



Federation of Christian Ministries



Newsletter
September/October 2017
VOL. 51 - Number 5

Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter - September/October 2017 VOL. 51 NO. 5



Cover photo by Antoinette Marold

Autumnal Equinox around September 21st.

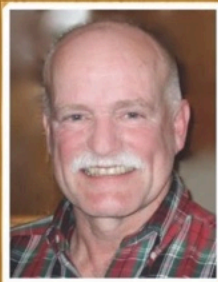
"Equal dark, equal light
Flow in Circle, deep insight
Blessed Be, Blessed Be
The transformation of energy!
So it flows, out it goes
Three-fold back it shall be
Blessed Be, Blessed Be
The transformation of energy!"

Night An'Fey,
Transformation of Energy



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TOM STRICKER

CHAIRPERSON

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Good and Faithful Servants

Our July Circle meeting was an eventful and productive gathering for many reasons, beginning with the completion and acceptance of a *new Code of Ethics*. This effort began at last August's Circle meeting when **Judith McBride**, a member of the Ethics Committee, presented a workshop on the purpose of a Code of Ethics followed by an analysis of the code in effect at that time. When the Circle voted to revise our code we sent suggestions to **Joe Ruane**, Chair of the Ethics Committee and requested he begin work on an updated version. The Circle and all of FCM are grateful for the months of work the Ethics Committee dedicated to the project, and I believe you will appreciate it as well. I remind all members it is *your responsibility to read the Code of Ethics prior to renewing* so please take the time to do so

<http://federationofchristianministries.org/index.php/fcm-standards-ethics>.

Another exciting endeavor is the work that **Tom Cusack** and **Dan Pellegrin** did to lay the foundation for us to begin an *FCM Endowment*, ensuring and expanding our ministry's financial security long into the future. Tom and Dan developed detailed bylaws that will govern the endowment which the Circle accepted unanimously. After a legal review of the document we will establish a committee outside the Circle to commence the project. We are proud to say that all members of the Circle have contributed to the initial funds required to begin this important effort. Please see the accompanying article for further details.

Specialized Ministries have recommended a *mid-semester review to accept petitions for endorsement* from commissioned members in late October. The need for this arose from the changing landscape and needs of those to be endorsed and the number of individuals petitioning for endorsement. This is one more indication of our growth and service throughout the organization.

Members have also requested an organized process through which FCM can *respond and contribute to the civic dialogue in our country in terms of our faith and values*, about which many feel frustrated and overwhelmed. The Circle voted unanimously that we develop a monthly effort via Constant Contact to educate our members on issues and provide a way to respond particularly to our legislators. Please see the accompanying article in this issue for more details.



This meeting also marked the completion of terms of service for three Circle members, all of whom deserve our deepest thanks. **Eileen DiFranco**, Chair of Denominational Concerns completed her three-year term in July. Eileen

has written a book on building small faith communities and continues to work in this most important aspect of adult spiritual development.



Treasurer **Sue Ross** stepped up to the plate when **Ken Knapp** could not complete his term due to his wife's illness. We are truly grateful for her over the past two years. I also want to thank Sue's wife Connie who assisted her in her duties. Sue and Connie stepped in when we needed them and served us well.



Amy Simpson Bennethum completed two three-year terms as Great Lakes Co-Vice President. Beyond participating in the 12 bi-annual meetings during her

term on the Circle, she developed an extensive handbook detailing the duties of the Vice President and helped further the development of Area Representatives which has become a formal position within FCM. She also served as chairperson for the 2014 National Assembly in Cleveland. Amy will continue her efforts within FCM as she is assisting with the implementation of *REALM*, a system that will benefit all members by securing our data while providing more opportunities for communication between leadership and among members. Watch for updates as this project develops.

I cannot say enough about how grateful I am to all the volunteers who make up our Circle of Directors. Their hard work and donated time make it possible for thousands of individuals to receive spiritual care throughout the nation. What a wonderful gift to so many.



TOM CUSACK

PRESIDENT

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The Inner Running and the Outer Running*



On August 9 with my wife, Ginny, I attended the award ceremony for the 2017 Sri Chinmoy Self Transcendence 3100 Mile Race. Yes, 3100 miles. It is a 52 day race in which the runners cover about 60 miles per day, consistently, until the distance is attained. It is a great effort to watch as superbly trained athletes concentrate in an unimaginable way to make it to the completion of the race. "The overall winner of the race was Vasu Duzhiy 51, of St Petersburg, Russia, who won the 21st Annual Sri Chinmoy Self-Transcendence 3100 Mile Race for the second time in 46 days+17:38:22. It was Vasu's sixth consecutive finish and his second consecutive first place." (See <https://us.srichinmoyraces.org/featured#node-10181> for details) **This is an example of the Outer Running.**

This outer achievement is based on an inner achievement of concentration, focus and spiritual development. **That is the Inner Running.** Now to FCM and its outer running.

Our outer running is currently characterized by initiatives across several key activities for FCM. The Circle has approved the **development of an Endowment Fund** for FCM. Work on making that a new reality for our future growth and stability to support new initiatives is proceeding. Quite a few FCM members have come forward to volunteer in reviewing the proposed bylaws document, and even to consider being trustees of the fund. This outer activity will send a message of permanence: that FCM plans forward for the next 50 years as it celebrates its 50 year history.

Our outer running in technology is addressed in the decision to upgrade our data management capabilities. **Amy Simpson Bennethum** is heading this effort. Using Realm software, FCM leadership will have a new tool at hand to communicate with membership, to keep real time records and to add significant information, enabling our records support new initiatives. This decision will move us to an up-to-date data capacity. It will move us forward.

Our outer running in faith communities and group members is moving ahead as FCM member **Ginny Cusack** (my wife) has volunteered to help build our group member infrastructure. This effort will include outreach to our Group Liaisons and the establishing of video conferencing among them. This will begin a new set of benefits which FCM can offer faith communities who might consider joining FCM.

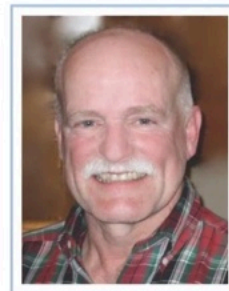
The outer running is *completely dependent* on the **Inner Running**. This running is our daily exercise of our spiritual and devotional life. I've requested for several years that you include **2 by 2 4 FCM** daily. That is, two minutes of prayer and of meditation for the benefit of FCM. I've increased that request with **Tuesday 10 4 FCM**. It is an additional and specific focused spiritual concentration for 10 minutes on Tuesdays for the benefit of FCM. Please carry out these requests as you choose. The outer running fails without the inner running. They both are critical for our progress... the **Inner Running and the Outer Running**. Please let me know how your running is going: President@FCMmail.org

*A book by Sri Chinmoy of the same name, 2008.



Making Our Voices Heard

(Editor's note: After lengthy discussion and consideration regarding FCM's response to pressing issues of justice and peace, the Circle of Directors, led by FCM Chairperson Tom Stricker and the Justice and Peace Chairperson, Carolyn Horvath, agreed to the following plan. Thanks to our Chairperson Tom Stricker for providing this plan to the Newsletter.)



TOM STRICKER

Our Mission Statement begins by saying we are "Called by God's spirit and grounded in personal spiritual practice." We believe personal spiritual practice does not isolate us, but rather brings an awareness of how connected we are with all people. This connection is the foundation of our ministry.

The Mission Statement continues how FCM is engaged in "... supporting the growth in faith and ministry of its individuals and collective members." This is what it means to be "Christ inspired," central to the calling to live the Good News. As he began his ministry Jesus quoted Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, anointing me to preach good news to the poor and sending me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set the oppressed free." These values compel us to be active in the national dialogue.

Although we are small in number, we can make a real difference by contacting our legislators by phone, email, and letter. It is said the one letter faxed to a member of Congress (not a chain letter) has the value of 1000 votes. Since so many issues are facing us it is easy to feel overwhelmed. By working together we can make a difference. Here's how:

- * We will focus on one national issue each month. Contact Tom Stricker chairperson@fcmmail.org if you would like to have input on the concerns to be addressed.
- * Each month members will receive a one-page Constant Contact message on the topic with a brief educational fact sheet. The message will also have a suggested comment which could be used when speaking to the member of Congress whose contact information will be included.
- * We encourage any FCM member who may disagree with the proposed message to call their senators and representatives and express their view as well. Our goal is to promote education and dialogue.
- * We encourage our membership to share this information with friends, family and faith communities, inviting them to make contact as well.

Visit our blog www.fcmblog.org for further discussion on the issues. Keep in mind: we want to encourage Non-Violent Communication, seeking and promoting understanding among all people.

Talk to someone who does not share your view and ask that person to help you understand their position. Do this with care so that once you understand them you can invite them to hear you.

If you want to talk with members of Congress and do not know their phone number, text your zip code to (520) 200-2223 for an immediate response on contact information.

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DAN PELLEGRIN

Endowment Fund

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FCM Endowment Fund Moves Forward

FCM's Circle took a major step forward in July 2017 by approving the creation of an Endowment Fund. The Fund is meant to support and insure FCM's work and mission statement well into the future. Every member of the Circle has financially contributed to the Plan.

What Is The Endowment Fund?

We can think of an endowment fund as a saving account whose principal can never be touched. Only a portion of the interest and earnings can be used every year. The rest of the growth stays in the account, allowing it to grow each year and throw off additional interest and earnings income every year. The growth can be very impressive. Professional money managers often oversee endowment funds, investing in stocks, bonds, and other investments. We have provisionally chosen the Presbyterian Fund to manage the endowment. This Fund enjoys a sterling reputation, and an impressive record. While past success is no predictor of future success, a fund begun with them in 1981 with \$100,000 would have paid out earnings of \$415,000 by 2015, and the fund would have a worth today of \$225,000.

Why Have An Endowment Fund?

Our FCM Endowment Plan will make sure our work will carry on far into the future, for as long as we can see and well past our time actively working on it. The Plan gives a permanency to our gift given today. Our endowment ensures that FCM will be around in the future to carry out its mission. I find this a comforting and exciting thought, and makes contribution very special and very appealing.

We are also told that endowment funds impress donors, especially generous donors. They know, as we do, that our non-profit convention of churches manages its resources well, plans efficiently, and will likely survive any crisis. The Plan gives our members, and other donors, the comforting option of giving a gift that keeps on giving well into the future.

The Future of the Plan

Building our endowment is a long-term project. Our Circle has set guidelines for its use, including the requirement of socially responsible investing, and how much of the earnings can be used yearly. We are having the bylaws reviewed by counsel for a technical, final approval.

Our 50th anniversary celebration will take place in Philadelphia in July 2018. How wonderful it is to have an Endowment Plan in place in time for the 50th Anniversary, to insure the longevity of FCM.

(Editor's note: Thanks to **Dan Pellegrin**, Northeast VP and attorney who together with **Tom Cusack** have been working behind the scenes to develop the necessary first steps for the creation of our endowment fund.)



Federation of Christian Ministries



ANTOINETTE
MAROLD

Communications

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2018 FCM Membership Renewal

Instructions for submitting your report and paying your dues on the FCM website

I expect that you have received your **2018 Dues Packet** and are making plans to complete your report and pay your dues. Of course you can complete the report form that was sent to you via US mail, put it in an envelope addressed to the FCM Central Office along with your check and you are done.

If you would like to complete your report and pay your 2018 dues online, you can follow these simple directions: **Go to the FCM website www.federationofchristianministries.org**

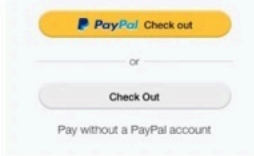
On the right hand side of the page, you will see a button titled **2018 Membership Renewal**.



Click on the button....you will be taken to a page that lists the different categories of membership. Click on your category renewal form.

Complete the form, (this serves as your ministerial report for the previous year and updates your information). When you are finished, click **SUBMIT** on the bottom of the page. You will be taken to a payment page. Under the heading **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**, find your category. Fill in the dues amount and click **Add to Cart**. You will be taken to your shopping cart.

VERY IMPORTANT You do not have to be a PayPal member or join PayPal to pay on this site. Under **Order Summary** you will see: is marked Check Out. information and click **Continue**. for your payment.



Just click the block that Complete your payment You will receive a receipt

Questions? Contact me communication@FCMmail.org or 440.232.6212

VISIT THE FCM BLOG
www.fcmblog.org



Check out our **BLOG!**

Blogs are posted by FCM and written by FCM members. The contents are the sentiments of the author of the post and not necessarily the FCM Community.

You are free to post a comment on any of the blogs. If you would like to post a blog, please send it to me at communication@FCMmail.org. All blogs are reviewed by an Executive Committee member before posting.



PLEASE
LIKE FCM ON
FACEBOOK

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

Federation of Christian Ministries



PETER STRENING

Specialized Ministries

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Evolutionary and Revolutionary Ministry



Specialized Ministries is the part of the FCM community that assists individuals who are seeking Religious Body Endorsement, which may be required by an employer or by a certifying organization in such fields as spiritual care, clinical pastoral education or pastoral counseling. Specialized Ministries attempts to create a network of support for FCM members who minister in these settings, with a particular focus on helping those members navigate the endorsement process. For those of us who are part of Specialized Ministries it is a particular joy to accompany people as they articulate their gifts for ministry and to celebrate with them the acknowledgement of their gifts by FCM and other professional organizations.

With the support of Specialized Ministries I received Endorsement by FCM for my ministry as a Certified Educator with the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE). This year it has been my privilege to work with three different institutions to create a new Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program in Fort Collins, Colorado. The three institutions, Columbine Health Systems (senior care), UHealth (health care) and Colorado State University (campus ministry), have recognized the importance of providing spiritual care for their constituents and they are partners in supporting a CPE program that will place a Spiritual Care Resident in each of the three settings. Although the pastoral context of each setting is different, there will be opportunities for the Spiritual Care Residents to respond to the unique needs of the residents, patients, students, families and staff they encounter. They will also be able to learn with and from one another, thereby taking advantage of the wide range of educational opportunities available in the community.

An exciting challenge for the CPE program will be responding to the needs of the students at Colorado State University. A majority of students identify themselves as "spiritual but not religious" or having no religious or spiritual affiliation (the "nones"). There will be many learning opportunities for the residents, who will grow in their capacity to meet spiritual care needs that may well require non-traditional ways of ministering. Their experience will equip them to be 21st century ministers who are agile in providing care to individuals who will identify their spiritual needs with language and in forms that are evolving as those needs reveal themselves. Competent ministry in the future will require ministers who are 1) firmly grounded in their own faith and value systems, 2) self-aware, and 3) radically open to learning about the beliefs and practices of those in their care. Our vision for the Fort Collins Clinical Pastoral Education program is that it will provide the opportunities and support for the Spiritual Care Residents to become evolutionary and revolutionary ministers, and at the same time supply them with the credentials they need should they decide to pursue professional certification.

The FCM Mission Statement reminds us that "our Christ-inspired organization...(welcomes) people of all spiritual persuasions. We offer endorsement and commissioning to those who have discerned a call to ministry." The inclusive spirit inherent in FCM's mission empowers the work of Specialized Ministries. We have open hearts both for those we serve within FCM and for those who will receive the informed and compassionate care that our endorsed members offer in many different contexts. We are preparing our members to be responsive and responsible ministers with eyes to the future as God, with many new names, is revealed to us.



MARITA GRUDSEN, FIRST WOMAN CERTIFIED BY FCM &
FIRST WOMAN CO-PRESIDENT

A Pioneer's Journey

Opening the door to commissioning for women in FCM...

How clearly I remember sitting in a circle on the floor at **Bill and Mary Manseau's** home for the early discussions of what was then called 'Certification.' It was October, 1974. **Bill Manseau** was president of the newly named *Fellowship of Christian Ministries (FCM)*, formerly *The Society of Priest for a Free Ministry*. Bill's overarching vision was the SEEDS program of which Certification was an essential component. SEEDS represented: Spirituality, Education, Enablement, Development and Service.

The Certification program would affirm and endorse persons in FCM who were exercising ministries for which they were prepared theologically and professionally and had appropriate letters of recommendation. This certification program emerged out of the new Preamble of the Fellowship Constitution: "**We are Christian men and women striving to respond to that Spirit that was in Jesus Christ, the Spirit of a New Pentecost, and committed to that embodiment of that Spirit in a variety of Gospel ministries.**"

The new word, Fellowship (*koinonia*) of Christian Ministries, signaled a new consciousness within the group. The awareness of being a vibrant community was stronger than a society of individual male members (priests) and the preamble acknowledged implicitly the emerging role of women in the community.

The Preamble to the FCM Constitution at that time stated that FCM embodied Community, Ministry and Witness to the mystery of Christ.

As we discussed what would become the guidelines for implementing this program, I remember thinking how important it was to have women included in the certification from the beginning. It was in this context that I put myself forth.

At that time I was co-vice president of FCM. I served on the board of The New Berith, a home for women in transition, directed by Rev. Dorothy Payne and one month later I would initiate with my husband a response to the famine in Bangladesh: *Milk for Bangladesh* which Jerry and I co-directed and would receive an international award. I was also facilitating a small Christian Community in our home and designing retreats, and developing Christian rituals.

Shortly after my Certification, I joined the women ministers circle in Westchester. This is something I wouldn't have done if I hadn't been certified. Together we planned different educational events and new models for women in the Westchester community. It was a very fruitful joint ministry that expanded what any of us could do as individuals.

I hope that FCM's commissioning will continue to be bestowed within a community Ceremony, a grace-filled ritual that gives witness to the gospel and calls on the Holy Spirit to confirm these ministers. This can be done on a regional basis or at the bi-annual convention. We are thus sent forth in a way that changes us, touches our senses, and call us forth in new ways.

Promoting the role of women in ministry world-wide...

Women do essential and multiple forms of ministry every day throughout the world: caregiving and unique ways of nurturing life within and outside the home, deepening their prayer to that place where they are connected to all living beings, creating art forms to nourish the soul and awaken the spirit, educating, counseling and mentoring at all levels of human development, healing and companionship the sick, at home, on the street, and in hospitals, prisons, and war torn areas, singing lullabies and operatic tragedies, demonstrating activism on the part of our Mother Earth, standing up to corrupt power, negotiating conflicts and bringing reconciliation when it seemed impossible, giving legal representation to those who can't afford it and whose lives depend on it, organizing demonstrations to uphold peace and justice, being journalists who expose greed and its effects on the most vulnerable. Women everywhere are creating community, and trailblazing in ever so many ways to meet the needs of the Body of Christ. And, we affirm our sister Roman Catholic Women Priests with their special ministry.

Over the last twenty-five years my work has primarily focused in two areas: Co-founding a center at Stanford University in Ethnogeriatrics with a special focus on 'honoring spiritual and cultural diversity at the end of life.' Applying with a Jewish chaplain for and receiving a Templeton Grant for teaching 'Spirituality and Meaning in Medicine' which is required for all Stanford Medical students.



Left to right: Sr. Stella (a Catholic nun), Marita, Munira (a Muslim) and Doris (a Protestant)

My ethnogeriatric work has given the experience of visiting and learning from so many immigrant and African American elders. I have sat in circles with Hmong elder shamans, Latino healers, Vietnamese elders in their temple, African American and American Indian circles who shared their healing practices. I initiated a program for 7 hospices to address the gaps in Latino End of Life Care. I have been able to bring what our team learned by facilitating Nurses aides training and doing faculty development for physicians. I have been asked to teach in Osaka, Japan and Istanbul. My certification in ministry has impelled me to show the face of Christ in all these situations.

More recently, in the past 6 years, I co-created with my husband an educational program in Kenya, '**Paths to Peace Kenya.**' This developed organically as we met with missionaries and local pastor and priest about the tension between Muslims and Christians and African Traditional religious people. We partnered with different organizations and began recruiting leaders (now teachers) from these different faith communities, teaching them about what we had in common and about their different beliefs. Then we had them form teams that would do research in their larger community about religious issues. One team of 3 women a Muslim, Doris (Protestant) and Sr Stella (Catholic nun) have crossed boundaries in their communities by being the first nun in a Muslim community and the first Muslim on the Cathedral grounds as a team member. There are so many stories that nurture the seeds we plants and entrust to the Holy Spirit.

My hope is that more women with specialized ministries in bringing hope and mercy, breaking open the scriptures, building community wherever they are, and manifesting the gifts of the Holy Spirit, will step forward for commissioning by FCM. May each of them find themselves called to manifest the mind, voice and hands of Christ for today's world.

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

2018 Assembly Updates

MICHAELITA QUINN, ASSEMBLY CHAIR
EMAIL: QUINNEMS@AOL.COM



Get Involved in Spreading the Word!

Did you see the Assembly promotional card?

- ◆ It's in your FCM renewal packet
- ◆ We have more for you to give out
 - ✦ At local gatherings
 - ✦ To friends
 - ✦ 1/2 page or 1/4 page sizes
 - ✦ Email Michaelita, quinnems@aol.com
 - ✦ She'll mail them to you.
 - ✦ They're free!

Plan To Be in the Assembly Program!

- ◆ As a sponsor with your name listed
- ◆ As an advertiser promoting your ministry
- ◆ As a member sending 50th Anniversary wishes
- ◆ Details to come soon in a Constant Contact

SPECIAL THANK YOU!

TO OUR ASSEMBLY NATIONAL PLANNING TEAM

Who are meeting every month
to create this Anniversary celebration.

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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





NANCY E. JOHNSON, FCM

In **October of 2015**, I attended my first Federation of Christian Ministries retreat – a gathering of members from the Mountains and Plains Region at Lake Williamson Christian Conference Center in Carlinville, Illinois. I encountered people of faith devoting their lives to the works of mercy who had stories a lot like mine. What a comfort to discover that my journey as a United Methodist-turned-Catholic, multiple-degreed theologian, lesbian, hospital chaplain, Roman Catholic exile was not so weird after all. As we shared our stories, it became clear that we had been marginalized, excluded, and rejected by far too many communities of faith that prioritized self-preservation and theological certainty over compassion and humility. We were all searching for ways to live authentic gospel lives either on the edges of those institutions or in new communities. We were people gathered from many various places – living a thousand miles apart and coming from a variety of faith communities, races, cultures, and vocations. And we understood each other perfectly. It was a Pentecost moment.

I remember thinking, **“What we have here is a church without walls.”** It was abundantly clear to me that day that we were being church to one another and church in the world. This was a church with no literal walls – no buildings, no shrines, no physical “holy space” – and no figurative walls – no dividing lines to demarcate who is “in” and who is “out,” no barriers of doctrinal certainty, no theology of exclusion. It struck me then and has been growing in my heart ever since, that this is the gift of FCM – being church without walls – **a community of the Spirit grounded in openness, dedicated to humility when speaking of God, defined by compassion and empathy, celebrating how we are different and what unites us.**

**THIS IS THE GIFT OF FCM -
BEING A CHURCH WITHOUT
WALLS - A COMMUNITY OF
THE SPIRIT.**

The **FCM Constitution** expresses this beautifully. From the first words of the Preamble declaring, **“We are women and men responding to that same Spirit that was in Jesus Christ, the Spirit of a new Pentecost,”** FCM lifts up its identity as a community of the Spirit, grounded in equality and openness.

Other key phrases in the preamble are **“rich diversity of ministries,” “renewal and transformation,” “mutuality and partnership,” “whole-hearted love of God and neighbor,” “interdependence and interconnection of all reality,” and “work for justice, equality, and peace.”** I encourage you to re-read it, not only to appreciate how well it describes our communion, but also to find both solace and inspiration.

The rest of the Constitution follows upon the themes of the Preamble, focusing on **“love and justice,” “the gifts of the Spirit,” and “a collegial model of equality.”** The definition of church written in the Constitution describes exactly what I experienced at the retreat: **“Like the early Christian communities, we believe that the people of God, whenever and wherever they gather, are church.”** This understanding of church, together with **“the Spirit of a new Pentecost”** declared in the Preamble reveal the identity of the FCM.

Remember that the account of Pentecost in the Acts of the Apostles is at least in part a story of the reversal of Babel. In Genesis 11, we learn that long ago **“the whole earth had one language and the same words.”** Anxious to preserve this unity-in-sameness, the people made bricks and mortar and built a city and tower – **“otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.”** God takes exception to this strategy and **“confuse[s] their language, so that they will not understand one another’s speech.”** (NRSV)

In his book *Genesis*, noted biblical scholar Walter Brueggeman describes the situation thus: **The peoples do not wish to be spread abroad but want to stay in their own safe mode of homogeneity.... This is a self-made unity in which humanity has a ‘fortress mentality.’ It seeks to survive by its own resources.... It is a unity grounded in fear and characterized by coercion. A human unity without the vision of God’s will is likely to be ordered in oppressive conformity.**

The ones who built the Tower of Babel ordered their lives according to fear rather than **“God’s purposes of joy, delight, freedom, doxology, and caring.”** They wanted to be with those like themselves. They sought to protect their way of life with bricks and walls. We learn from their story that this is not God’s way.

The FCM Constitution acknowledges that we are **“people in diaspora.”** We have experienced various churches that have built walls constructed of definitive statements, pronouncements, and concepts of inerrancy or infallibility. We have watched as predominantly male power structures have marginalized women, people of color, the LGBTQIA community, and so many of the vulnerable people that our society has already deemed **“less than.”**

This Babel approach represents a closed system, built brick upon brick, celebrating the value of sameness. By contrast, Pentecost represents an open system, courage to be vulnerable, and unity in diversity. The Babel mentality, motivated by fear, cannot grasp that we do not need one language as long as we have the Spirit as our interpreter. More than ever – as the violent forces of sameness and fear make themselves manifest in our streets, our neighborhoods, our workplaces, and perhaps even our homes – our world needs us to bear witness to this different way.

WE DO NOT NEED ONE LANGUAGE AS LONG AS WE HAVE THE SPIRIT AS OUR INTERPRETER

One of my favorite theologians, Louis-Marie Chauvet, notes in Symbol and Sacrament that the Spirit is rarely mentioned in the scriptures. He identifies this “absence” as indicative of the Spirit’s essence. Rather than being found in the words themselves, the Spirit is found in the blank spaces between the letters and the words. The Spirit creates the space that makes understanding possible. When we as the communion of FCM ground ourselves in a “new Pentecost” and declare our intention to “embody that Spirit,” we commit ourselves to forgo the security of bricks and mortar and to inhabit the spaces between – the open spaces that make understanding possible. We embrace our calling to occupy the spaces between churches, the spaces between walls and boundaries wherever they are built. We accept our mission to bear witness to openness and the richness of diversity in a world so enamored with walls and sameness. We do not rely on bricks and mortar. Instead, we trust in the Spirit. We are church without walls.



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.

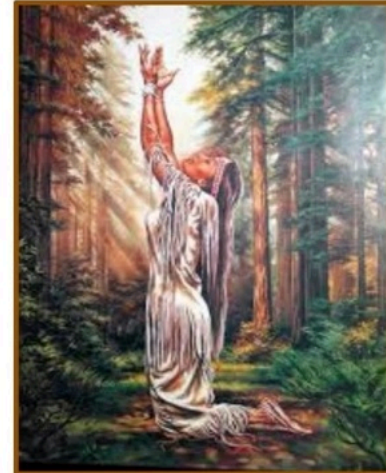


TOM LEONHARDT, FCM

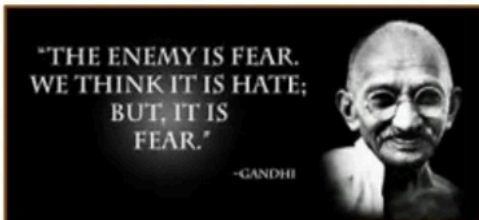
(Editor's note: Thanks to Tom for another of his reflections on FCM's personal and corporate response to concerns of peace with justice in our world, beginning with our own spiritual journey.)

Energy out of balance... Mythologically, we are witnessing in our country and beyond the betrayal of the deep feminine. Even as each morning at the pipeline in South Dakota, young Native American women do ritual honoring water and earth, this betrayal stands in profound contrast to the vision and message of the Good News of Jesus. Our culture, including institutional religious culture, continues to ignore the ancient and mystical wisdom which cries out that we are ONE and that the diversity we experience is not a drawback but rather, rich ground for deeper gratitude and appreciation.

We are stuck in our preoccupation with security, our reliance on weapons and winning. Even our sports have been and continue to be charged with the language of war. What are we to do? Whatever we do outwardly needs to be grounded in daily, personal spiritual practice, grounded in love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness. We are desperately in need of integration of the masculine and feminine energies, an integration embedded in the **gematria** tradition as found in the Synoptic Gospels.



Gematria is the intentional crafting of words whose Greek letters have specific numerical value which, when added together, are known to hold a particular significance. The sum for the word "mustard seed" in the Greek text of the Synoptic Gospels means integration of masculine and feminine energies. This vision is clearly realized in the Jesus story. Today we continue on the path of destruction by out-of-balance masculine energy. What makes this energy so dangerous and deceptive is the appeal to fear, fear which is unreasonable that justifies violence in many forms. As Merton noted in *Seeds of Contemplation*, "At the root of all war is fear."



Charlottesville, Virginia has laid bare the death throes of patriarchy: entitled white males, desperate and driven to violence, throttled by the terror of losing control [many following the Jesus depicted on the hill calmly looking over Jerusalem with an AK47 resting on his lap]. By contrast, rising consciousness across the nation came in swift response to a dying dream of control through "Power over!"

But death throes are not pretty and no one knows how long they will last. In so many ways we are a nation long committed to violence, to clinging to control, to securing the growing gap between wealth and squalor. This is a scary time. We do not know what will happen. What will we do as people who claim to be followers of the non-violent Jesus, the suffering servant, calling us to let go of results and stay committed to liberty and justice for ALL, no matter what the consequences for us personally?

Responding to fear... In the wake of the various and ongoing terrorist attacks around the world our collective fear in the United States, unlike responses in some other nations, has reached new heights. This collective fear is further exacerbated by the political situation, churning our already high level of obsession with security.

Let's look at the actual comparative danger of externally-generated terrorism. Let's stand back for some sane perspective on our situation. We are as likely to be killed by a terrorist attack as we are of being killed by a piece of falling furniture. We are far, far more likely to be killed in an auto accident, by a heart attack, cancer, or a medical mistake than we are by an externally-generated terrorist attack!

The alarming number of shooting incidents in Chicago and elsewhere are not connected in any way to externally generated terrorism, but people are just as dead and just as injured. The continuing rise of the Alt-Right is not in any way connected to externally generated terrorism. What does this obsessive and intentionally stoked fear of externally generated terrorist attacks as well as internally generated hatred and violence, tell us about what our minds do, both individually and collectively?

Getting into a car *is dangerous*, yet for the most part we are not afraid of getting into a car. Observation reveals that this danger increases as many people drive too fast, drive while impaired by alcohol, drugs, fatigue, or using the phone. Insurance rates will spike but most of this gadget related potentially lethal behavior is legal! Still, in light of these common observations, we are not afraid to travel by car. So, why do we experience great fear of events which are possible but far less likely, such as terrorist attacks, while we experience little or no fear of things which are statistically far more likely and take place around us continuously?

Awakening to our choices... Clearly it is about the mind, the weight or lack thereof which we give *unconsciously* to the stories we tell ourselves or which other people tell us, especially "power figures." It is about what stories we choose to believe, choose to assign more weight. Is ignoring the evidence rational, logical? Surely not! Of course, it happens unconsciously—in other words, *we are asleep!* What can we do about this irrational mental pattern and move toward a more tranquil way of living? **We need to awaken, become more intentionally aware, more realistic.** We do live in midst of danger from many sources, whether natural, humanly generated, with or without intent. But we do not need to live in constant fear, paralyzed by obsessing over our security.

We need to accept what is when there is nothing we can do about it. When there is something we can do then we need to take action!

It is not fruitful, in fact it is counter-productive, to use critically needed energy by blaming somebody else for the way things are. We need to look at ourselves to determine whether and how we may be part of the problem, whether we do the very things we *easily* blame on others. For example our national collective ego points to ISIS-sponsored terrorism. ISIS does sponsor terrorism. A look at our own national history however, shows that we also sponsor terrorism (usually in the name of "national security"):

➤ Seventy-two years ago the US Marines bombed Guatemala City to oust democratically elected President Arbenz who was repossessing land for his people from the United Fruit Company, in which the US Secretary of State had a family interest---hardly a national security threat. Was this not US sponsored terrorism?



Several FCM members attended the SOA Watch at Ft. Benning

➤ The School of the Americas (currently known by the Pentagon term, Center for Hemispheric Security) based at Fort Benning, Georgia trains police from various Central American Countries to torture and kill their own people to provide stability benefiting the wealthiest two percent of their populations. Victims include: Archbishop Oscar Romero, assassinated during liturgy; four church women, raped, murdered and thrown into a grave; six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter, dragged out and shot in the middle of the night at the university of San Salvador for teaching about justice.

➤ Killing of peasants by two transnational corporations to further their mining projects in El Salvador and insure ever growing profits. Are these not acts of terrorism?

What can we do?... The first thing is take immediate ownership of our own nation's bloody and violent racist past and ongoing treatment of minorities, people of color, native peoples: the Dakota Pipeline, indiscriminate deportation of Hispanic and Muslims individuals and families for reasons of "National Security!" This fear of *The Other* has practical consequences. For example, Wright State University outside Dayton, Ohio has seen applications from international students plummet by nearly half for the next school year. This same drop has also taken place in other schools around the nation. International students and recent graduates who hope to remain in the US find it extremely difficult to find jobs (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*, April 1, 2017.)

As a nation we need to bring an end to behaviors that feed hatred toward us because of our imperialist self-serving patterns and thus enhance recruiting on the part of terrorist organizations.

As people coming awake to the dangers stirring internally, we need to continue to practice and we need to continue to act.

There are at least two opposing options that come to mind:

1. Go on blaming the violence on others and further engage our obsessive fears of losing our lives and material assets **or**

2. Wake up...which happens one person at a time, but which is becoming collective. So if we want different results we need to keep trying something new, doing what is right not because it is successful or profitable but because it is right.

Changing individual behavior...

- How am I violent?
- How am I aggressive?
- How am I exclusive?
- How am I arrogant?
- How am I judgmental...
- toward myself, other people, other living beings, Earth?

What are the patterns in my life that show that it is *all about me*? Step one requires conscious noticing and owning of recurring negative patterns. We cannot do anything different if we do not notice and own. Then we need to work with the material, *staying* not avoiding, not denying. We do not do this in a judgmental, self-critical, self-condemning way. We just need to notice and own it. With hard work we can change these sometimes deeply engrained responses. This process then becomes the ground on which healing is built, healing not only for ourselves but for others too.



You may already be familiar with a practical spiritual practice originating in Hawaii, Ho'oponopono – “making right.” <http://zero-wise.com> Dr. Ihaleakala Hew Len, Ph.D., worked as a psychologist at a hospital in a unit for the criminally insane. The staff was constantly changing, with personnel unwilling to enter the unit because it was so dangerous. Patients were not improving. Dr. Hew Len, realizing that we are all ONE, that there is no “other” would become aware that what he saw on the outside could be cleaned on the inside. A possible English rendering might be: “**I’m sorry I caused your suffering. Please forgive me. Thank you. I Love You.**” This would be said or chanted over and over and over again, thus cleaning within.

During a five year period, the unit staff stabilized, patients got better, were taken off the heavy drugs and eventually released. The unit was closed because the staff was no longer needed. Dr. Hew Len realized that as he cleared within what he saw outside, patients became well. He realized that we are all one, all connected with each other, inter-vibrating with each other. As our wounds, wants, obsessing, unhealthy spontaneous reactions become healed, that healing vibration goes out to others. “Zero-Wise means a state of being pure love, thought free, in the present. **The Ho’oponopono cleaning process allows direct contact with the divine wisdom, love and inspiration already within each of us. It is achieved when memories replaying as thoughts, fears, and judgements are transmuted to ZERO by Love. It is a state of being which enables us to lead inspired lives.**” (from the website)

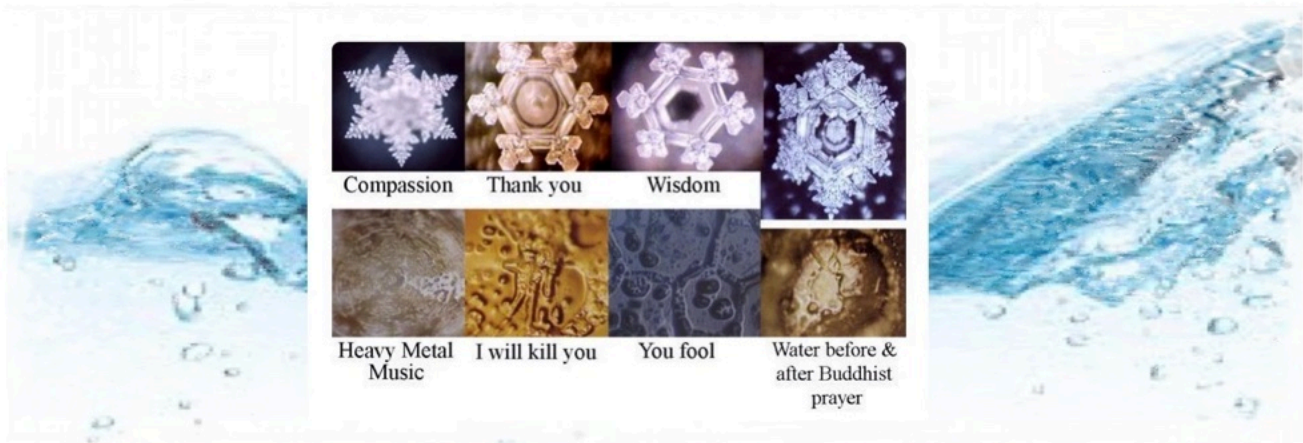
Personal commitment... In these troubled times we have already had occasion to take to the streets. It appears we will have on-going opportunities to do so. The key will be for us to be grounded in love even as we speak a clear and firm *No* to oppression, injustice, violence in its myriad forms, *No* to ignoring the Statue of Liberty, *No* to racism, *No* to ethnic profiling. These times offer the challenge and possibility of a new surge of true unity through civil conversation with people who are different from us, who look differently, think differently, and act differently from us. It is time to vision anew a land which is truly a land of the free and home of the brave, where there is liberty and justice for ALL, not just some privileged, connected, important few.

Jesus said: “Love your enemies.” Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz, in his book, *Prayers of the Cosmos: Meditations on the Aramaic Words of Jesus*, translates this saying from Jesus’ language, Aramaic. It suggests a process resonant of the Ho’oponopono practice. “*From a hidden place, unite with your enemies from the inside fill the inner void (inanity, vacuity) that makes them swell outwardly and fall out of rhythm: instead of progressing step by step, they stop and start harshly, out of step with you. Bring yourself back into rhythm within. Find the movement that mates with theirs—like two lovers creating life from dust. Do this work in secret, so they don’t know. This kind of love creates, it doesn’t emote.*” (added emphasis)

Staying with the Aramaic sayings of Jesus, the second line of the Lord’s Prayer could be rendered: “Help us clear a space *inside* of busy forgetfulness, so your shining Vibration, your Name, can find a home, a center around which our lives turn.”

Another practice I have found fruitful is from the work of Dr. Donald Pachuta which he terms "Effective Prayer," another clearing, cleaning process. When we experience obsessive "stuff," things that hook us, thoughts, judgements, fear, contentiousness, resentment, anger, etc., we can go to the mantra: "I release *all of my* fear of....(be as specific as you can) to the light. This is to be repeated exactly for two to three minutes. I have sometimes repeated it for a longer period and found the practice helpful in bringing me to ZERO.

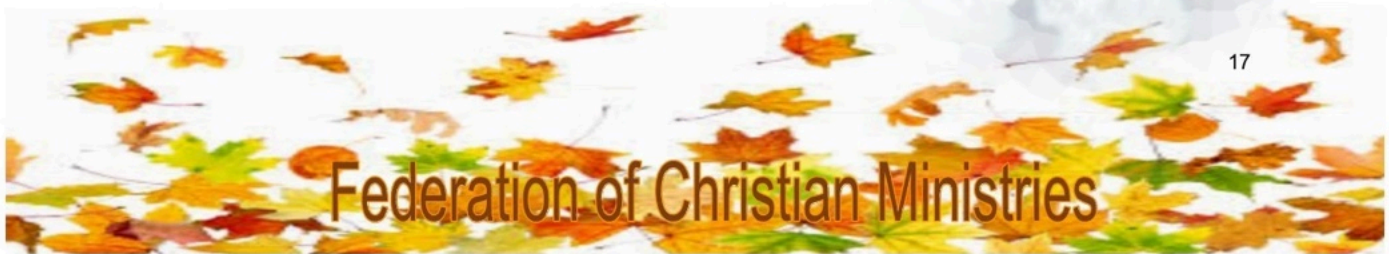
Forgiveness is central to Jesus' message, even to seventy times seven times, with no conditions. We may view forgiveness as something purely spiritual, something that takes place without any outward manifestation, yet it actually does have outward manifestation. When you have asked or received forgiveness, you have surely noted that you feel differently and probably that you act differently. We speak of having a load lifted from our shoulders. Forgiveness is another one of those cleaning, clearing practices. We become free of what is burdensome, heavy, slowing us down, maybe even shutting us down yes, physically. Forgiveness lies at the very heart of justice making and needs to become handy to us in times of such challenge. Forgiveness clears resentment, anger, judgement, etc. Forgiveness, to be effective, needs to be given through the pain of the offense, not side stepping, let alone denying it.



Finally, hearts of love and gratitude are essential to meeting the challenges of injustice and hate.

Love and gratitude are energy patterns and, as we experience, are sometimes palpable. The research of Dr. Masaro Emoto on water makes clear that we are talking about manifest energy. When water is exposed to negativity, its crystals are ugly; when it is exposed to positivity, its crystals are beautiful. So the effects are physical! On the hard copy of his book, Messages from Water, Dr. Emoto shows a photo of a beautiful water crystal. Around the crystal the following text appears three times: "Messages from water are telling us to look inside ourselves." Once again the resonance of *work within!*

The Jesus vision of "life in abundance" will not be realized without a new spiritual awakening, grounded in committed daily spiritual practice which will empower us to be in this together, for the long haul. We are FCM, we are not simply individuals. We have greater power together than we do individually. As our president and chairperson have suggested, let us join together in spiritual practice and in speaking out! As each is called let us act for justice and peace, ever grounded in Love, Gratitude and Compassion.



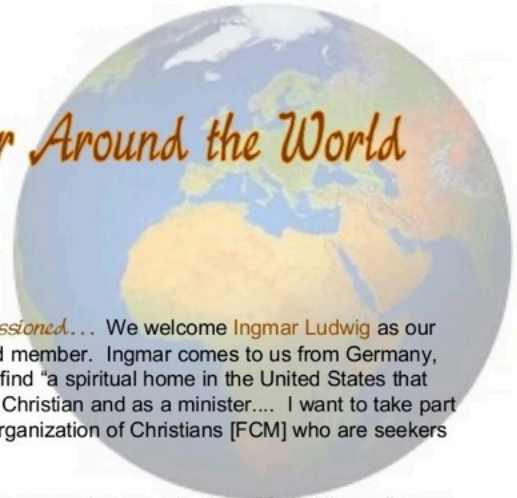


VICE PRESIDENT
DAN PELLEGRIN

Northeast Regional News

Sept/Oct 2017
VOL. 51 NO. 5

Journeying Together Around the World



New Member Commissioned... We welcome Ingmar Ludwig as our newest commissioned member. Ingmar comes to us from Germany, writing how he would find "a spiritual home in the United States that fits my evolution as a Christian and as a minister.... I want to take part in and represent an organization of Christians [FCM] who are seekers and helpers."

In many ways Ingmar is representative of the new members coming into FCM. His studies are inspiring: at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City he "focused on Bonhoeffer, liberation theology and the theology of Paul." Ingmar also studied at the Hanshin University, Seoul, South Korea in 2006 about which he wrote: "In my time in Korea, I focused on Minjung Theology and the history of the divided Koreas in the context of Israel and Judah in the Old Testament and my experience of the divided Germany and reunification." He serves as a chaplain at New York Presbyterian Hospital in Manhattan.

Those who recommended Ingmar spoke of his "proactive chaplaincy" (a concept certainly worth learning about) and one stated: "I truly believe that he will be a great asset to the Federation of Christian Ministries. And he will bring his unique energy and tireless curiosity and wonder to FCM." Ingmar is now on our endorsement track.

RCWP member to return to Asia... FCM presented a gift membership to a newly-ordained Roman Catholic Woman Priest in our region. We can't share more details as she will be returning to an unwelcoming Asian country. We are proud to have a new member in Asia, adding to FCM's small (but growing) international footprint that includes members in Canada, Ireland and Africa.

Journeying Together in FCM... Continuing our theme of FCM members sharing and supporting each other, I offer some thoughts of Sr. Joan Chittister from her reflection **A Seeker's Path** (where it sounds like she was writing about us!): "We do not all hear the same tones at the same volume, or see the same visions in the same colors, or seek the same goods of life in the same way. The search for God depends, then, on choosing the spiritual path most suited to our own spiritual temper and character. For many, it is the search to belong to a group of fellow travelers who will hold us up when we fall, and urge us on to greater heights when we are afraid to strain for more. These are the seekers who are looking for others who seek what they seek, who care about what they care about, and who set out with them to make life richer and the world better than they know they could ever do alone."

Apropos of that final thought, Zoom is coming to the Northeast Region. Watch for more information.





VICE PRESIDENT
RON DAVIS

Great Lakes Regional News

Sept/Oct 2017
VOL. 51 NO. 5

Commissioning to be Among Retreat Activities

The FCM Circle meeting in Cleveland this past July was very full and much was accomplished over the three days. Among those activities was the Circle vote to commission **Rev. Jim Zippay** who ministers in the greater Columbus, Ohio area.



The hand of God is on Jim's life and God has blessed him richly in many ways. I know him to be devoted to his wife for over 30 years. He has raised two children in the faith with love and care. He was the founding pastor of Heritage Christian Church in Westerville. Under his leadership Heritage has grown to be one of the strongest evangelical churches in the greater Columbus metro area. He has been involved in prison ministry for a number of years and has completed 4 units of CPE at Nationwide Children's

Hospital, Columbus working well with patients, their families and the staff. Jim is a strong and gifted spiritual leader who has had impact across the world in his ministry.

You might well ask why Jim is looking for commissioning from FCM. The reason is that Heritage is an independent church that is not a part of a greater endorsing body. Jim desires to continue his ministry as a chaplain and in order for him to become board certified, he has to be commissioned and endorsed. Months ago, we discussed his need for endorsement and I talked to him about FCM. This past January he became a member because he believes FCM to be a good fit.

Jim will be commissioned at worship service during the Great Lakes Region's retreat at Maria Stein, Ohio September 29-October 1. The service will take place Saturday at 1:30 p.m. with Jim as the speaker. I am looking forward to this segment in our weekend's gathering.

There's a lot more to that event, beginning with a meal served by the staff at Maria Stein at 5:30 p.m. Friday. That evening the welcoming activities will be planned by our members from the Cincinnati area and will end with a wine and cheese fellowship time. Saturday will be a full day, with our Cleveland area members presenting the morning's programming. Following lunch we will have our Commissioning Worship Service in Maria Stein's Chapel followed by a block of free time. And since this is Oktoberfest Weekend in Maria Stein, one good activity could be to go into town and eat some good German food. Following dinner our Michigan group will offer the evening's program. The day will end once again with wine and cheese and sharing over the day's events.

Sunday morning will begin with breakfast then we will move into a Morning Worship Service. Following the service, we will have a time to talk about what is going on in FCM, our last organized event of the weekend. The weekend concludes with lunch.

The staff at the conference center's staff is gracious and kind and very accommodating. You may register for the retreat up to and through September 25th. Whether for the entire weekend or just a portion, know that you are welcomed. Please contact me by the deadline.

With Deepest Sympathy

On August 9, 2017 our Chairperson, Tom Stricker's brother Raymond past on to his new life in Spirit. Our sympathy and prayers are with Tom, Patty and their family.



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Federation of Christian Ministries

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2017 Great Lakes Region Gathering

September 29 - October 1, 2017

Spiritual Center of Maria Stein...2365 St. Johns Road.....Maria Stein, Ohio 45860



SCHEDULE...COST (includes 2 nights, 5 meals, 3 workshops, 2 social gatherings)

Friday, September 29

Activities hosted by Cincinnati area members

4:00 – 7:00pm: Registration
6:00pm: Dinner
7:30pm: Evening Gathering

Saturday, September 30

Morning activities hosted by Cleveland area members

8:00am: Morning Meditation
8:15am: Breakfast
9:00am: Gathering One
10:00am: Break
10:30am: Gathering Two
11:30am: Lunch

Afternoon and evening activities hosted by Michigan members

1:30pm: Gathering One
2:30pm: Free Time
5:30pm: Dinner
7:30pm: Gathering Two
8:30pm: Wine and Cheese

Sunday, October 1

8:30am: Breakfast
9:15am: Prayer & Worship Planned by Ron Davis and Friends
10:15am: Closing Business & Discussion on Future Retreats

Name: _____

Address: _____

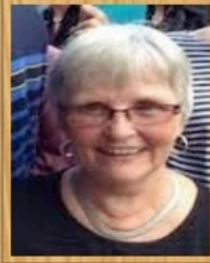
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number attending: _____ X \$175 single or \$250 couple = \$ _____ (Total Due)

Please mail registration to:

Ronald Davis, 200 Brookhaven Dr. N, Columbus, OH 43230
with your check payable to: **Federation of Christian Ministries**

If you have any questions, call Ron @ (513) 262-2210.



VICE PRESIDENT
DIANE DOUGHERTY

Southern Regional News

Sept/Oct 2017
VOL. 51 NO. 5

Celebrating the Southern Region



Commissioning and Endorsement celebration at First United Church of Christ in Tampa, FL
Left to Right: Laura Callender, David Nyland, Diane Dougherty, Nathan Nordine, Joshua Albrecht

Celebrating Growth in Membership January-August 2017

New Members

Abigail Eltzroth
Weaverville, NC
Jeffery Childers
Lexington, KY
Shelley Gilchrist
Deland, FL
Patricia Weidman
Frickville, PA
Jeffrey Martin
Herndon, VA

Commissioned

Laura Callender
Dover, FL
Judith McNutt
Jacksonville, FL

Endorsed

Marellen Mayer
Forest Hill, MD
Ralh Garofolo Sr.
Columbia, SC

Commissioned and Endorsed

Lisa Koch
Raleigh, NC
Nathan Nordine
Safety Harbor, FL
Lindsay Butler
Memphis, TN
Joshua Albrecht
St. Petersburg, FL
David Nyland
Oldsmar, FL

Renewing - Dorothy Shugrue, Bonita Springs, FL One **Group Membership** - pending

Celebrating Our First Member from Memphis, TN



Lindsay Butler's community gathered in the backyard of Manna Houe - a Resting Place for the Homeless.

Included were ministers from the program, friends, and those with whom she has been working.

How do members find us?

For the most part it is word of mouth, as well as marketing to people beginning small faith communities, those in need of Wedding Officiants authorized by an official body, as well as chaplaincy programs for which endorsement from a non-denominational body is needed.

What new ventures are in store for the Southern Region?

The focus for the next months is to promote EARLY RENEWAL and to begin making use of ZOOM, a video communication platform FCM members are using increasingly across the country. Bayfront Medical used it with great success during their Endorsement Process and we have used it for conference meetings so I am going to give it a try. And for those who do not have computer access, phone connections are fine!

A new emphasis is on developing and collecting resources for those in small group ministries.

Thanks to **Ginny Cusack** who has volunteered to collaborate on the sharing of group resources. I will be asking members what can be done to help this process get started and how it can be used for greater success.

The East Coast Conference of Call To Action will be in Baltimore October 20-21, 2017.

<http://files.constantcontact.com/7ea64922601/2df4f9d1-d24c-426e-bd8d-0f483a9a648a.pdf>

This is a great opportunity for ministers to gather and is open to all. If a group of us want to attend to meet each other, network with others in our area and gather ideas for our ministries, let me know!

SAVE THIS DATE:

**2018 FCM National Assembly - Celebrating 50 years of Ministry
Philadelphia, July 20-22, 2018**

Assistance in promoting the meeting is needed

RENEWAL PERIOD COMING UP FOR 2018 - stay tuned.....

Happy



**"All labor that uplifts humanity
has dignity and importance and
should be undertaken with
painstaking excellence."**

**Labor
Day**



- Martin Luther King Jr.



VICE PRESIDENT
RICHARD JAMES

Mts & Plains Regional News

Sept/Oct 2017
VOL. 51 NO. 5

Newly-Commissioned Members Enrich Region

It brings me great pleasure to present to five newly-commissioned ministers from the Mountains and Plains Region. I hope you will take the time to look them up on the FCM Member Web Page, send them a note of congratulations and encourage their continued fellowship. I look forward with great anticipation to seeing you at our regional retreat. If you have not registered, please do so A.S.A.P. Also, please be on the lookout for an email from me inviting you to sign-up for a Zoom Meeting. Until next time, may the blessings of health, faith, hope, and love be yours.



Dawne M. Banks received her Master of Divinity degree with an emphasis on Pastoral Care in June 2016, from Northern Seminary in Lombard, IL. She is currently in the final unit of a year-long CPE residency program at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge, IL, and will seek board certification through the Association of Professional Chaplains next year.

As part of her training, Dawne has supported patients and families in critical care areas of the hospital, including Medical/Cardiac Intensive Care, Cardiac Telemetry, and the Emergency Department. She is interested in helping people consider how their spiritual values might impact decisions about goals of health care, especially at end-of-life.

Dawne has been actively involved in pastoral care throughout her life. She has led many Bible studies and small groups, including a support group for survivors of sexual abuse. Based on her own experience of raising a son on the autism spectrum, she created and managed a ministry to families of children with special needs in her church enabling parents to attend worship together, some for the first time in many years. Dawne is extremely grateful for the faithfulness of God in her life and looks with anticipation for the Spirit's work in this next season.



Fred Clay holds a BS in Music Education from Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas (1976), an M.Div. from the Toronto School of Theology (1982), and an MA from Notre Dame University with an emphasis in Liturgical Studies (1993). He is currently working full-time at St. Cyril of Alexandria Parish, Houston, Texas.

Fred initially answered God's call as an ordained priest in the Congregation of St. Basil, serving happily and faithfully for 16 years. His second call was equally as compelling: to be in a relationship with a woman who would later become his wife. At first, he resisted, because he was committed to his vocation as a priest. As Fred sees it, "Because I see in this opportunity yet another aspect of God calling me, I am honor bound to say 'yes.'"

Becoming a member of FCM in 2017, he says, "I am a firm believer that ministry should be completely inclusive of anyone who is qualified and called to serve God's people. For that reason, I am an avid supporter of FCM and its ministry, especially in my prayers." Fred comes recommended by those who know him best praising him as being a sought-after counselor, an excellent musician, and vocalist.



Barbara A. Lawrence chose to be baptized at the age of fifteen when she realized she wanted a relationship with God. During a pastoral care seminar, an associate minister in her church spoke of her own call to chaplaincy. Barbara says, "Immediately, I experienced a paradigm shift in my mind. At that very moment, my call to the vocation of chaplaincy became very clear."

Her calling to chaplaincy was confirmed as she began her pursuit of a CPE residency. Upon completing the program, she was so sure of her calling that she only submitted only one employment application and that was to Advocate Christ Medical Center, where she is currently employed as a Staff Chaplain.

Barbara holds a BA degree in Psychology with a minor in Christian Ministries and an MA in Christian Studies from Trinity International University. Soon after her CPE residency, she became a Registry Chaplain at Advocate Children's Hospital, and most recently a Staff Chaplain at Advocate Christ Medical Center. Barbara plans to pursue FCM Endorsement, and become an APC Board Certified Chaplain.



Sherri L. Stella received her undergraduate education from Saint Catherine University in Minneapolis as well as an MA in Theology with a Certificate in Pastoral Ministry. In 2015 she completed a one-year Clinical Pastoral Education residency at the University of Minnesota Medical Center. She is currently Director of Pastoral Care at Saint John Neumann Church in Eagan and a chaplain at North Memorial Hospital in Robbinsdale.

Growing up in a devout Catholic family, Sherri has found herself challenged by many of those beliefs, specifically by the church's stance on LTBQT rights and the inequality of women. "I have come to see that my tradition views my daughter who is part of the LGBTQ community as a sinner. This disappointment was very painful for my family and one that I can't stand behind. I don't want any person to feel less than beautiful and loved. My mission as a minister is to spread the message of God's love to all."

Sherri is seeking endorsement by FCM because she wants to solidify her role as a Christian minister while celebrating our love of Christ and our call to love. Sherri proclaims a theology of love and inclusion that is grounded in her deep faith in God and Christ.



Gregory J. Widmer grew up on the shores of Lake Winnebago in Oshkosh, Wisconsin loving Jesus, the Packers, and grilling brats no matter how cold it was outside. Along with year-round athletics and membership in a vibrant youth group, his formative years included a growing interest in other cultures. After learning Spanish he developed close friendships with recent immigrants from Latin America.

During college Gregory juggled studying International Ministries at a Bible college, ministering as a youth pastor for inner-city Hispanic youth, and serving in the military. As such, he "crammed" the earning of his bachelor's degree into six years due in large part to two overseas deployments. His faith and presuppositions were immediately challenged while living in Iraq where he says he grew up quickly. "That's when I started to view the world in color."

Gregory met his bride, Tami, in college and they married in April 2010. Their world expanded even further when they attended Denver Seminary. During this season of their lives is when he and his wife had their daughter, Willow Spring. Currently, Gregory works at the Department of Veterans Affairs in Fargo, ND. Soon they will move to Sioux Falls, SD where he will engage in a one-year Chaplain Residency program at the Veterans Affairs Hospital.





- ***FCM Mountain & Plains
Region Retreat Gathering***

{Invitees: All current and potential members of the FCM.}

- October 14-15, 2017

- At Lake Williamson Christian Center – Carlinville, IL 62626
(www.lakewilliamson.org)

- See Registration Form for Pricing: Lodging, Buffet Meals, Conference, Recreation Activities all covered.

- Register by September 1, 2017




Lake Williamson

Christian Conference Center

RESTORE. RENEW. RECONNECT.

Federation of Christian Ministries 2017 Mts. & Plains Regional Gathering Registration

October 14-15, 2017 - Lake Williamson Christian Center

ATTENDEE INFORMATION:

Name: _____ M or F _____ / _____ / _____
First Last Gender Birthday

Email: _____ May we email you? Yes No
Regarding Attending this Event

Address: _____
Mailing Address

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Preference: Home Cell
We prefer to have a cell phone number on file

ROOMING OPTIONS:

- Single Occupancy: **\$125.00 per person** Double Occupancy: **\$115.00 per person**
 Triple Occupancy: **\$107.50 per person** Quad Occupancy: **\$97.00 per person**

Roommates Request: _____

Would you like us to pair you with a roommate(s)? Yes No

If no, and no roommate requests are made we will assume you would like to pay for single occupancy

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VICE PRESIDENT
DONNA SCHREIBER

Pacific Regional News

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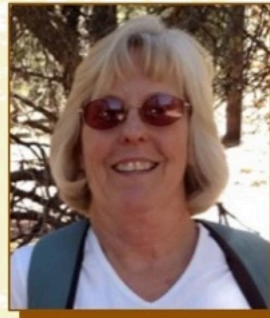
Two Chaplains Endorsed, Commissioned



It is my pleasure to introduce **Jamez Terry**, our newest endorsed member in the Pacific Region and the only FCM member in Alaska! Jamez is employed by Providence Health & Services as a chaplain to The Children's Hospital at Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage.

His ministry focuses on children, youth, and families, as well as their staff caregivers within the hospital. He will be continuing his journey toward board certification with the Association of Professional Chaplains.

I have gotten to know Jamez through the use of Zoom which we have found to be very helpful. Congratulations Jamez!



I am also happy to introduce **Barbara Bunsold** who is our newest commissioned member in the Pacific Region. Barbara resides in Yuma, Arizona where she is employed by Yuma Regional Medical Center as a professional hospital chaplain and care advocate. She offers "presence without judgment" to people of all faiths, as well as those who find no home within a sacred or spiritual tradition. She will be continuing her journey towards becoming a Certified Educator by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education.

I got to know Barbara at a Pacific Region gathering in Casa Grande, Arizona earlier this year. Congratulations Barbara!

Federation of Christian Ministries

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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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