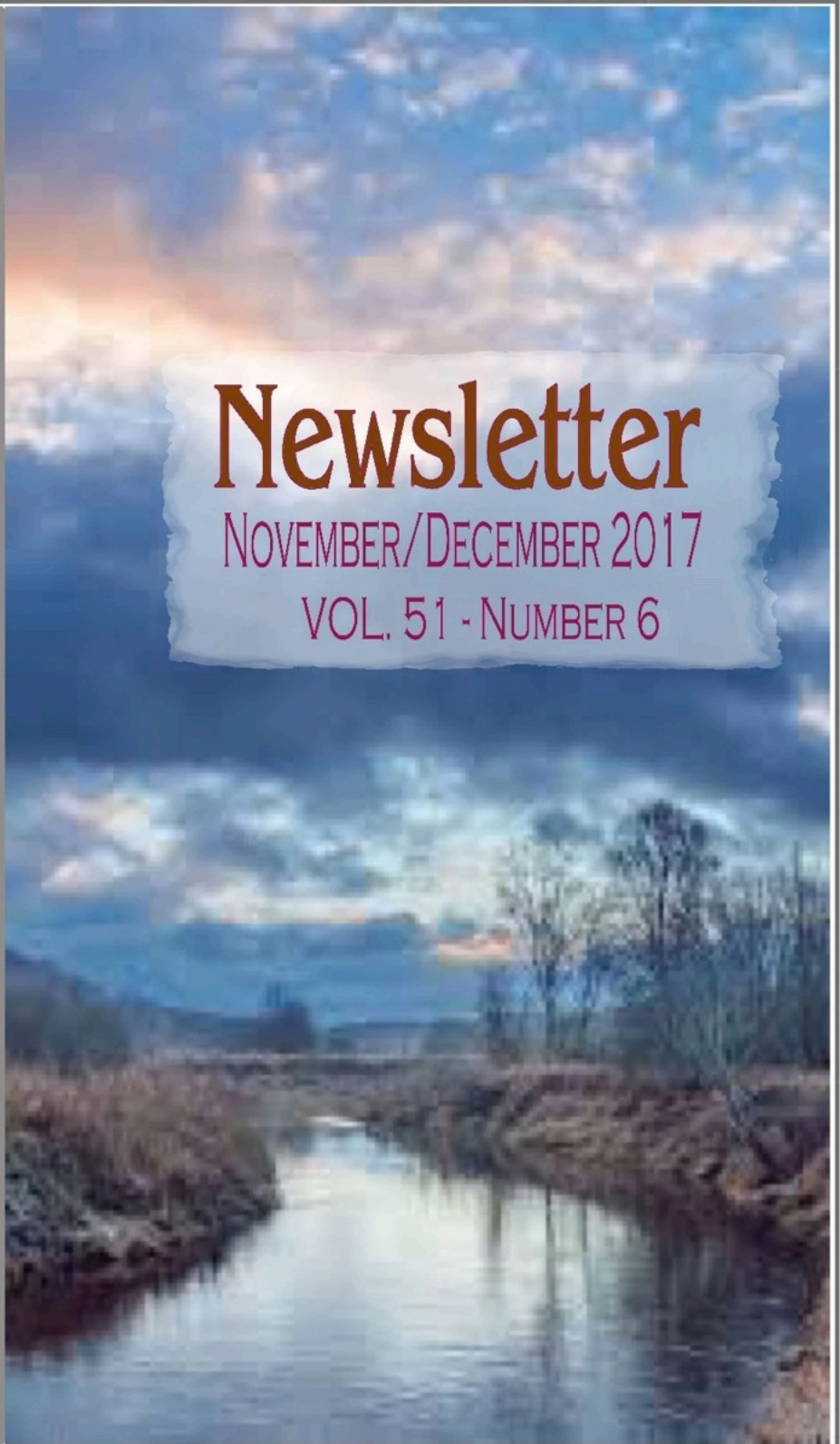


Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2017

VOL. 51 - NUMBER 6



Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter - November/December 2017 VOL. 51 NO. 6



Prayer of Thanksgiving
Vienna Cobb Anderson

God of all blessings,
source of all life, giver of all grace:

We thank you for the gift of life:
for the breath that sustains life,
for the food of this earth that nurtures life,
for the love of family and friends
without which there would be no life.

We thank you for the mystery of creation:
for the beauty that the eye can see,
for the joy that the ear may hear,
for the unknown that we cannot behold
filling the universe with wonder,
for the expanse of space

that draws us beyond the definitions of our selves.

We thank you for setting us in communities:
for families who nurture our becoming,
for friends who love us by choice,
for companions at work,
who share our burdens and daily tasks,
for strangers who welcome us into their midst,
for people from other lands
who call us to grow in understanding,
for children who lighten our moments with delight,
for the unborn, who offer us hope for the future.

We thank you for this day: for life
and one more day to love,
for opportunity
and one more day to work for justice and peace,
for neighbors and one more person to love
and by whom be loved,
for your grace
and one more experience of your presence,
for your promise: to be with us,
to be our God, and to give salvation.

For these, and all blessings,
we give you thanks, eternal, loving God,
through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

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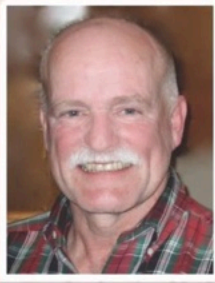
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TOM STRICKER

CHAIRPERSON

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Cut From the Same Cloth

While considering what is going in our country today, I got to thinking about a story in Matthew's gospel. It may be one of the more famous ones, as it contains a verse many people can quote: "Render to Caesar what is Caesar's and render to God what is God's." Many see it as a discussion of separation of church and state, some as a commentary on whether it is right for us to pay taxes while still others are talking about the trap being set for Jesus and how he reversed it. I wonder: what could it mean for us in FCM?

Earlier in the passage he asks pointedly about "Whose image is on the coin?" to which his questioners respond "Caesar's." I suggest the question for us is, "Whose image do *you* bear?" In the deepest sense we bear God's image. Were not each of us created in the image of God? Are we not all children of God? Any other image we may have of ourselves – or others – is simply an illusion that is not true or to put it more strongly, it is a lie that over time we have come to believe.

Whether or not we are a parent in any literal sense, we all have people in our lives who are our children or whom we recognize as our children. Imagine the pain a parent feels when one child hurts another. We might say, "How can they do that?" And yet we have done the same thing, often out of our own pain. Can you bring into your consciousness the pain and disbelief when the Divine sees his/her children killing, mistreating, hating, not respecting others made in the same image? "Lord, have mercy!"

The words "Lord, have mercy" are meant to be an acclamation of joy and celebration. My liturgy professor in seminary had always taught that but I never understood it until I learned a new way of looking at those words when I was at Resurrection Church, an African American parish where I was pastor. A member of the community came to tell me how he had announced to his grandmother that he had won \$2500.00 in the lottery. Her response in celebration was, "Lord, have mercy!" When I utter those words I need to know that I am already forgiven. Just as the \$2500 was already won, my forgiveness has already happened. The same is true about every other person in the world. I need to come to acknowledge that reality and act upon it.

If I can come to totally embrace the reality that I am a child of God and I truly bear the image of God then I need to learn to live differently.

You see, if I truly believe I was created in the image of God, that I bear God's image, it is not just something to be kept hidden in my pocket like that coin of the Pharisee, too embarrassed to show others. Sometimes I believe that I am ashamed to acknowledge that I do in fact, in reality bear the image of God. It is my responsibility to reach out and share the forgiveness I have with others. I am called because of who I am and who they are, to be at one with them. Anything else is a lie and is not part of reality.

If I can come to totally embrace the reality that I am a child of God and I truly bear the image of God then I need to learn to live differently. I come to recognize it is also true that the person next to me is a child of God and bears the image of God and begin to treat myself and others differently. The notion that we are all separate is an illusion. I judge that I am better or worse, evil or good, hated or loved, Democrat or Republican, conservative or liberal. With that judgement I then have the right to ridicule, forget, hate, discredit. I can say, well they deserve this. In this lie or illusion I am justified to do all of these things: to hate, disrespect and kill other children of God by my words or deeds.

Jesus challenges us to look deep into our pockets or purses and understand our value, to come to see who we really are and whose image we bear. We were made in the image of God, the awesome one whom the Scriptures tell us created the universe some 13 billion years ago in a burst of energy. I choose to see that moment as a burst of love that has been expanding ever since and that I am made of that love, the same star dust from that explosion of love. I have that same love as part of my DNA if I may use that analogy. Who am I not to be awesome and wonderful, caring and loving to myself and to all others, friend or foe? That is the reality, all else is an illusion or a lie. Are those close to me or my adversaries any different? They were created in the divine image and have star dust as part of who they are, created in a powerful explosion of love. We have repeated the lie so often that we have come to believe the illusion as our reality. And unfortunately we use this lie to justify our destructive actions.

So perhaps Jesus was not really talking about paying taxes. Any Jew within the crowd that day observing that event with the Pharisees, Herodians and Jesus would have been familiar with the verse "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness there of" (Psalm 24:1). Everything is God's, there are NO exceptions. No wonder they were amazed. Are you?



TOM CUSACK

PRESIDENT

Nov/Dec 2017
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Jesus and the Nukes

It happened in the Garden of Gethsemane after the heavy Passover meal. Jesus and several apostles had gone there to pray. The apostles were very sleepy due to the time and the wine. The second time that Jesus came back to check on them and had to awaken them, Peter commented to Jesus.

“Lord I had a dream while I was asleep. It was about some kind of new weapon called a nuke. I think we can solve all our problems with the high priests and with the Romans using it. You can just materialize it. Then we can nuke ‘em.”



Jesus rolled his eyes and replied to Peter, “What you and I are about does not include weapons, whether the ones we know about or the ones you saw coming in the future. Our mission is to elevate the dignity and awareness of each human being. As they realize what they can be, they will grow to become what God wants them to be. That is our mission. It is not a mission that is imposed or defended by weapons, whether they be the swords we know, or the nukes you foresaw in your dream. Now I’m going to pray some more, please stay awake and pray with me. “

The rest unfolded as we know. As the crowd approached them in the garden, “... One of those who accompanied Jesus put his hand to his sword, drew it, and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.” (Mt 26.51-52)

Even when his life was clearly at stake, Jesus did not embrace the use of violence. That is our ongoing challenge as followers of Him. We live in a society filled with guns and violence. Our culture leans toward greater levels of weaponry to accomplish a feeling of safety. This is following a false god. Jesus gives the example following the true God under whose rule death has no sway.

Hard as it is to believe, the leader of our US government, President Donald Trump, is making nuclear threats about North Korea in contradiction to the morals expressed by Jesus, in contradiction to the war making powers vested in the Congress in the U.S. Constitution, and in contradiction to any view of mature leadership. The threats of “fire and fury” and “you’ll find out” are horrifying. The destructive power of nuclear weapons is beyond the understanding of any of us. Only two atomic weapons have been used in human history, the toll of lives lost, the suffering and the destruction that those low – yield weapons caused was beyond anything seen before.

The possibility of a nuclear exchange in and around North Korea would entail 1 million deaths in the first day as the formidable conventional and nuclear weapons on both sides are brought to bear. The dead would be envious in not having to experience the burns, the shredded skin, the radiation sickness and the usual long slow miserable death with no support, since all infrastructure (hospitals, clinics, doctors and nurses) would be in the same casualty categories.



Allowing for and stoking a nuclear exchange is wrong. It must not continue. What are we to do as a Christian community? In this country we have a representative government, and we must act to influence our legislators to be barriers to the possible initiation of a nuclear exchange. This means outreach by us to the president, our senators, and our representative in Congress. In addition, we must spend significant and dedicated time in prayer and meditation for peace. We follow the Prince of Peace. If we don’t put in systematic time in prayer and meditation for Donald Trump, for Kim Jong-un and for peace, who else will do it? Let’s do it for the world and through FCM.

Hiroshima, the pictures they didn't want us to see

http://www.fogonazos.es/2007/02/hiroshima-pictures-they-didnt-want-us_05.html

Mushroom Cloud Over Hiroshima

<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2013/01/rare-photo-of-the-mushroom-cloud-over-hiroshima-discovered-in-a-former-japanese-elementary-school/267042/>



HEIDI A. TIERNEY

TREASURER
ENDOWMENT FUND

Nov/Dec 2017
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Report Shows Healthy Picture

As of July 2017 I began this journey of serving as FCM Treasurer. It is a responsibility that is important to me. It is an honor to give my time. I am very grateful for the work of **Sue Ross** and **Connie Town** as I took over these responsibilities, which include weekly monitoring of our financial activity.

We have three accounts. The first is dedicated to our National Assembly, and monies have been set aside for this event (2018) in the amount of \$11,765. Our second account is a premium money market account which holds our surplus, in the amount of \$70,044. The third is our general (operations) account which sees the most activity. As of the end of September 2017 our revenue was \$47,240 and our expenses were \$73,828.

We have spent 87% of our expense budget year to date, which is our normal, and our revenues are in line with the previous year at this time. We look forward to this time of year, during our membership renewals, as our revenue takes a huge leap and will continue to do so in October.

Our cash flow continues to be strong and our expenses remain within our budget, which puts us in a healthy financial position to finish out this year. Through your generous donations we have been able to assist others affected by the recent natural disasters.

We have also started an Endowment Fund as a long term investment in FCM (*editor's note: see update article elsewhere in this Newsletter*). Take comfort in knowing that your Circle of Directors is managing our resources with great integrity and awareness. Our expenses are current and our revenues are increasing. Thanks to those who have submitted their renewal dues on time as this is the principal way we are able to maintain good fiscal standing for the year.



FCM Endowment Update



As we move ahead on finalizing details for our endowment, we are pleased to report the Albuquerque, New Mexico attorney whom FCM has retained to review the policy has submitted his comments. Our committee – **Tom Cusack, Tom Stricker, and Dan Pellegrin** – will review the revisions after which they will work with the attorney in preparing a final draft of the policy. The next step would involve its review and voting for approval by the entire Circle. We hope to have this accomplished by January 1.





CHRISTY HOWARD STEELE, CHAIR

Specialized Ministries

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Embraced, Affirmed, Included

According to the COMISS Network's Pastoral Care Week Committee,

"Spiritual care is important for peoples' sense of identity as they find meaning in belonging to a common humanity and particular cultures. The idea of our sharing a preciousness as human beings has found its source in religious, philosophical and societal communities. Sadly for some, defining the "other" has been a desperate attempt to exclude those who are different. Hospitality as practiced by so many cultures and religions breaks through walls of alienation and marginalization which deny human belonging. Welcoming, understanding, and celebrating the place of those who have been isolated makes for a wonderfully diverse expression of community. Cultivating (growing and nurturing) attitudes and actions of inclusion means that people are cared for as valuable members of the human family."

How are you offering hospitality by cultivating inclusion?

As I reflected on this year's theme for spiritual care week, **Hospitality: Cultivating Inclusion,**

I remember how welcomed I felt when I attended my first FCM Assembly in Columbus, Ohio. As a Protestant and African American my sense of feeling "other" dissolved as I was embraced, affirmed, and included in the FCM community. I remember telling my ministerial colleague that I felt more welcomed in FCM than I did in my local community of faith.

I felt connected to the people and community of FCM as I received their spiritual care in being a place to belong.

I wonder how FCM helps you feel included?

To feel included I not only need to experience commonality; my uniqueness and my different-ness must also be acknowledged and valued. When well-meaning people say they don't see

color, a part of me feels denied. Who I am is informed by my lived experiences as a black woman in America. If I need to hide parts of myself to belong then I am not able to be my authentic self and that keeps me from fully connecting and being in relationship. It keeps me from feeling included.

The desire or need to exclude seems to me to be born out of fear: fear of losing something you have; fear of not having enough for oneself; fear of one's self being excluded or marginalized; fear that is focused on self-preservation of power and privilege. It is my experience that I and others may not even be consciously aware of our fear. Maybe I just feel that I don't like a particular person. Exploring why within myself, I may discover that I feel the person's behavior unconsciously threatens my sense of competence. Becoming aware of this helps me disempower it.

Henri Nouwen writes:

*In our world full of strangers, estranged from their own past, culture and country, from their neighbors, friends and family, from their deepest self and their God, we witness a painful search for a **hospitable place** where life can be lived without fear and where community can be found.*

*Our society seems to be increasingly full of fearful, defensive, aggressive people anxiously clinging to their property and inclined to look at their surrounding world with suspicion, always expecting an enemy to suddenly appear, intrude and do harm. But still – that is our vocation: **to convert the hostis into a hospes, the enemy into a guest and to create the free and fearless space where brotherhood and sisterhood can be formed and fully experienced.***

Cultivating inclusion involves acknowledging, affirming and valuing people and their gifts. It involves accepting and valuing differences. It also involves examining one's self to explore and disempower one's unconscious fears.

* Coalition on Ministry in Specialized Settings

† "Creating Space for Strangers"

https://www.amazon.com/Reaching-Out-Three-Movements-Spiritual/dp/0385236824/ref=sr_1_1?e=UTF8&qid=1359511017&sr=8-1&keywords=reaching+out+nouwen



Thank You FCM Members!

On September 6th FCM members received an email plea to help the victims in Houston, Texas.

The email read as follows:

FCM is happy to report that our members (ministers) have been contacted and are safe.

FCM is collecting donations for the victims of the hurricane. The entire donation will be used for those in need. The donations will be distributed person to person by FCM ministers in the Houston area.

The entire amount of your donations (\$1800) purchased eighteen (18) \$100 Visa gift cards. We sent six (6) each to three of our Houston members. They are Katelyn Melcher, Cindy Hong and Rick Castillo. They minister right in the flood zone of Houston. They each received six cards and distributed them to those in need. Thank you, FCM and others, for your generosity. Following are messages we received from Katelyn, Cindy and Rick

Dear All,

Words cannot express the thoughts, prayers, and gifts of great love you have provided to us in the midst of loss and tragedy. I work at a Trauma One center and my church is actively committed to social justice ministry in the community. From my perspective, it was easy for me to identify families affected by Harvey and their needs. I would say giving the gift cards to FCM members to personally hand to the families is a very effective way for FCM to be a presence in our communities and to ensure the monetary aid went directly to the family in need. Since I was aware of so many families in need it took discernment to choose only six. With limited funds and many in need; one gift card per family is a good general rule. I apologize for getting back to you later than expected. As you can imagine its difficult to work a full time job while attending to the various needs of Houston during this time. I do believe this way of gift giving is a good way to go with assisting to those in need by the devastations following Harvey. Thank you FCM for your love and presence with us during this time.

Peace & Blessings,
Katelyn Melcher

Dear FCM,

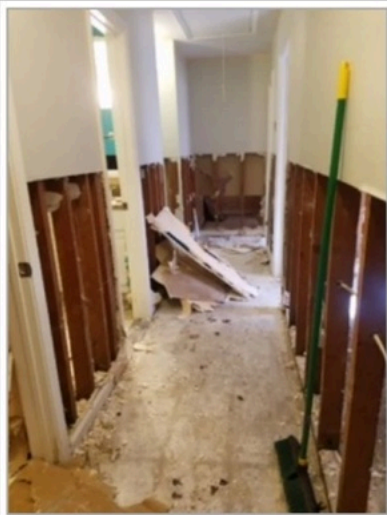
Thank you for your thoughtful and kind gesture with the emails and gift cards, as well entrusting some of us in Houston with handing these out. Those that I identified (and I echo Katelyn's words about needing discernment to choose only six) were so very appreciative of this unexpected gift during a time of need. A couple of brief stories: S is a lady in her 60's and she and G had paid off their one-story house, only to see it fill with 3 feet of water. Many of their things were out on the curb waiting to be picked up, and they were still uncertain what to do going forward. She was still able to see the gift card as "Christmas in September" and was very grateful. H also lived in a one-story house, with everything gone, including the cars. Their street flooded to the top of the stop sign. As he recounted the incidents of that day, he said there were not enough boats to rescue everyone in the neighborhood, so he helped those who needed to be in the boats, and then he swam the several blocks to the Kroger. Both of these families are living elsewhere as they figure out what to do next. I think this is a very relational and practical way to provide some immediate aid to several people in the community and all have been so grateful with this gift. Thank you FCM!

Blessings on your week,
Cindy

Federation of Christian Ministries

HOUSTON HURRICAN HARVEY

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Thank You

Dear FCM members,

On behalf of the survivors of Hurricane Harvey in Houston, I would like to "thank you" for your kind contributions ("gift cards") to & prayers for those who were significantly affected by the historical flooding that took place throughout the Houston area.

Your "gift cards" aided/supported the following:

- 1) Bear Creek United Methodist Church Food Pantry;
- 2) The Nelson Family;
- 3) The Meehan Family;
- 4) A Muslim Family of Northern Houston
- 5) Woodlands Church Soup Kitchen serving the local survivors of Hurricane Harvey, Woodlands, TX, Afro-American community.
- 6) A Family of the Iglesia Bautista del Senor, Conroe TX.

I am sending a few pictures (in a separate email) of the devastation that many, many families (their homes) endured this past month.

Again, thank you so much for your prayers & support of our Houston community!

Peace & Blessings,

Chaplain Richard Castillo

JULY 20-22, 2018
DOUBLETREE HILTON HOTEL
PHILADELPHIA, PA

2018 Assembly Updates

MICHAELITA QUINN, ASSEMBLY CHAIR
EMAIL: 2018ASSEMBLY@FCMMAIL.ORG



Plan Now to Attend These Exciting Workshops!

After many of you suggested 74 ideas for Assembly workshops, the 2018 Planning Team chose these six.

Centering Prayer: the Deeper Connection

End of Life Care: Integrating Cultural Humility and an End of Life Doula Approach to Spiritually Diverse Populations

God's Cocktail: Addiction, Faith, and Hope

Transgender Support: Trans Christian Voices

Diversity and Spirituality of FCM Faith Communities

Spiritual Health and Interfaith Care that Nurtures Healthiness: A Chaplain's Perspective

Look for the Big Announcement in the Jan-Feb Issue!

Program Quick Look Overview

Registration and Hotel Information

How to Include Your Ad or Sponsorship in the Program

New Assembly email address:

2018assembly@FCMmail.org

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Nov/Dec 2017

WWW.FEDERATIONOFCHRISTIANMINISTRIES.ORG

Federation of Christian Ministries

SAVE THE DATE

FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

CELEBRATING

50 Years of Ministry

Reflecting on the past
Celebrating the present
Shaping the future

1968 ♦ 2018

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

RABBI RAMI SHAPIRO



Rabbi Shapiro is an award-winning author of over 30 books on religion and spirituality. He currently directs the One River Foundation and its World Wisdom Bible project, writes a regular column for Spirituality and Health magazine called *Roadside Assistance for the Spiritual Traveler*, and hosts the magazine's weekly radio show. His newest book is *The World Wisdom Bible*. Rabbi Shapiro is in demand as a speaker at churches, synagogues, and retreat centers across the country and abroad. He comments that he will go anywhere "...where there are people willing to wrestle with the perennial spiritual questions that challenge thinking people in every generation."

SIMONE CAMPBELL, SSS



Simone Campbell, a Sister of Social Service, is an attorney, activist, and advocate for social justice. The Executive Director of NETWORK since 2004, Sr. Simone has extensive experience in public policy and advocacy for systemic change. Widely known for leading the five "Nuns on the Bus" tours in 2012 to highlight issues of social justice, she also wrote the famous "nuns' letter" supporting the healthcare reform bill in 2010. Sr. Simone is constantly sought as a speaker worldwide for conferences, interviews, and the media on current topics of public policy and social justice. A featured speaker at the 2012 Democratic National Convention, Sr. Simone has received numerous awards.

JULY 20-22, 2018

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON HOTEL

PHILADELPHIA AIRPORT

4509 Island Avenue

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

www.federationofchristianministries.org





ANTOINETTE
MAROLD

Communications

Nov/Dec 2017
VOL. 51 NO. 6

It Is Time to Renew Your Ministry Listing on the FCM Website

Instructions for Listing or Renewing Your Ministry Listing on the FCM Website

DROP DOWN TAB
AS IT APPEARS ON THE
FCM WEBSITE HOME PAGE

Find A Minister

[For Weddings](#)

[For Baptisms And Funerals](#)

[For Healing](#)

[Faith Communities](#)

[Spiritual Counseling](#)

[Peace And Justice - Solidarity](#)

[Retreats And Workshops](#)

[Authors, Services, Etc.](#)

Are you listed on the FCM website under the FIND A MINISTER tab?

If you are, it is time to renew your listing. If you do not renew your listing by **December 31**, it will be deleted from the FCM website.

To Renew... Login to the FCM Member Login area (on the right bottom) of the FCM Home Page. After you login, click on the Members Only area (right top of page) and go to Ministry Listing Form. Complete the form and submit.

Request a listing on the FCM Website for 2018...

Follow the instructions for renewing above.

New and renewed listings will be updated by February 2018.

A website listing under the Find A Minister tab is a benefit of membership. You can request a listing under three (3) categories.

You can be listed under the Weddings area if you are **commissioned by FCM**.

If you are a **FCM Faith Community Group Member**, you can list the address and time of your worship service or meeting.

If you have not registered as a member in the Members Login Area and need assistance, please contact me at communication@FCMmail.org.



VISIT OUR BLOG
www.FCMblog.org



JOIN THE FCM
GROUP ON
LINKEDIN



PLEASE
LIKE FCM ON
FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/Federation-of-Christian-Ministries-179262215432851/>

BAPTISM ATTENTION

All FCM members who preside at BAPTISMS
You are required to register the Baptism with the FCM Registry Office
The registry form is available on the FCM website.

- ◆ Go to www.federationofchristianministries.org
- ◆ Login to the Members Only area of the website.
- ◆ Click on Members Only link on the top right of the page.
- ◆ Click on Baptism Registry Form. You can complete the registry ONLINE or download a PDF form and mail it to the registry office. The address is on the form.

Questions?
Please email registry@FCMmail.org. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Federation of Christian Ministries

Berkeley Community Shines a Beacon of Courage



(Editor's note: many thanks to **Maureen Mancuso** and the St. Hildegard Catholic Community for submitting the latest in our ongoing series on FCM's group members.)

In the autumn of 2014, Rev. Maureen Mancuso, a Roman Catholic Womanpriest (RCWP) serving in another Catholic Community, felt drawn by the Holy Spirit to minister in Berkeley, California. As she entered a process of discernment it became clear that the RCWP movement needed to be visible where Roman Catholic seminaries were ordaining only men.

Berkeley is home to the Graduate Theological Union, a consortium of major seminaries and the most comprehensive institution for graduate studies in religion in North America. Included in this consortium are two Roman Catholic seminaries—the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University (JST) and the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology (DSPT). Mancuso studied at both and graduated from JST with a Masters of Divinity (the required canonical degree for her male counterparts seeking ordination in the Roman Catholic Church) and the hope, along with the conviction of her own vocational call, that the Catholic Church would recognize the prophetic witness of so many, namely that God calls both men and women to ordained priestly ministry in the Roman Catholic church.

With this call of the Spirit nudging her, Mancuso formed a team and after much planning and preparation, on Passion Sunday 2015 St. Hildegard Catholic Community was birthed into existence. "It was amazing!" she reflects. "We found space to rent from a local community church – in an upper room no less –literally down the hill from the mainstream Catholic seminaries at GTU. The symbolism was compelling, but more importantly was the opportunity to welcome those who felt excluded, forgotten or marginalized by the mainstream Catholic Church."



In addition to Mancuso, the community has a deacon, Christine Haider-Winnett who was ordained in 2016 and will be ordained a priest through RCWP in the early part of 2018. The community clearly sees itself as an example of inclusivity and a witness that hierarchy, patriarchy and clericalism are outdated notions.

LEFT: CHRISTINE HAIDEER-WINNETT
RIGHT: MARIE STROMBERG-WOJCIK

The community voted to name itself after St. Hildegard, currently one of only four women Doctors of the Church, because of her intelligence, talent, strength, resiliency, and her uncanny ability to confront authority with truth through loving kindness. Their mission is aligned to the courage and faith of its patron, promoting social and environmental justice by proclaiming it faithfully and living it at the forefront.

In this time of environmental erosion, St Hildegard's visions and her prophetic warnings to care for Mother Earth inspire and guide members. They are deeply committed to the use of inclusive language, and welcome and embrace all who want to participate in the Eucharistic liturgy, operating from the idea and commitment that ministry occurs through the collegiality of the baptized. The contemplative and contemporary liturgy with powerful preaching is a welcoming and inclusive environment, truly a bright light inviting those who are looking to feed their souls. All who are interested in supporting the community's efforts or simply to connect with them are encouraged to do so by emailing either Maureen@sthildys.com or Christine@sthildys.com





VICE PRESIDENT
DAN PELLEGRIN

Northeast Regional News

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On Grace, Leadership and Staying in Touch

"Priest: midwife of grace."... This striking phrase was used by FCM member Bishop **Andrea Johnson** at the ordination of **Donna Enos Burke** and **Erma M. Durkin** to the diaconate of the Roman Catholic Women Priests in Stony Point, NY, on October 15, 2017. FCM was represented at the event to offer gift memberships and our ongoing support to Donna, Erma, and RCWP.

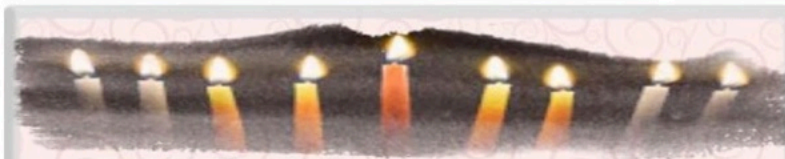

The image comes from Matthew Fox, ordained in the Roman Catholic Church and now serving as an Episcopal priest and theologian. I find it to be quite fitting in describing the work of FCM and our members. The concept almost seems capable of going beyond the barrier of language to be inclusive of both women and men. It stresses the prime importance of the minister's role as receiver of grace, and not the facilitator of it. Inherent is praise and thanksgiving for the Font of Grace.

Thanks to Area Representatives... As 2018 membership renewals come in, it is gratifying to see our members volunteering to be local area representatives. After clarifying their chosen role, I will have a full list of them for the next Newsletter, and in the interim will communicate with our Northeast members about local assistance.

I have decided not to run for re-election as regional VP in 2018. My wife Donna and I will remain active, most thankful and most appreciative members of FCM. Becoming a local area representative is a good way to learn more about the VP role: its challenges, its joys, its rewards, its possibilities as vehicle for service to our organization. With this decision I am hopeful even more will answer the call to serve in a leadership role within FCM.

Pressing on to improve communication... Some time ago I went to an eye doctor after I found out I have glaucoma. When I asked about the chances of becoming blinded by the disease, he reassured me, "Don't worry, Dan. You'll be dead before you're blind!" The urgency this brought to mind came up again as I thought about how important it is to be that we continue our efforts developing the use of Zoom Video Conferencing <https://zoom.us>. Please be assured I am dedicated to getting this service available throughout the region as soon as possible.

Membership Renewal... Being "midwives of grace" comes to mind again as I reflect on the renewal of our membership as it is, indeed what we are all about. It becomes even more clear as we journey together. This Newsletter is reflective of that unity and solidarity. Thanks to all who chose to continue their participation: for what FCM can do for you and what you can do for FCM.

Edward John Dobransky, FCM

Deepest Sympathy to the family of Edward Dobransky, long time FCM member of the Northeast Region.

Edward passed into Spirit on September 17, 2017 from pancreatic cancer.

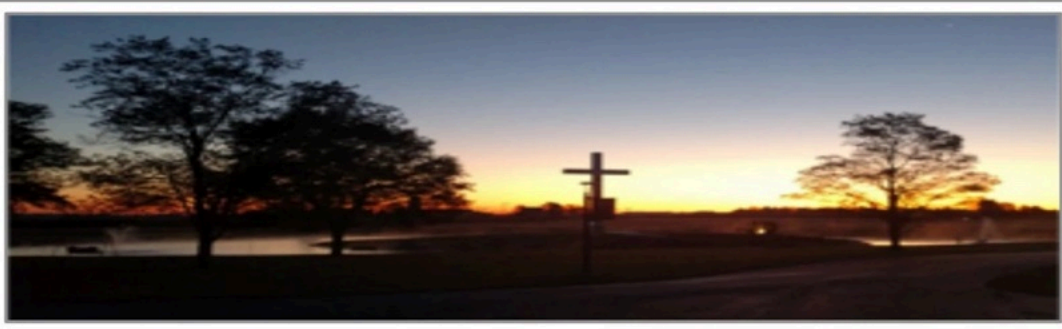
Federation of Christian Ministries



VICE PRESIDENT
RON DAVIS

Great Lakes Regional News

Nov/Dec 2017
VOL. 51 NO. 6



Grace for the Journey

Regional gathering enriching, enjoyable... The bi-annual retreat at the Conference Center in Maria Stein, Ohio turned out to be a tremendous success. We are thankful for three days of perfect weather, affording us the opportunity for great times in and outdoors. People journeyed to this lovely site from across Michigan, Ohio and Louisville, Kentucky. It was a joy to have time with one another. Thanksgiving is lifted up to each one for their participation.

It seemed like everyone's hand was in something during the weekend—a meal, the learning sessions, and the times of prayer and worship. Everyone did something. We were able to hear one another's heart for God and compassion for each other. By the end of the weekend, we felt a real sense of closeness and refreshment. Thank you Great Lakes Members for touching my heart.

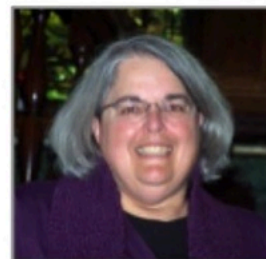
Membership renewal moving forward... Thanks to all who have renewed their membership before the new deadline of October 31. The Circle does recognize that some of us might be in a financial bind and could possibly need to make different arrangements for renewals. If you are in this kind of life circumstance, please feel free to contact me (or your VP in your region) to move your membership application forward. We are a community of faith and we do want to work with you.

As we anticipate the twelve months that are before us, I would like to visit each of our gathering communities at least once. We tend to gather in Michigan and Kentucky, Cleveland and Cincinnati on a regular basis. When you schedule your events, please send the dates to me as I would like to support and encourage you in your efforts.



FCM Member's Article Published

We recently received news that Great Lakes member and former FCM Secretary **Bea Broder-Oldach** has had an article published in the Graduate Theological Foundation Monograph 2017. Bea's home and ministry are in Cincinnati, Ohio.

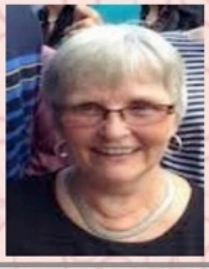


You can read the article, titled "Forming Responsive Spiritual Care Interventions Through Interdisciplinary Team Communication and Informal Assessment" online by following the link below and scrolling to page 49:

<http://www.gtfeducation.org/images/dynamic/file/research/FOUNDATION-20171.pdf?150-7652811349>

Sincere congratulations to Bea on this outstanding accomplishment!

Federation of Christian Ministries



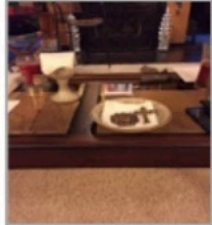
VICE PRESIDENT
DIANE DOUGHERTY

Southern Regional News

Nov/Dec 2017
VOL. 51 NO. 6

Rising Up in a Time of Need

FCM as a broader community responded to the recent life-changing events in our region, as Hurricane Harvey hit Texas and Irma drove with force through Florida and Georgia. Rising to the need, several members of the Circle including **Tom Cusack, Tom Stricker and Antoinette Marold** reached out to our membership in an effort to assist those affected by these disasters. We thank them for taking this initiative, the first in the history of FCM, to do what we had the power to do. As I emailed and called members of the South to see how they were doing, I prayed with many that angels would push away harm. Here are some of their stories.



The tales begin with **Miriam Picconi and Wanda Russell**, who as they were packing up to leave Palm Coast, targeted for a direct hit by Irma had accepted an offer to stay with me along with their two dogs. It took them nearly twice as long as the typical 6 hours to make the trek to Avondale. We gathered some of our community for a Mass of protection and hope for FCM members as well as all those in the direct path of the storm.

We found **Kathleen Dzura** and her daughter in Philadelphia, who surprisingly had returned to find minimal damage to their property in Ft. Lauderdale. On Florida's Gulf coast, **Ronald Modras** had just started dinner with his wife when the lights went out. He reported they had a candlelight dinner, went to bed early and awoke to discover Sarasota was in the eye of the storm and little damage had been done to the city. **Tom and Marge Wilt**, The Villages, Florida had the MOST memorable cruise vacation finding themselves stranded for 3 additional days.

Those in the Miami area seemed to fare well in terms of extended damage, but I had much difficulty reaching **Sally Sherry** – former Southern region VP – on her mobile phone. 8 days later, I finally called her home number and she answered. After a sigh of relief we discovered she had fled to a friend who lives not 2 miles from me. **Katie Zatsick** was on her way to GA and ended up with her family in Tallahassee with everyone remaining safe, to return to Sun City, FL where full power was available and no damage had occurred.



To conclude this challenging walk with our FCM companions, I spoke to **Laura Callender** of Dover, FL, board-certified chaplain in a trauma hospital, who sent pictures of her Sweet Garden of Prayer, a neighborhood place of retreat to recover, relax and become rejuvenated from the trauma. <http://sweetgardenofprayer.com/a-walk-in-the-garden/> What a welcome and needed space. God is with us through all these changes and always. FCM rose mightily, and continues rising!

Join me in welcoming these new members:

Abigail Eltzroth - Weaverville, NC: RC priest who hopes to organize a worshipping community in western North Carolina and is designing a course for The People's Seminary (connecting with sister priests in ARCWP)

Jeffery Childers - Lexington, KY: Resident chaplain at Lexington VA Medical Center serving needs of those with mental health and substance abuse challenges

Shelley Gilchrist - Deland, FL: Theology student who has completed the Episcopalian Diaconate program and is anticipating hospice chaplain studies (FCM colleagues: **Miriam Picconi** and **Wanda Russell**)

Patricia Weidman - Frackville, PA: Catholic sister and retired correctional chaplain who wants to work in funeral ministry with the unchurched and inactive Catholics (FCM colleague **Peter Wolf**)

Jeffrey Martin - Herndon, VA: Retired from the military and is looking to be commissioned and eventually endorsed as a chaplain. (FCM colleague **Peter Kim**)

Michael Jason Morey - Poquoson, VA: Hospital chaplain with Sentara Healthcare and Crooks Memorial UMC (FCM colleague **Dave Efimetz**)

Linda VanPutte - Clearwater, FL: Chaplain with Baycare Health in Clearwater and preparing to be commissioned and eventually endorsed. (FCM colleague **David Nyland**)

Commissioned in 2017

Laura Callender Dover, FL
Judith McNutt Jacksonville, FL

Endorsed

Marellen Mayer Forest Hill, MD
David Nyland Oldsmar, FL
Lisa Koch Raleigh, NC

Commissioned and Endorsed in 2017

Ralph Garofolo Sr. Columbia, SC
Nathan Nordine Safety Harbor, FL
Lindsay Butler Memphis, TN
Joshua Albrecht St. Petersburg, FL

FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES



JULY 20 - 22, 2018

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON HOTEL - PHILADELPHIA AIRPORT
4509 Island Avenue - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Membership Renewal

Thanks to ALL who have renewed early

To those of you offering to help with meeting the needs of the members of our region: I welcome your assistance in serving as *area coordinators* who could keep in touch with local members. Hosting a gathering, inviting members and working with them in developing an agenda is surprisingly easy and rewarding for all concerned. Please contact me if you feel called to do this important effort.



VICE PRESIDENT
RICHARD JAMES

Mts & Plains Regional News

Nov/Dec 2017
VOL. 51 NO. 6



Standing on Holy Ground

Wow! What a Holy Ground experience we had at the FCM Mountains and Plains Regional Retreat Gathering at the Lake Williamson Christian Center in Carlinville, Illinois on October 14-15. Twenty-two members attended with each day beginning by connecting with God and each other and concluding with devotional meditations facilitated by **Conner Simms, Barbara Zeman, Michael Keefe, and Dawn Banks.**

On the first day of the retreat, **Christy Howard-Steele** presented two sessions, one of which was entitled "Introduction & Sharing." During this time together each person introduced themselves by sharing a food item that they were bringing to an imaginary potluck, which began with the first letter of their name. The relational challenge was to remember each person's name, the food item associated with their name, and recite it aloud to the group. What a connecting joy that was to experience.

The second session began with the question, "When in your ministry did you feel and know for sure that you got it?" This time together allowed each person to express the nature of that ministry and their intimate connection with Divinity, humanity, themselves, and what I sensed as their Divine Anointing for ministry. Next, we reviewed some information and concerns from the region, including the news that **Peter Strening** has agreed to be the representative of the Denver, Colorado area.

After we took a break, Christy led our second activity called "Other." She launched the gathering into reflection, sharing, and deeper connecting by asking the question, "When have you felt like other?" Though this question, each person expressed their struggles within our society, and became in touch with their point of empathy for others as they listened to one another in community.

During the early evening, we celebrated the commissioning of **Phillip Haltom, Barbara Lawrence, Katelyn Melcher and Conner Simms.** The celebration continued with a bonfire and sharing our responses regarding the question, "What do you want for and with FMC?"

During the second day of the retreat we enjoyed a presentation facilitated by **Conner Simms.** **Conner** led the gathering by inviting each person to remember and share a time of transition in their lives. He helped the group share the nature and challenge of change and our resource with the Divine. We followed that by taking time for a Meditative Nature Walk, followed by an Art Creation session.

I took the liberty to ask those who attended to share with you what was most impactful regarding the retreat gathering and their prayer concerns. Please enjoy a few photos and comments from FCM members in attendance, and may we see you at our next FCM area gathering or national FCM assembly. I must say, that I am thoroughly impressed and blessed by how the Divine showed up, expressed in the authenticity, courage, and humility of the facilitators, devotion leaders, and each member in attendance. It was indeed a Holy Ground experience!

Thanks so much for such a wonderful retreat. Open, engaging, refreshing, and deepening. There was truth-telling and honesty, too. ... I think two things that stood out for the retreat for me were several stories and the devotion about transitions, and the overarching understanding through the weekend that the area where we met was sacred space, holy ground, and a safe place to be honest, to share, and to open ourselves to each other. **Elizabeth Jones**

The retreat this weekend... was a holy time of renewal. ... In vulnerability, we shared our struggles, triumphs, and fears as we listened to one another with "the ear of the heart." Together in the Spirit, we offered one another understanding, solace, and encouragement. **Peace, Nancy**

As caregivers, we seldom have the opportunity to gather with other likeminded souls to unpack the gifts that have brought us to this present moment, and share in a safe, refreshing environment, filled with open hearts. This made for a weekend that nurtured my spirit and affirmed the oneness of all. **Barbara Zeman**

Our gathering was a time for renewing and re-inspiring! **Michael Keefe**

When we make space to join with one another from the various ministries we serve, one shares their story. Whether we name our joys and encouragements or challenges and pain, when we do so we gift one another with light. Light that reminds us that we are stronger when we take time to be together, such light comes from another and rarely from within. The light we share is also a reminder that God is with us, guiding through our personal and professional lives, and we are not alone. For it was God who sent the light of his love that we might bless one another for a future of hope. **Dan Hoard**

I found the weekend at the FCM Mountains and Plains Region Retreat to be a surprise "in and of the Spirit." Prior to coming, I frankly viewed my commitment to FCM as important, but not for the same reasons as now. Whereas I used to see FCM as a vital link to the all-important credentialing process in ministry, I now see that while it is nothing less than this, that it is oh, so very much more. I now see FCM at a totally new level, and thank God for being a part of the far greater whole, now understood as a result of this time together. **Phillip L. Haltom**

Thank you so very much for this past weekend. It was great meeting everyone face-to-face. It was great getting the opportunity to learn more about FCM and one another. It was wonderful for me to have the weekend to do a little decompression as well. Thank you for leading everything so well!... The Mountains & Plains Regional Gathering provided an incredible space to be still and listen; to the Divine, to myself, and to others! I'm looking forward to gathering again! **Conner Simms**

It was so very good to be with you and our M&P community over the weekend. A blessing for me. Thanks again for your leadership and guiding us through. ...I was again reminded why I am a member of the FCM. I was encouraged, inspired and challenged by the stories that were shared by my FCM sisters and brothers. I found true communion with them, which was moved to Eucharist as I found myself filled with gratitude. **Peter Strening**

"The phrase... "Come as you are"..... is my way of describing this weekend's FCM retreat. I feel blessed to be a part of a group that lives..... that out! ...FCM and the Lake Williamson retreat was a lovely weekend place for meditation, relaxing, being heard, and/or hearing with fresh ears.... meeting old and new peers, eating together, and taking in all of God's beauty and creation. A wonderful way to spend the weekend. Here is a prayer by **Angela Mackey** that helps me – when things are crazy and uncertain. *"Father God some days this world seems to attack us from all sides. We feel the stress of responsibilities, crazy schedules, relationships are difficult, and life feels out of control. And in reality it is out of our control. But it is in Your control. Father we pray for Your peace that passes understanding when things in life go crazy. We pray that You will be our anchor in the storm of difficult things, comedy of errors, and the lonely times. Father remind us that when we are weak, then we can be truly strong. When we rest in Your plans then we can walk the roads you marked for us. Father help us to trust each event, each step we take, to Your leading and direction. Help us to pour our hearts out to You when we feel buried under by circumstances. Remind us that we are victorious in You. May we never lose sight of the joy You have in store for us in heaven. Thank You Jesus for loving us so much. Thank You for paying the price for our victory on the cross. May we live worthy of Your sacrifice. In Jesus' Name, Amen."* **Kelly Wunderlich**

The retreat was a celebration of open sharing supported by all rather than of quiet meditation in solitude. **Dennis Condon**

First, thank you for your leadership, passion, and encouragement. The time we spent together was rejuvenating and refreshing. Holy, Sacred, Ground. ...During our time together we shared with one another when being seen as "the other" was "painful" and when it was "interesting." I had not considered this range of dynamics before. The stories that were shared in this sacred space were honest and authentic. And this allowed us to hold space to talk about how we have – and have not – engaged situations when we are witness to someone else being treated as "other." Holy sacred ground indeed. **David Moss**

My ministry is being present to anyone I meet, listening to them and their stories and to their anxieties and concerns. It seems to me that this is the basis of all ministry. **Paul Vincent Reithmaier**

God is always with me even in transition of life experiences. **Jan Reithmaier**





VICE PRESIDENT
DONNA SCHREIBER

Pacific Regional News

Nov/Dec 2017
VOL. 51 NO. 6

Local Gatherings Planned, Portland Members Featured

There are several opportunities in the coming months throughout our region to join your fellow FCM members for prayer and sharing. To help defray the cost there will be a donation of \$25.00.

FCM President Tom Cusack will join us remotely. Contact me at PacificVP@FCMmail.org or call (609) 304-4866



Please check these out and mark your calendars:

Washington: Saturday, November 11, 2017 from 9am to 3pm
at **Forrey's Forza, Coffee, Café & More**, 130 Marvin Rd SE #130, Lacey, WA 98503.
For directions: <https://www.forreysforza.com>

Arizona: Saturday, February 10, 2018 from 9am to 3pm
at **Hope Covenant Church**, 1770 S. Dobson Rd. Chandler 85286.

California: Saturday, March 10, 2018 from 9am to 4pm in Long Beach, CA. Location TBA.
Saturday, March 17, 2018 from 9am to 4pm in San Francisco Area. Location TBA.



I was grateful for the opportunity to get together recently with our two members from the Portland, Oregon area. **Puanani Lalakea** (Left) and **Sarah Wolf** (Middle) met me on October 14th in the Tea House at the Chinese Gardens in downtown Portland which gave us the opportunity to learn so much about each other and our ministries. Sarah shared much about her ministry "outside the box" and how the intersection of gardening and honoring one's ancestors make a natural connection.



While living in Akron, Ohio Sarah was commissioned by FCM while earning four units of clinical pastoral education at Akron General Medical Center. Since then, after moving to Bellingham, Washington and then on to Portland, she has been giving talks in the Portland area and for an FCM gathering focusing on ways to establish a connection with your ancestors.

Following a sabbatical to Europe in 2015, she enrolled in the OSU Extension Service Master Gardener Program. As part of her training, Sarah was assigned to restore the Pioneer Herb Garden at historic Jenkins Estate in Beaverton, Oregon.

Federation of Christian Ministries

The Pioneer Herb Garden was started in 1985 by volunteers, flourishing until 2000. In 2005, again through volunteer efforts, the gardens were replanted. As with any garden left untended for 8-10 years, the summer of 2017 marked the beginning of its third rehab. Sarah and other master gardeners have worked to identify what was growing, clean up, prune, remove, and initiate best garden practices to take care of existing herbs and decide upon new plantings. This is more of a cottage garden with shady, aromatic, culinary, medicinal, and industrial herb beds as well as benches for visitors, a rose arbor of heritage roses dating into the 1800's, and other plantings such as lavender, rosemary, rose campion and more. It is meant to be both beautiful and useful.



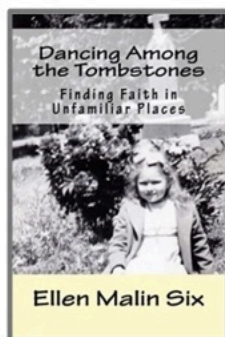
In some ways, the Pioneer Herb Garden is a memory garden, remembering a way of living in the early 1900's. The medicinal bed has been patterned after a quilt (see photograph).

A bed of Field or Flanders Poppies has been planted in memory of all those lost during World War I. A neighbor to the Jenkins Estate donated a comfrey planting. A horehound start was given by the gardeners at the End of the Oregon Trail Pioneer Garden. Hollyhock seeds have been planted, coming from the Fort Vancouver historic vegetable and flower gardens, as well as additional donations from other master gardeners in the area.

Sarah's passion is honoring or remembering our ancestors. In pioneer times, families planted roses or lilacs or trees near the graves of their loved ones. That practice has gone by the way side, replaced by flat stones and mowed grass in many cemeteries, cutting off one way people had to mark their grieving.

Sarah's new start is Custom Memory Gardens through which one can "create a living memory of your loved one. Gardens can be in containers, indoors, or outdoors on a patio, a window box, or section of your yard. In my time as a hospital chaplain, I learned those individuals who were dying wanted to be remembered. It is about creating an emotional link to your loved one by thinking about your mother, father, best friend, etc., what they liked, what the person meant to you, and getting involved in designing the garden."

She encourages her fellow FCM members to contact her for more information about her ministry at SarahGrammWolf@gmail.com with 'Memory Gardens' in the subject line.



Pacific Region member **Ellen Malin Six**, announced the release of her book. *Dancing Among the Tombstones....Finding Faith in Unfamiliar Places.*

In the book Ellen includes her faith journey, her call to priesthood and the steps in healing from the death of her husband which led her to the work with grief ministry.

Ellen's book is available on Amazon
<https://www.amazon.com/Dancing-Among-Tombstones-Ellen-Six/dp/1530541328>



Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter - November/December 2017 VOL. 51 NO. 6



Newsletter Editor...John Polanski
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 15th of each month (February, April, June, August, October and December).

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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.

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 twice yearly. Endorsement application materials are available for downloading on the FCM website at: www.federationofchristianministries.org
Inquiries may be made at: specmin@FCMmail.org

GLOBAL MINISTRIES UNIVERSITY

GMU offers degree completion programs 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: GMU5053@aol.com
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