

# *Federation of Christian Ministries Newsletter*

*July/ August 2020*

*Vol. 54 Number 4*



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*With  
Liberty &  
Justice for  
ALL*

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# CHAIRPERSON

CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE

## More FCM Leadership Changes



Please join me in congratulating, welcoming, and supporting **Shannon Queenan** in her new role as Vice President-Elect of the Great Lakes Region. Shannon is a hospice chaplain who values hospitality, relationship, and community. She hopes to strengthen the Great Lakes and FCM communities through growth with younger more diverse membership and to deepen the commitment of members for the strengthening of the overall organization. As Great Lakes Vice President, Shannon will become a member of FCM's Circle of Directors. Her three-year term begins after the July 2020 Circle Meeting. FCM's Circle of Directors.



Last newsletter we congratulated **Ron Davis** for becoming FCM's President-Elect. In this edition, I invite you to join me in expressing much gratitude to Ron for his service as Great Lakes Vice President or (co-Vice President) for the past six years. Ron has overseen the commissioning of many members in the Great Lakes Region, facilitated the Great Lakes regional gatherings, and he has been an important, cool, and compassionate voice of wisdom on the Circle of Directors. I look forward to continuing to work with Ron as he steps into the position of President.



**Kathy Bean's** term as secretary also ends at the conclusion of the July Circle meeting. Please join me in expressing an abundance of gratitude to Kathy who responded to the request to fill the position of secretary with little notice and little training. She has done a remarkable job not only recording and transcribing minutes of the Circle meetings, keeping the meeting on track as needed, but also sharing her gifts and perspective as an inspiring minister and Roman Catholic Woman Priest. Kathy is looking forward to having more time to spend with her family and with her quilting. We will miss you Kathy!



Last and definitely not least, please join me in giving a GRAND expression of gratitude for The Reverend **Thomas Cusack's** service as FCM's President for the past six years. (If you know Tom, you know why I had to say "grand" and use his full name and title.) Prior to serving as President, Tom served as (Grand) treasurer and then as Chairperson of the Committee on Denominational Concerns. He has been on the Circle of Directors for over ten years and has worked tirelessly on FCM's behalf. Most recently, he initiated the Thursday night Prayer Gathering with Anthony Capone. Tom will continue serving FCM as a member of FCM's endowment committee.

**CONGRATULATIONS SHANNON!!!**

**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU RON, KATHY, AND TOM!!!**



TOM CUSACK



### Go, Going, Gone

**Go** deep within. I request that you intend daily to reach the level of your soul. Calm, courage, peace, directions for action, energy, solutions, perspective all are found there. The soul is within, but the journey to that location requires discipline and consistency of effort. This is a task requiring many lifetimes to achieve, but we are in a lifetime in which we know that the presence of our teacher, Jesus the Christ, is available to us immediately upon our request. We just have to demonstrate that we are serious in our request for help and in our dive toward the soul level.

Here's what I suggest. Consciously expand in a deliberate, slow manner the amount of time that you devote to your spiritual life. As you sit down to spend this time, have sacred props in your view as physical feedback that you are now doing your spiritual exercises. I suggest your favorite picture representing Jesus. Perhaps you would add a copy of your Bible and maybe a candle. This sets the scene. Spend one third of your planned time reading a sacred text, such as the Bible or the writings of a saint. Then spend the second third of your planned time in prayer. This is talking to God. God really likes us to talk to them, and God is a very good listener. Spend the last third part of your time in meditation. This is a time to be silent so that the Teacher Jesus or the Holy Spirit might have your undivided attention. Giving undivided attention is challenged by our monkey – mind. This noisy part of us needs to be trained by gentle observation. "There, there, you are talking again during my silence. Please be silent with me." Be kind to your mind, it does not know any better and needs to be trained to be silent. You will have to gently correct your mind 10,000 times to accomplish this. You may even want to give your mind a name to distinguish this functional part of you from you as a soul. You get to choose your own name for your mind. This will inject a little fun into the serious process of spiritual growth.

Yes, and please, as you are in your devotional time, spend daily **2 X 2 for FCM** [two minutes of prayer and two minutes of meditation for the benefit of FCM]. Also, **Tuesday 10 for FCM** can be on your spiritual schedule.

## TOM CUSACK, PRESIDENT CONT'D



**Going.** FCM is going forward. There is a strong **leadership team** in place, and the July turnover of people on the Circle will continue to provide new ways of directing our growing FCM. **Ron Davis** will step into the presidency as I step away. **Shannon Queenan** will step into the Great Lakes Vice Presidency as Ron steps away. **Sara Lindberg** will step into the Secretary position on the Circle as **Kathy Bean** steps away. These changes indicate the dynamic nature of FCM's grappling with its mission in this wounded society. New minds mean new action.

**Anthony Ercolano**, Commissioning Chair, has offered new instructional documents for our vice presidents to use in the process of moving commissioning candidates toward the Circle vote on their commissioning. He is also announcing in a separate article the initiation of a new supportive function in FCM, the *Regional Commissioning Liaison*. This person(s) will help the Vice President with the big job of introducing commissioning candidates into the FCM process. I worked with Tony on these projects and feel good about the outcome.

The **Social Vision Committee** is working hard to bring greater awareness to the FCM community. The protests and response to the horrific murder of George Floyd have brought so many needed avenues of change to our attention. We must do our best as a faith community to respond.

The **Endowment Committee** will be expanded to 7 members in July at the Circle meeting. The article in this issue about the Endowment shows its promise. The Endowment is growing, thanks to all.

The **FCM Prayer Ministry** is assuming a strong place for 30 or 40 members per week. This ministry, coordinated by **Anthony Capone**, is providing that time of silence and mutual spiritual support that we all need in this pandemic and transition time.

We have a lot **Going on**. And...

**Gone.** I am completing my second term as President of FCM in July at the Circle meeting. *So, I am stepping off the Circle.* This has been a wonderful six years. It followed my six years as Treasurer and my one year as Chair of Denominational Concerns. I have been so happy to have this FCM experience. It has been my chance to provide some leadership in this unique Christian convention.

The list of friends and associates from my Circle work is too long to mention in its entirety. Those I must mention include **Antoinette Marold**, former chairperson, and current Communication Chair; **Tom** and **Michaelita Quinn**, former Co-Presidents and former Northeast Region Vice Presidents; **Tom Stricker**, former Chairperson and former Great Lakes Region Vice President; **Tom Leonhardt and Carolyn Horvath**, Central Office coordinators; and **Christy Howard Steele**, current Chairperson and former Chair of Specialized Ministries. I have worked so closely with them. Thank you for being there.

I will continue to be involved in FCM. It is a key part of my life. With some additional time available to me, I hope to systematically put more effort into meditation. Perhaps then I could better live the core values of FCM: Belonging, Compassion, Empowerment, Equity, Mindful Living.

I hope to see you soon.

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**CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE**  
CHAIRPERSON

# PRIVACY MATTERS

## Did you know that you can adjust your own privacy settings in Realm?

You can! This is important. When your Realm profile was initially created the ability to view your information is limited to leaders and group members. This is the default privacy setting.

### Why is this important?

While this setting offers you the most security, it also limits our ability to communicate through Realm across regions with those not in one of our groups. For example, if you wanted to find an FCM commissioned member who performs weddings in a state in a different region, your search would be limited to those members whose privacy settings have been adjusted.

### What options are available?

Glad you asked. Below are the available choices.

## Privacy Settings

Anyone in the church (Anyone who is a current FCM member)  
If selected, everyone in FCM with a Realm login can see this information. This option is not available to users with a family position of "Child".

People in my groups  
If selected, only members of the same groups, leaders\*, staff with the **View Details for** permission, and administrators can see this information.

Leaders  
If selected, only leaders\*, staff with the **View Details for Individuals** permission, and administrators can see this information.

Church Staff only (FCM Circle of Directors Members Only)  
If selected, only FCM Circle members with the **View Details for Individuals** permission and administrators can see this information.

**\*Note**  
Leaders include group leaders, ministry area leaders, pathway leaders and pathway step leaders. Only current FCM members have access to Realm. Realm is a very secure site. Expanded security is one of the reasons we chose Realm as FCM's membership database. We want to keep members' information as safe as possible.

CONT'D

# PRIVACY MATTERS

CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE, CHAIRPERSON



## How can I review or adjust my privacy settings?

Below are the instructions. You can choose to make all or some all of your information visible to all current FCM Realm users. To only make some information visible such as name, address, email and/cell phone, use the custom settings. Please note, if you make changes, you will receive an email from Realm confirming the changes.

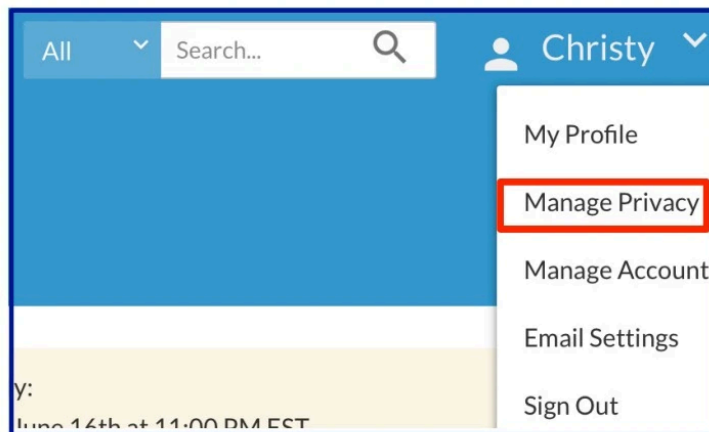
### Set Your Privacy Preferences

Many find the online directory in Realm invaluable for locating contact information and putting faces with names. For various reasons, however, some like to limit who can see contact and personal information. You can revise your privacy settings, so this information is limited to administrators or the members of small groups or teams you're involved with. Of course, you can also make your contact information available to everyone with a login to your site.

1. Log into the site.
2. Click your name in the upper-right corner and select **My Profile>Manage Privacy**.
3. Select your name, or the name of a family member.
4. Select the privacy option you're comfortable with or click **Custom Privacy** and select options for each field.

**Click Save.**

I personally have selected the custom privacy settings that allows any current FCM member to see my name, address, email address, and (cell) phone. **Adjusting your privacy settings will help us use Realm to its full capacity to communicate and build relationships.**



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# URGENT FCM ENDOWMENT MESSAGE!

BY TOM STRICKER, FCM ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE MEMBER

## FCM on the verge of achieving a major goal!

The Federation of Christian Ministries Permanent Endowment Fund is on the verge of achieving a wonderful goal. Last July we had an anonymous pledge of \$10,000.00 as a matching Grant. The individual promised to donate \$10,000.00 if we could raise \$10,000.00 by the FCM National Assembly, July 2020.

At this time, we have \$9,120.00 donated to the Matching Grant.

**That means we are \$880.00 shy of the \$10,000.00 grant.**

**Just think, one individual could donate \$880.00 to achieve our goal!**

**If 9 individuals donated \$100.00, we could achieve our goal!**

**If 12 individuals donate \$75.00, we could achieve our goal!**

**If 18 individuals donated \$50.00, we could achieve our goal!**

**If 44 individuals donated \$20.00, we would achieve our goal!**

You see, **we need everyone** to contribute **what you are able** to put us over the top in meeting the Matching Goal of \$10,000. Help us achieve a goal that will continue to give long into the future! Send in a donation today to help achieve the Matching Goal. Here's how: go to the FCM website at <https://www.federationofchristianministries.org/index.html>

Click the blue **Donations** button on the right. In the resulting pop-up box, type in the amount you will give. To its right, on the "Fund" line, click the down-arrow so you can highlight **FCM Endowment**. Then follow the prompts to completion.

We can get this done...together.



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# Donate to the FCM Endowment Fund

Help us to reach our match goal of \$10,000.



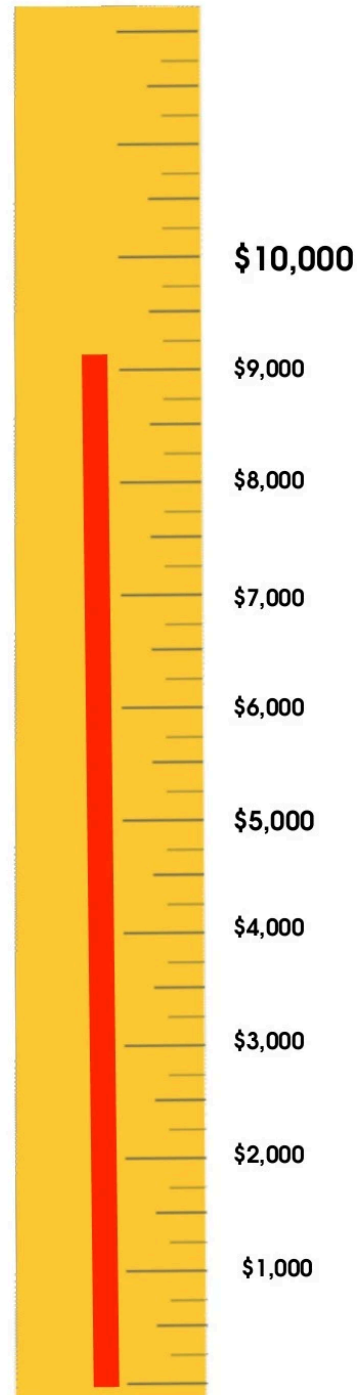
The Endowment Committee has some exciting news. We have an anonymous donor who is challenging the FCM membership with a \$10,000.00 match grant. If we can match individual donations equaling the \$10,000, the donor will donate the match.

**We need everyone to get involved. No donation is too small.**

Go to the FCM website [www.federationofchristianministries.org](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org) or go to your personal account on Realm [www.onrealm.org](http://www.onrealm.org) and make your donation.

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

**DONATED TO DATE: \$9120.**



**Measuring Our Success**



ANTHONY ERCOLANO  
COMMISSIONING CHAIR



## New FCM Regional Position: Commissioning Liaison

Over the years, the role of the Regional Vice President has grown tremendously. From simply representing their region at the semi-annual Circle meetings, they have evolved into writers for the quarterly FCM Newsletter, membership renewal overseers, regional networking and Zoom conferencing specialists, members' Realm profile pages updaters, regional Commissioning and Endorsement ceremony coordinators, organizers of local conferences in years when there is no National Assembly, and vital contributors to the Commissioning process.

If this sounds overwhelming, you are right, it can be. And they undertake all this as volunteers. **They need help.**

For this reason, we are looking for two or three FCM members from each region who would assist their Vice President in the essential role of guiding members through the Commissioning process. The volunteer will carry the title of Regional Commissioning Liaison.

A **Regional Commissioning Liaison** would support the Vice President by interviewing candidates, making sure that the candidate submits the required documentation, and helping to compose the brief biography (called a thumbnail) that the Vice President submits to the Circle before each candidate is voted on by the Circle.

The time commitment may be 5 to 10 hours of helping-work twice per year; plus, a willingness to learn the process is necessary. Those who have previously served as regional vice presidents would be particularly suitable for this role, but no prior experience is necessary.

If you are willing to consider helping your Regional Vice President and FCM in this way, please contact your Vice President. S/he will discuss the responsibility in more detail. Or contact me at [commissioningchair@fcmail.org](mailto:commissioningchair@fcmail.org).

We are grateful for your consideration of this invitation.  
Tony Ercolano, Commissioning Chair





## FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES 2020 Virtual Gathering

FCM invites all members to connect with one another on  
**Saturday, July 18** for a virtual presentation and gathering:

### "Tools for Post-Traumatic Growth" Chaplain Beth Reece

Beth is an Endorsed Member for the Mountains and Plains Region whose research has focused on Post-Traumatic Growth. Beth shares the following:

"Trauma affects us physically, spiritually and emotionally. Dr. Jerome Groopman, in his book, "The Anatomy of Hope, writes: "Trauma disconnects victims from those aspects of their being that can connect with life. The primary wound of trauma is one of disconnection...from self, body, other, life and God." Emerging research suggests that the tools of post traumatic growth can provide positive change following traumatic events. Faith is one of those critical tools alongside story-telling, community, hope, and creativity, or openness to change."

The presentation will include exploration the impact of trauma, utilization of PTG tools, how faith intersects and informs the other tools, and conclude with discussion for facilitating spiritual and emotional healing in the aftermath of life altering COVID-19."

With the trauma of unspeakable violence and racism harming so many, Beth's presentation is especially timely.

**Our Virtual Gathering will also include Meetings hosted by FCM regions, to provide an opportunity for members to share stories with one another, provide and seek support, and build community.**

**This virtual event is open to FCM members only and is free of charge.**

### Schedule

Saturday, July 18, 2020

**10:00 a.m. Central Daylight Time - Chaplain Beth Reece**

**Tools for Post Traumatic Growth**

**11:30 a.m. - Break**

**1:00 p.m. - Regional Gatherings**

Our virtual meetings will take place via Zoom.

**REGISTER THROUGH REALM!**

Log on to your Realm account, and go to "Community" and then "Events".

**Please register by Sunday, July 12.**



## My Prayer Space

We are growing!! The FCM prayer ministry has experienced a revival! Our prayer team membership has increased and we are now offering different types of prayer opportunities to all FCM members. What an impactful time to be part of FCM! With all that has been going on in our country and throughout the world, we need prayer support more than ever. As the prayer support leader/coordinator I feel it is my responsibility not only to coordinate our intercessory prayers for our FCM family but to grow our prayer team and increase our spiritual opportunities to grow as people of God.

We need YOU as part of our prayer team, as pray-ers to pray for those in need. We also need you to lift up those who are in need of our prayers by adding them to our prayer list so that we may intercede on their behalf. I would not be doing this if I did not believe in the power of prayer!

***And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.***

***Ephesians 6:18***

Asking God to work in peoples' lives not only can help bring about a resolution to their situation but can also bring some peace to our lives knowing that we are lifting them up to God for His guidance and care. We would also like to celebrate answered prayers and any good news! So please offer those prayers of thanksgiving so that we may praise and glorify God. To be a member of the prayer team please email me: [anthonycapone111@gmail.com](mailto:anthonycapone111@gmail.com).

Something special has happened during this time of sheltering in place. Tom Cusack and I took a leap of faith and started an FCM zoom prayer evening. We meet on Thursday evenings from 8:00 to 8:30pm EDT for prayer and a little social gathering afterwards. What a great success! We are praying together, and as you know during these uncertain times there is a lot in this world to pray for and we finally have faces to put with those FCM names! So please won't you join us for an evening of quiet respite and some time spent in the presence of the Holy? It might be just what you need.

There will be other opportunities for us to pray together and experience the amazing power of prayer. I will be setting up prayer team meetings via zoom so we can meet as a group to support one another, pray for each other, connect with God and strengthen our Christian community.

I could go over all the benefits and reasons to pray but all I ask is that you join us in community to experience the joy of being together with each other, lifting up those in need of prayer and being with the one who knows what we need before we ask, Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Please join us!

Blessings,  
Anthony Capone

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## The FCM Faithful Major Anniversaries of Membership

The people listed below have worked long and faithfully to build FCM to its place today. If you wish to congratulate them, search them online in Realm ([www.onRealm.org](http://www.onRealm.org)) or on the Realm app. Not signed in to Realm? Ask your Regional Vice President or [connect@fcmmail.org](mailto:connect@fcmmail.org) for authorization.  
Tom Cusack

### 45 Year Anniversary

Mary Warner, Northeast Region, 08/01/1975

*While several members have earlier membership dates, Mary has our oldest known membership date.  
Congratulations, on this singular anniversary, Mary.*

### 25 Year Anniversaries

David Gawlik, Mountains and Plains Region, 08/01/1995

Tony Heitzman, Great Lakes Region, 08/30/1995

Edward Knight, Northeast Region, 07/07/1995

### 20 Year Anniversaries

Carol Berg, Great Lakes Region, 07/04/2000

Frank Berg, Great Lakes Region, 07/04/2000

David Efimetz, Southern Region, 07/01/2000

Diane Small, Southern Region, 08/10/2000

Henry Thiel, Southern Region, 07/24/2000

### 15 Year Anniversaries

James Hayes, Mountains and Plains Region, 08/08/2005

Sarah Wolf, Pacific Region, 07/07/2005

### 10 Year Anniversaries

Mark Meyer, Great Lakes Region, 07/26/2010

Peter Strening, Mountains and Plains Region, 07/26/2010

### 5 Year Anniversaries

Richard Cruse, Great Lakes Region, 08/25/2015

Peter Kim, Southern Region, 07/08/2015

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# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

by **Carol Hushek, FCM** ...Carol graduated from Global Ministries University with a Master's Degree in Theology with an emphasis on Global Spirituality. As part of her studies, she rewrote the 10 commandments with a positive slant called "Creation Spirituality"!

With all that is going on in our world today, God led her back to reading them again and she was awestruck at how appropriate they are in today's climate!

## The Ten Commandments transformed from the Baltimore Catechism to Creation Spirituality:

### **1. I am the Lord thy God and there will be no other Gods before me**

***We are all part of God and therefore live in harmony with all of God's creation***

In the old story, it was assumed that God was "out there", an entity to be obeyed "or else"; in modern time it also refers to not putting material goods or addictions before the honoring of God. In the new story, God is within all of creation; therefore there are many "Gods before me"! Everyone and everything we have contact with is "God" and need to be treated with love and compassion.

### **2. Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain**

***Thou shalt sing God's praises by living a compassionate life and seeking justice***

In the old story, being disrespectful in the use of God's name was seen as discounting His position and authority. In the new story, God is described as creative energy and a co-creator; therefore, all of creation must be acknowledged. We show respect for all souls by our compassion and working for social and ecological justice.

### **3. Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath day**

***Thou shalt be grateful for each moment of every day in blissful enjoyment of the state of being"***

In the old story, the idea was to set aside one day a week to worship God and rest from the week's labors. In the new story, we are asked to enjoy our "beingness" just for the sheer fact that we are; and since we are all "God", each of our days is holy.

### **4. Thou shalt honor thy parents**

***Thou shalt honor the equality of all souls and work toward the healing of those that are broken***

In the old story, it is an obvious commandment to treat our parents with respect (no matter how they treated us). In the new story, we are all parents, brothers, sisters, and children of each other because we are all "one with God". Therefore, we must cherish and love all earthly beings and aid in helping to heal those that are broken.

### **5. Thou shalt not commit murder**

***Thou shalt respect the dignity and grace of all forms of life including the earth itself***

In the old story, this commandment was talking about killing other human beings. In the new story, this commandment not only takes on the positive spin of respecting all forms of human life, it includes having reverence for all parts of the earth. We must work to cease killing the earth through promoting smog, destroying our ecosystems, generating excessive waste products, etc.

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# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

by **Carol Hushek, FCM** ...cont'd.

## **6. Thou shalt not commit adultery**

***Thou shalt maintain personal integrity in all interactions with others***

In the old story, this commandment is talking about breaking a sexual vow made to a spouse. In the new story, it has been expanded to take into account that when adultery is committed, it also erodes one's personal integrity. When that happens, a person becomes incapable of being "God's light" for others ... a person loses their authenticity. Personal integrity and honoring the integrity of others are important tenets for living the life of creation spirituality.

## **7. Thou shalt not steal**

***Thou shalt remember that in God's world all our needs are provided for; therefore, we can focus on the need for social justice and being good stewards of our environment***

In the old story, we are commanded not to take anything that belongs to any one else. In the new story, all creatures are divinely cared for and we meet each others needs by becoming members of the community of earth ... ergo there is no need to steal ... we share the resources of the cosmos equally. Assuming we have all we need to survive and thrive, it is our duty to share our excesses with our earthly community and to work toward justice and freedom for the oppressed.

## **8. Thou shalt not bear false witness**

***Thou shalt live an authentic life and continue to give birth to creation spirituality***

In the old story, we are directed to not lie, gossip or slander anyone. In the new story, since our aim of life is to be part of the universal order (which invokes living in harmony and love with all of God's creatures) we need to focus on embracing our true authenticity, valuing the "Godness" in others, and continuing to rebirth ourselves. This is accomplished by growing through creation of new speech, activities and life styles that focus on compassion and social justice.

## **9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife**

***Thou shalt embrace one's own passionate self and use that energy to transform oneself***

In the old story, we are ordered to not lust after a married person. In the new story, we are encouraged to embrace our passionate selves (via positiva) ... to see pleasure (including sexual activity) as a deep spiritual experience and to use that passionate energy to promote healthy relationships and celebrate our earthiness. In this commandment, sexual energy is seen as a positive attribute! Alleluia!

## **10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods**

***Thou shalt give freely of what one has and celebrate the gifts others have received***

The old story reminds us not to be envious or jealous of things we don't have. The new story invites us to live in a state of blissful gratitude for the blessing of "life" itself; when we have an attitude of gratitude, there is no room for envy or jealousy. We can then use our spiritual energy to applaud the good fortune of our fellow beings.

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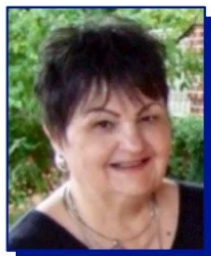
# GMU Celebrant Training Program Helps FCM Member to Be Commissioned

BY JEAN CONLEY, FCM/GMU



**Maryann Crilly**, who is the Sacramental Registrar for FCM, earned a Wedding Certificate of Celebrancy from the Global Ministries University Celebrant Training Program in May of 2015. She was commissioned by FCM the following year. We contacted Maryann recently to find out what her experience of our program was like. She said the Celebrant Training Program helped her to be commissioned by fulfilling FCM's requirement that the candidates have professional skills and education/training, as stated on the FCM website under item no. 6 of the commissioning application process:

*6. An additional statement of the candidate's professional skills and education/ training already attained or a plan to acquire them. The regional vice president will determine the suitability of the candidate's academic, pastoral, and personal qualifications. This determination may be made in consultation with the Commissioning Chair. A lack of education or ministerial preparedness may require further study, course work, or obtaining a certificate of ministry preparation from an approved college, university, or seminary such as Global Ministries University. Any program of study must be approved by the regional vice president in consultation with the Circle of Directors.*



**Antoinette Marold**, who is in charge of Communication for FCM, is also the Instructor for the Weddings Track of the Celebrant Training Program. Maryann praised Antoinette's capabilities, stating *"My Instructor, Antoinette Marold, was the best! I learned so much from her."*

Maryann also liked the flexibility of the program: *"The program gave me the ability to complete the training on my own schedule."* This program is completed entirely online... there are no registration or start dates, nor are there assignment due dates, you work at your own pace.

As Director and Founder of the Celebrant Training Program as well as an FCM member for over 30 years, I am pleased to be able to provide formal training for FCM members and commissioning candidates. Feel free to contact me at [director@becomeacelebrant.org](mailto:director@becomeacelebrant.org) if you have any questions about my program.



# Memories of Early Days of FCM

DECEMBER 2017.... BY MARY ALICE WARNER



In the late 60's and early 70's I met Jerry Grudzen in White Plains, NY while we were both working in activities housed in an Episcopal Church. Jerry was a teacher in an alternative high school and I was a volunteer running a housing help line, and Jerry would greet me as he passed by, and we became friends.

Though I may not be accurate in actual dates, I think Jerry also had a group discussing the welfare system and poverty, possibly linked to an outreach program of New York Theological Seminary. Jerry asked if I would consider attending the Core Theology course at Mary Knoll Seminary. I, as the only Protestant in the class, was privileged to be among a diverse group of students and adult priests and nuns, and learned history from a Catholic perspective.

Jerry and Marita, having been priest and nun, had met at Maryknoll, married, and invited me to be part of a group of married priests and others at their home for sharing liturgy and thoughtful talk of our faith journeys. I was inspired by the ministries that those in the group were carrying on in lives outside of the church, as many expressed that having been ordained to the priesthood or as nuns, they still had a call to minister.

I remember that the name of the group was called the Society of Priests for a Free Ministry, and I met many other couples who were building their lives in service as teachers, Christian education in churches, and missions overseas.

After the Grudzens and their daughters Corita and Simone moved to California, I kept my membership in the now-called Fellowship of Christian Ministries, and when my husband Kent and I moved to New Hampshire, I looked forward to the issues of the Diaspora Newsletter as spiritually guiding me.

My own sense of ministry has grown, with a Masters degree in Counseling from N.Y. Seminary, being a family therapist, support parent groups-in prison and out. My husband and I started an early learning program for parents and babies. I am an Elder in my Presbyterian Church, and minister to shut-ins.

Years ago, I attended an annual gathering of FCM in California, when my daughter was in Stanford Medical School. She met Marita, we were in touch. Last year Marita and Jerry visited Corita in the east, we had dinner and a grand reunion. I am so grateful to Jerry for opening new avenues of spirituality enabling me to follow Jesus' way of serving others by helping and loving them.

Photo of Gerry & Marita Grudzen.  
Appeared in Mercury News with  
an article in about 1977.



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# NORTHEAST REGION

CARL YUSAVITZ, VICE PRESIDENT

## FCM Commissioning

We have three candidates for FCM Commissioning in July. All three are chaplains in Pennsylvania and New Jersey and strong candidates. We are grateful for their decision to join FCM. I will follow-up with pictures of all three in the next newsletter.

For regional members discerning a call to FCM Commissioning, please note that besides the Commissioning application on Realm, there are additional required steps to apply for Commissioning. Please review these steps on the FCM Website under Membership/Commissioning. It is also important that you stay in touch with me, as your regional VP, during the entire application process.

## Needed: FCM peer volunteers

As FCM grows, one of the expressed difficulties for some of our regional members in areas where there are no other FCM members, is finding an FCM peer. What we've learned from the Covid-19 pandemic is that people can meet and form virtual communities on-line. Given that, we need a few volunteers to serve as FCM peers for people in areas where there are no FCM members close-by. Ideally, your peer would be in the same specialized ministry, but not necessarily. Please contact me, northeastvp@FCMmail.org if interested. Thank you.

## Regional Zoom Meetings

Following a regional survey in April, we facilitated six Zoom meetings during May, with mixed results. Only about 24 members joined in the six meetings. When asked, most preferred a Saturday morning at 9 AM, rather than a weekday or evening. A great suggestion was made by regional member and faith communities coordinator Ginny Cusack that we not schedule meetings state by state but offer open times for anyone from the region to check-in and meet. So we'll see how this goes for July and August. I will send a Zoom invitation to all Northeast FCM members for the following Saturdays at 9 AM:

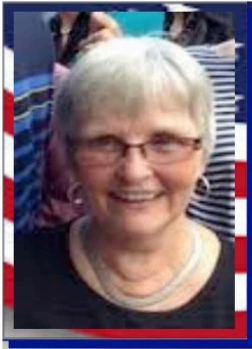
- July 11th
- July 25th
- August 15th
- August 29th

## Prayers for racial healing and justice

Pictured are FCM members and others at a weekly prayer service in Philadelphia, following the death of George Floyd.



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# SOUTHERN REGION

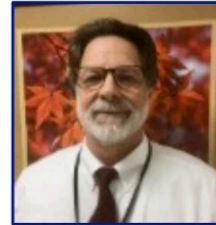
DIANE DOUGHERTY, VICE PRESIDENT



JOSEPH MUCO



GREG AGUIRRE



GEORGE FRANCIS

The Southern Region held its first Zoom Commissioning on May 29. It was a holy experience with over 30 participants during the event. Congratulations to **Joseph Musco**, Dunedin, FL and **Gregg Aguirre**, Palm Harbor, FL and in a special way to **George Francis**, Port Richey, FL who was with us in absentia.

### Next Zoom Gathering Thursday, June 25, 2020. 7:30PM

Workshop- Prepare to Die-Hope to Live: A recorded and archived workshop by Cathy O'Keefe, Mobile, Ala. was given to the Southern Region on what we need to have prepared before we die to help out our loved ones. If you would like to see it, email me or need to talk with Cathy, she is open to talking with anyone. Much needed information was given.

### Four New members and a Transfer

We are pleased to have four new FCM members who have told us that they plan to seek future commissioning by the FCM. Welcome to **Deborah Davis** of Fayetteville, NC; **Tammy McNeal** of Newnan, GA; **Dorie Griggs** of Roswell, GA; and, **Susan Levy** of Clermont FL. We welcome also **Daneen (Dee) Warner**, now of Durham, who has transferred to us from the FCM Northeast Region.

**Southern Region is seeking two Regional Coordinator Liaisons (RCL)** to volunteer to assist with various tasks as the region has almost doubled in four years from 59 members to 109. We need to restructure our regional operations to deal with this growth. The June Zoom meeting will be a brainstorming session on how to deal with the growth emphasizing how to empower people in small groups to gather and support each other. Please contact me if you are interested. Thank you.

### Southern region by age

# 20-30	2
# 31-50	17
# 51-70	48
# 71-90	37
	<hr/>
	104

### Primary areas of growth – Hot Spots for new growth since July 2016

+ 12	MD, VA, WV	(33 Total)
+ 12	NC	(22 Total)
+ 7	Georgia	(10 Total)
+ 7	East/Central FL	(17 Total)
+20	Southwest FL	(26 Total)
+58	New members from July 2016-July 2020	



*Blessings to you FCM Community!*

*I write this one month before our July Circle of Directors meetings. It is a busy time. Most every week, we are holding transition meetings. We are preparing to receive ministry professionals for commissioning and endorsement. It is always exciting. I wanted to commit the heart of my message to what I have been feeling since the death of George Floyd. So, I offer you a small window into my heart during this season of American History.*

For the last couple of weeks, I have been gripped by all that is going on in America. It has been a hard time. I find myself grieving over my people's and our nation's history. I grieve that which we are going through currently, too. Without changes, serious changes, I grieve what future generations will experience in their lives.

I spoke to my 85-year-old aunt yesterday. She told me that there was a real sense in which she had to become content in doing what she could do in her living, rather than focus on the problems with race in America. She lived in Louisville, Kentucky during the Jim Crow Era and there were separate movie theaters in that day. It would take two to three years for the black theaters to show films that were released in Hollywood. There were two times when she wanted to see a new release so badly that she traveled to Cincinnati to see a newly released movie. The one that came to mind in our conversation was "Ben-Hur". But other than that, she lived under the cultural norms of that day. Just accepting things as they were for her.

This caused me to reflect on myself. I wonder if I have become like her in my living. Do those who see and know me experience me as one who was content and acceptant of the racial norms of America or one who has done all that he could do in order to champion change? I know full well that I experience racism and know the need for systematic changes. Yet, I wonder if I am doing a good job of communicating that to others? Or am I content with trying to be nice and a good American who doesn't want to make waves?

What both my Aunt and I are paying attention to are today's young people. In my aunt's eyes, this generation is not like that of her generation. This generation want liberty and fairness right now for themselves and for others. She was and is thrilled to see people from all walks of life out there protesting and reaching for systemic changes. When I see this generation, I see my three daughters. I saw one of my daughters with a sign that she created, standing on a corner in Columbus, Ohio. It read, "I want to matter in this country." The sign brought me to tears. Self-esteem, self-worth, racism changes a child's spirit. It has changed my child's spirit. It has changed my family's self-worth for 7 generations. Then, I must say clearly that my children matter to me. I pray for an America that is decent, fair, and just. An America that recognizes that Black lives Matter too. I pray that we will work together to heal this country.

May Jesus Christ help America as we strive to love one another,



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# MTS. & PLAINS REGION

CONNER SIMMS, VICE PRESIDENT

## FCM mourns the death of George Floyd along with many other black lives lost that matter.

**FCM MOURNS GEORGE FLOYD**

FCM's Executive Committee affirms as its own the eloquent statement offered by FCM Mountains and Plains Vice President Conner Simms.

Christy Howard-Steele, Chairperson  
Thomas Cusack, President  
Heidi Tierney, Treasurer  
Kathleen Bean, Secretary

### Statement

#### FCM Mts. & Plains Vice President Conner Simms

As the Mountains & Plains VP I come to you today to join in lament over the tragic killing of George Floyd and the subsequent understandable anger and rioting which has taken place here in the Twin Cities and around the country.

I also come humbly as a white man who has enjoyed countless privileges of safety and ignorance over the years; to apologize. I apologize on behalf of FCM for our not speaking up earlier. Our collective lament today as a Federation is not new. It joins the chorus of voices from people of color since the founding of this country. Those who were slaves, those who have been marginalized, those who have been treated with racist intent (conscious or unconscious) over the years. It joins with those who have been assaulted and killed simply because of the color of their skin.

Our lament joins the generations who have been crying out against these injustices over the years. God have mercy.

My wife and I lived less than three blocks from the 4th Precinct here in Minneapolis in 2015 when Jamar Clark was killed.

Today we live mere minutes (still Minneapolis) from where Philando Castile was killed in 2016.

Finally, on my way into work this morning I passed by the ongoing smoldering devastation wrought by this most recent example of racism and prejudice.

Yet simply living near to or passing by a tragedy is not the same as experiencing that tragedy. At best, we can cry with those who cry. We can with utter humility learn from them. We can listen to them share their experiences which we ourselves have never known. We can sit quietly and be honest about the fact that in many ways, we know nothing at all.

May our Region today sit and learn. May we learn from one another. May we sit and cry. May we take an active role in creating a better future. May it be a future where my toddler daughter, as we drive by doesn't have to ask, "Why that building on fire dada?" May we create a world together where I don't have to tell her that "a riot is the language of the unheard."

Grace and Peace to all of you today and everyday. Stay healthy. Stay safe.

Conner Simms, FCM Regional Vice President, Mountains and Plains Region

This article can also be found on the FCM Blog <http://fcmblog.org/blog/fcm-mourns-george-floyd-by-conner-simms-fcm-mts-plains-vice-president>





# PACIFIC REGION

TRACY PETERSON, VICE PRESIDENT

The Pacific Region is excited to welcome a new member, **Joellyn Robinson**, to our region. I have enjoyed connecting with her and look forward to working with Joellyn and all of you in our special region in the future.

On Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> we held a regional Zoom meeting and had about 15 people participate. We each talked about our ministry and how we are working to take care of ourselves in the midst of this pandemic. We discussed different self-care techniques and that led me to a poem that I found recently.

It was written by Lynn Ungar on 3/11/20. Lynn Ungar's first book of poetry, *Blessing the Bread*, earned her fans around the world. In her professional life she serves as a minister for the Church of the Larger Fellowship, an online congregation for Unitarian Universalists and other religious liberals.

## Pandemic

What if you thought of it  
 as the Jews consider the Sabbath—  
 the most sacred of times?  
 Cease from travel.  
 Cease from buying and selling.  
 Give up, just for now,  
 on trying to make the world different than it is.  
 Sing. Pray. Touch only those  
 to whom you commit your life.  
 Center down.

And when your body has become still,  
 reach out with your heart.  
 Know that we are connected  
 in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.  
 (You could hardly deny it now.)  
 Know that our lives are in one another's hands.  
 (Surely, that has come clear.)  
 Do not reach out your hands.  
 Reach out your heart.  
 Reach out your words.  
 Reach out all the tendrils of compassion that  
 move, invisibly, where we cannot touch.  
 Promise this world your love—  
 for better or for worse,  
 in sickness and in health,  
 so long as we all shall live.

<sup>1</sup> Lynn Ungar, 2020, *UUWorld*, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston, MA (p. 18).

Please know that you all are in my prayers and I pray that you continue to be cared for as you care for others.

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**Newsletter Editor...Tom Cruse**  
Email: [newsletter@FCMmail.org](mailto: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](mailto:newsletter@FCMmail.org) by the 15th of each month (February, April, June, August, October and December). FCM member-submitted articles should aim for 500 words and 2-3 selected photos in MS Word and JPG formats.

## FCM Central Office



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FCM Blog: [fcmblog.org](http://fcmblog.org)  
FCM Registry: [fcmregistry.org](http://fcmregistry.org)

### FCM CERTIFICATES

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

## FCM Membership & Realm

### REALM ADMINISTRATOR & MEMBERSHIP

**Amy Simpson Bennethum**  
Emails: [connect@FCMmail.org](mailto:connect@FCMmail.org) - [membership@FCMmail.org](mailto:membership@FCMmail.org)

## Endorsement for Specialized Ministries

Qualified FCM members may apply for "Religious Body Endorsement" for the specialized ministries of Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling, and Clinical Pastoral Education. Such endorsement is required by professional certifying organizations and many institutional employers. The FCM Circle of Directors acts on endorsement applications twice yearly. Endorsement application materials are available for downloading on the FCM website at: [www.federationofchristianministries.org](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org)  
Inquiries may be made at: [specmin@FCMmail.org](mailto:specmin@FCMmail.org)

### GLOBAL MINISTRIES UNIVERSITY

GMU offers degree completion programs, certificates, a Celebrant Training Program, and individual courses online. FCM members are eligible for a 5% discount on degree programs. **For more information, visit the web site:** [www.globalministriesuniversity.org](http://www.globalministriesuniversity.org)  
Email: [info@globalministriesuniversity.org](mailto:info@globalministriesuniversity.org)  
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