

Federation of Christian Ministries Newsletter



May/June 2020
Vol. 54 Number 3





Magloni

Of the Empire...by Mary Oliver

We will be known as a culture that feared death and adored power, that tried to vanquish insecurity for the few and cared little for the penury of the many. We will be known as a culture that taught and rewarded the amassing of things, that spoke little if at all about the quality of life for people (other people), for dogs, for rivers. All the world, in our eyes, they will say, was a commodity. And they will say that this structure was held together politically, which it was, and they will say also that our politics was no more than an apparatus to accommodate the feelings of the heart, and that the heart, in those days, was small, and hard, and full of meanness.

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CHRISTY
HOWARD-STEELE

CHAIRPERSON

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FCM LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Please join me in congratulating, welcoming, and supporting the following three persons in their new roles on FCM's Circle of Directors. Conner's term began March 1st; Ron and Sarah's terms begin after the July 2020 Circle Meeting.

Ron Davis - President-Elect



Ron Davis was recently elected President of FCM and will assume his duties at the conclusion of the July 2020 Circle Meeting. Ron Davis has been a member of FCM since 2010. He has served as the Great Lakes regional Vice President since 2014. Ron has been in ministry for 34 years; first as a parish pastor; and for the past 11 years as a hospital chaplain primarily working as the Hematology, Oncology, and Bone Marrow Transplant Chaplain at Nationwide Children's Hospital, Columbus, Ohio. He is married to Todd and is father to three lovely daughters who are women of faith. He comes to his role as President with a Pastor's heart for FCM, strong leadership skills, a heart for God, and many years of service on the Circle.

Conner Simms – Mountain & Plains Regional Vice President



Conner Simms was appointed the regional vice president for the Mountain and Plains Region effective March 1st. He has been an active member of FCM since 2015. At the 2017 Mountain and Plains Retreat, Conner led a time of reflection on transitions in our lives. Conner is the Surgical ICU Chaplain at Regions Hospital & a Staff Chaplain at Gillette Children's Hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota. He is also a Chaplain (1st Lieutenant) in the United States Air Force Reserve where he serves as a member of the 934th Airlift Wing "Global Vikings." For more than 15 years Conner has led ministries through the United States and the world and has led or participated in mission trips to four continents while working for various churches and nonprofit organizations. Conner currently lives in Northeast Minneapolis with his beautiful wife, Mayme, and his relentlessly cute daughter, Sydney.

Sarah Lindberg – Secretary



Sarah Lindberg has been appointed secretary beginning at the end of the July 2020 Circle meeting. Sarah has been a commissioned and endorsed member of FCM since 2014. She was raised on a farm in Iowa, then relocated to Minnesota for seminary, where she has lived since 2008. She currently works as a chaplain at a Level 1 Trauma Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, primarily serving the pediatric, obstetric, and burn units. In her work, she is passionate about bereavement care for families who experience the death of a child or another loved one due to trauma. Sarah is married to Nick, and they have two young children at home (Jonathan and Samuel). For fun, Sarah likes to play music, run, read, do puzzles, and discover new shows to watch on Netflix.

CONGRATULATIONS RON, CONNER AND SARAH!!!

Federation of Christian Ministries



TOM CUSACK

PRESIDENT

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Ominous Quiet, World-Concern, and the Spiritual Life

I am writing this on April 13, 2020. We're all in a brand-new world. A full lifetime ago on February 24, 2020, FCM emailed the ballot for its presidential election to all members. At that time the New York Times discussed the possibility of candidate Senator Bernie Sanders eliminating candidate Vice President Joe Biden from the Democratic race. Flooding in Australia was the lead article. Another article described that there were 150 cases of a new virus in Italy, where steps were being taken to contain the outbreak. The horror had not engulfed the USA. Then America on March 13 declared a national emergency responding to COVID-19. On March 20 FCM's voting for president concluded. The nation was grappling with the pandemic. Now we are in a new reality, and nothing will ever be the same again.

It is quiet across the entire world. This is not a peaceful and reflective quiet. It is an enforced quiet, as the world's population takes refuge in their homes, often at the enforced direction of their governments. Illness abounds and the death toll mounts. In the context of this global trauma FCM as an organization is taking the steps we must. The Circle of Directors supported **Assembly Chairperson Peter Strening** in postponing our Assembly from this July until July 2021. A virtual July Assembly Day is also in the planning. And FCM has the wonderful news of **Ron Davis** (Great Lakes Region) being elected our new president. **Donna Schreiber** (Pacific Region), **Robert Graf** (Southern Region), and **Ron** made up a slate of three strong candidates for the presidency. I thank each one. **Ron** will be a great leader for FCM because he has been a great leader for the Great Lakes Region. I have worked with **Ron** for over six years on the Circle of Directors. He brings long experience and deep spirituality to his new position in FCM, which he will assume in July after the Circle Meeting. I have committed to **Ron** that I will be at his beck and call to provide any help, any discussion and any work for FCM he would want. We will all be confronting new challenges going forward. **Ron** will be on the leadership team that grapples with the new reality.

Great pandemics of the past, such as the Black Death (circa 1663), left their societies changed forever. One thing does not change, however, and that is our relationship with the Master Jesus. We in FCM answer the "Divine Call" as people who have (in many cases) spent a lifetime following the Master. We lead spiritual lives, and we have trained our intellects with advanced degrees. I submit that in this time of concern-quiet in the world, that we as Christian leaders may take advantage of the world's quiet to increase the focus of our own prayer and meditation time. Our prayers and devotional activities impact the course of people's lives on the spiritual plane all over the world. We believe in the power of prayer. Please spend additional time in intense prayer to Jesus The Physician. Ask him to help you respond to the pandemic and to keep you safe. Please invoke divine protection with the expectation that it will be given. And please continue to provide two minutes of prayer and two minutes of meditation daily for FCM (2 X 2 4 FCM).

May you be safe. May you carry the light. May your prayers bring healing. May your quiet calm and courage be an inspiration to all. We will move forward through this crisis together.



CHRISTY
HOWARD-STEELE

CHAIRPERSON

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In January, I attended a presentation on the book, **Bandwidth Recovery: Helping Students Reclaim Cognitive Resources Lost to Poverty, Racism, and Social Marginalization**, given by its author, Cia Verschelden. The term 'bandwidth' (mental bandwidth) refers to the cognitive and emotional resources needed to deal with making good decisions, learning, caring for family, having healthy relationships, and more (xiii). The book's premise is acknowledging that certain life events and social conditions can dampen students' capacities to fully engage learning opportunities and that educators can incorporate some evidenced-based interventions to facilitate recovery of some of this capacity. Little did I realize how applicable this concept would become as events evolved that put me and perhaps you as well in need of recovering bandwidth!

On January 1st, my husband returned home from his 3-day hospital stay to recover from heart failure and his emergency pacemaker procedure. Two weeks later, my husband and I rushed to the emergency room in the wee-hours of the morning where our 33-year-old daughter was in kidney failure. I know many of us have experienced personal losses and crises this year; some more life-altering and tragic than my own. In addition to these emotional, personal events, the near-war with Iran, primary elections, impeachment hearings, Australian brushfires, just to name a few, were national and global events tugging on our hearts and minds even before the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a pandemic.

I admit, I initially didn't think COVID-19 would have the impact in the U.S. that it is actually having. Perhaps my thinking was based on a false sense of confidence about the US. Perhaps, I just needed to deny the scary reality of the situation as long as possible to self-preserve what bandwidth I had left. Maybe it was a bit of both. I'm not really sure. What I am sure about though, is that once I was face-to-face with the reality of the pandemic, it was overwhelming! Containing and managing my own anxieties in the midst of providing the ministry of being a non-anxious presence for others was absolutely exhausting! Slowing down, sleeping, quilting, connecting to the Divine, feeling heard, and feeling loved/valued/appreciated (connecting with others) helped me recover my balance and my bandwidth. What is or has helped you?

In her book, Verschelden concludes that a sense of belonging is the fundamental and essential element to facilitating bandwidth recovery; everything else builds upon this foundation (p. 121). **One of FCM's core values is belonging. I wonder how we are doing with this core value. Do you feel a sense of belonging in FCM? I am grateful to not just belong to FCM on paper. I am grateful that I feel like I belong in FCM; that I'm welcome, valued, included. I am hopeful that your sense of belonging in FCM helps you feel loved, feel heard, and connected to the Divine so that you too, if needed, can recover bandwidth!**



The ENDOWMENT Committee

BY ANTHONY S. ERCOLANO

When the maharajah's coach came to a stop in front of the beggar's post along the road, the poor man thought his life was about to change. Instead, the maharajah bowed deeply before the beggar and said, "Sir, may I have some of the barley you have collected. I have been traveling all day and have had nothing to eat."

Reluctantly, the beggar reached into his bowl and gave the maharajah five grains of barley. But the maharajah went on, "Sir, that will hardly satisfy my hunger. Can you spare more?" So, reluctantly, the beggar put five more grains into his hands and said, "That's all I can spare. This is all I have to live on." The maharajah bowed deeply and said, "Namaste, thank you," and he departed.

When the beggar returned home, he hung up his cloak and prepared to clean the barley for his dinner. But as he went through the bowl, he found a nugget of pure gold. Then another, and another – until there were ten in all. Then he realized that, for every grain of barley he had shared with the maharajah, the great ruler had surreptitiously put a grain of pure gold into his bowl. Then the beggar thought, "If I had only known, I would have given him everything."

Since 1969, the talent and treasure of its members has been the life blood of the Federation of Christian Ministries. So many have given everything. From its chaplains, who serve so courageously during this crisis in healthcare facilities and prisons, to its wedding ministers, pastoral caregivers and its general membership, you have kept FCM alive and thriving.

The FCM Endowment was created to ensure that future generations of ministers would have the same opportunities to serve that we have. The Endowment Fund stands at \$36,687.41 as of March 31st. The interest on the Fund will become available when the principal reaches \$100,000. At that time, the proceeds can be used to assist those who can't afford their renewal fees or who require help to attend local and national gatherings, to supplement the resources of our regional vice presidents, to provide seed money for new communities, and to help meet the increasing costs of engaging in ministry.

We are still in the process of trying to meet the challenge grant of \$10,000 that was put forward by a generous supporter. However, on March 30th, the Endowment Committee decided to temporarily suspend its fundraising efforts in light of the financial hardship that many of our potential donors are experiencing at this time.

When our national health crisis subsides, and things begin to return to what will likely be a "new normal," the Committee will resume its efforts to attain the Fund goals. Members of the Committee will begin to call potential donors and FCM members to see how you can help.

If you are blessed with the ability to help now, please contact a member of the Committee for details.

We look forward to continuing our work to ensure that the Federation has a bright future to support prospective generations of ministers and believers.

Committee members:

Tom Cusack, Circle member and Chair, Northeast Region
Tony Ercolano, Circle member and Secretary, Northeast Region
Grayce Lane, Southern Region
Tom Stricker, Great Lakes Region
Jim Verrecchia, Southern Region

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Donate to the FCM Endowment Fund

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



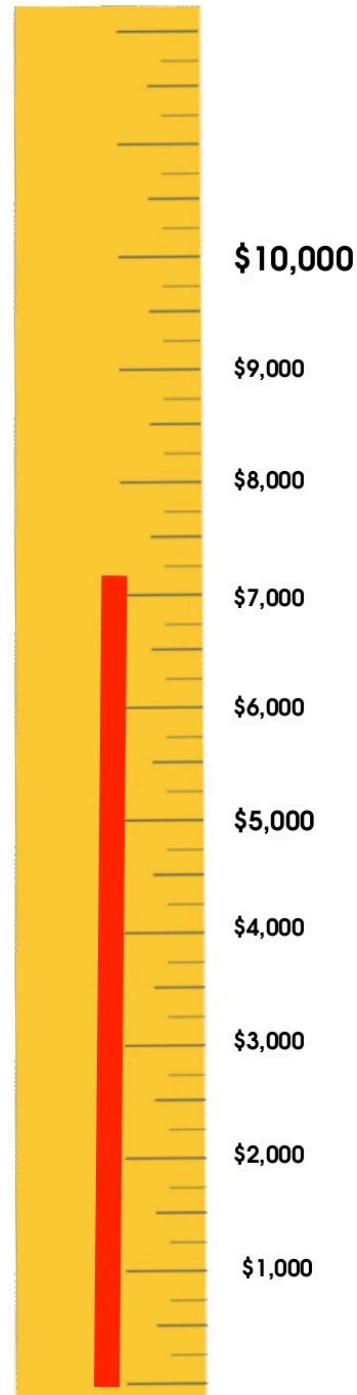
The Endowment Committee has some exciting news. We have an anonymous donor who is challenging the FCM membership with a \$10,000.00 match grant. If we can match individual donations equaling the \$10,000, the donor will donate the match.

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

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

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

DONATED TO DATE: \$7130.



Measuring Our Success



ANTOINETTE MAROLD
COMMUNICATIONS

Communications

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*"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the **age of wisdom**, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."* Charles Dickens - "A Tale of Two Cities"

This seems an appropriate opening for this time as the world fights the Corona Virus.

It also seems like a time that FCM members have a great deal to share with each other both hopeful and sad. We are sharing a great deal on our personal Face Book pages.

I would also like to remind you of the FCM LinkedIn page that is for members only. That means that everything you share is available only to FCM members who are members of the FCM LinkedIn page.

If you are not already a member of the FCM LinkedIn site. Go to [linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com) and join. It is FREE!

Once you have joined click on this link <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2745872/> and request to join the FCM Group. If you decide to do a LinkedIn search for Federation of Christian Ministries be sure to click on the group that has the FCM logo. Looking forward to seeing you there!

FIND A MINISTER on the FCM website. If you made a request on your FCM 2020 Membership renewal form to be listed under the FIND A MINISTER drop down on the FCM website, it has been posted. If you requested more than 3 categories, you were only posted on three. FCM Faith Community members are posted under a separate dropdown. Please review your listing. You can contact me at communication@FCMmail.org.

FCM BLOG - FCMblog.org or click on the Blue Box (FCM Blog & Newsletter) on the Welcome page of the FCM website - www.federationofchristianministries.org

The blogs are written by FCM members. If you would like to submit a blog for posting please send it along with some jpg photos to communication@FCMmail.org. Blogs must be approved by the leadership before posting. Blog postings are also linked to the FCM Facebook and Twitter pages.

FCM REGISTRY - FCM members can register their Baptisms, Weddings, and Holy Unions at www.fcmregistry.org FCM members who preside at baptisms must register the baptism with FCM.

On a personal note: **Wishing you all many blessings, good health and stay safe!**



YOUR URGENT HELP IS NEEDED

Please Register into FCM Members' Database (Realm)

FCM keeps its membership information in the online software we recognize as **Realm**. FCM depends on you, our members, to make sure that your information in Realm is accurate. Your information includes your name, your address, your contact information, and other personal information. All of this information can become obsolete over time. We all change addresses, we get new phone numbers, we move on in so many ways. For FCM to have your correct contact information, we need your help.

One third of our membership has not registered into Realm. This means we do not have full confidence in the personal information of about one third of our membership. **What to do next?**

If you have registered in Realm, please sign in and go to your profile page. Review what you see for accuracy, and update anything that needs it. Thank you for being on top of this.

If you have not registered into Realm, look in your inbox. We have sent an email invitation to you. It is good for 48 hours for security purposes. Open the email. It will contain a link. Use the link and follow the steps to **create a password**.

1. **Log in.** Log in to the Realm site using your email and the password you just created. (www.onrealm.org)
2. **Update your profile.** Make sure your personal information is accurate. If anything is incorrect, please change it.
3. Get the mobile app. This is optional, of course, but it provides you the most convenient access to your FCM membership. Go to your source for iPhone and android device apps. Search for "Realm Connect – For Our Church." Download the app and log in, in the same way you did for your online account. Now you have FCM communications at your fingertips.

As you have observed with our 2020 renewal process, FCM is of necessity moving to online resources in the interest of efficiency and expense reduction. No major technological effort like this is without challenges. What we are asking in this article is something you can do to help, to login and update, which is necessary for FCM (accurate membership information).

But what if you need help doing this? There is help available... **Amy Simpson** has led the effort to make Realm our personnel and activity management tool. (Thank you, **Amy**, for your tremendous effort.) You can reach out to **Amy** at connect@fcmmail.org. Additional help is offered by **Antoinette Marold** at communication@fcmmail.org. Our Central Office with **Tom Leonhardt** and **Carolyn Horvath** can help at centeroffice@fcmmail.org. Your regional Vice President can also help. Your regional VP is shown on our website at <https://www.federationofchristianministries.org/circle-of-directors/fcm-circle-of-directors.html> Their contact information is listed.

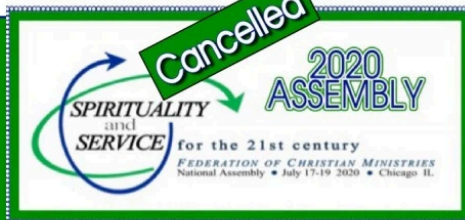
Thanks for your attention. Thanks for doing the Realm update. Thanks for being with FCM. Thanks for being a blessing to the world.

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From Your 2020 Assembly Planning Committee



We have become the 2021 Assembly Planning Committee! VIRTUAL 2020, FACE-TO-FACE 2021

As you probably know, the FCM Circle, in consultation with our Committee, made the decision to cancel the 2020 Assembly, to be held in Chicago in July. This decision was made with the health and safety of our membership in mind, in light of COVID-19. The Circle also decided to move forward with planning for our next Assembly, to be held **July 16-18, 2021 at the Holiday Inn Chicago O'Hare**. Our plenary speakers and workshop presenters have all expressed interest in participating in the 2021 Assembly. We anticipate that registration and reservation details will be available at the beginning of 2021. Please plan to attend!

If you have made reservations with the Holiday Inn for the Assembly in July of 2020, please cancel these reservations (773-693-5800) to avoid being charged.

The Circle recognizes how much FCM members value their relationships with one another. To that end, the Planning Committee was encouraged to develop a virtual event for July 2020, to provide an opportunity for connection and support. Mark your calendars for **Saturday, July 18, 2020**. This half-day virtual event will consist of two parts:

10:00 a.m. CDT - A presentation by FCM member Chaplain Beth Reece on Tools for Post-Traumatic Growth, an area of her research. Beth will lead us in addressing

- The impact of trauma
- The use of tools for post-traumatic growth
- The ways faith intersects with and informs the use of these tools, and
- Facilitating spiritual and emotional healing in light of COVID-19

11:30 p.m. CDT - Break for lunch

1:00 p.m. CDT - Meetings will be held by FCM regions, to provide an opportunity for members to share stories with one another, provide and seek out support, and build community.

This virtual event will be open to FCM members only, and will be free of charge.

We hope that you will be able to take advantage of this opportunity to learn and to connect. More detailed information about registration will be available soon.

In the meantime, the Planning Committee offers our hopes for your safety and health.

Peter Strening
FCM 2021 Assembly Planning Committee

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JEANNE HALE
CO-CHAIR

Specialized Ministries

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FCM Endorsement Process

As I sit down to write today, the grief, chaos and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic weighs heavily on us all. We need one another more than ever and finding creative ways to stay connected and be supportive while maintaining safe distance a daily struggle. Many of FCM's Endorsed Members are healthcare chaplains who have been supporting hospital and hospice staff as well as patients and families in this very challenging time. Please know that FCM's Committee on Specialized Ministries is here for you! If you need to talk, or you are looking for resources as you care for others, don't hesitate to reach out to us at our email address: specmin@FCMmail.org. Also, let me know if you would like to have conversations with other Endorsed FCM members via Zoom, I will be happy to coordinate that.

For currently Commissioned FCM members planning to apply for Endorsement, the next deadline to submit completed Endorsement applications is June 15, 2020. You must be a Commissioned FCM member to be eligible to apply for Endorsement. You can find information about the Endorsement process on the FCM Website at <https://www.federationofchristianministries.org/membership/fcm-endorsement.html>.

Prior to beginning the Endorsement process, you need to inform your Regional Liaison for Specialized Ministries of your intent to submit the application. If you do not do this, you may miss important steps and requirements in the process, which could result in your not being able to submit your completed Endorsement application by the deadline. The Regional Liaisons are available to answer your questions about this process. Their names and contact information are as follows:

Great Lakes	Judy McBride	judy.mcbride@cchmc.org	513-636-7211
Mountains & Plains	Peter Strening	peterstrening@comcast.net	970-817-1409
Northeast	Ingmar Ludwig	iludwig@fordham.edu	929-429-6233
Pacific	Jeanne Hale	jeannehale18@gmail.com	773-451-6177
Southern	Lisa Koch	dalikoch@aol.com	919-387-7459

Finally, I leave you with a quote from Bishop Desmond Tutu: "Your ordinary acts of love and hope point to the extraordinary promise that every human life is of inestimable value." Be safe and well, and thank you for your acts of love and hope.

**Applications for FCM Commissioning and/or
Endorsement must be submitted by...**

June 15, 2020

Federation of Christian Ministries



The FCM Faithful

Major May/June Anniversaries of Membership

We hope to make this honor list of FCM members a regular feature of the Newsletter. These people have worked long and faithfully to build FCM to its place today. If you wish to congratulate them, search them online in Realm www.onrealm.org or on the Realm app. Not signed in to Realm? Ask connect@fcmmail.org for authorization.

Tom Cusack

30 Year Anniversaries

Dr. Juanita Cordero, Pacific Region, 06/29/1990

20 Year Anniversaries

Donald Conklin, Mountains and Plains Region, 05/30/2000

Thomas Cusack, Northeast Region, 05/27/2000

Susan Schaefer, Mountains and Plains Region, 05/23/2000

10 Year Anniversaries

Kathleen Dzura, Southern Region, 06/14/2010

Richard Nelson, Northeast Region, 05/05/2010

5 Year Anniversaries

Tresca Allsman, Mountains and Plains Region, 05/09/2015

Cynthia Jones, Great Lakes Region, 06/03/2015

Heike Ward, Pacific Region, 05/14/2015

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MARITA GRUDZEN

Mindful Living

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FCM and Mindful Living on Our Mother Earth

In the Summer of 2019, the FCM Circle of Directors recognized its need to affirm an ecological consciousness on the part of its member churches and individuals. The question was how to communicate this need to its members. It was decided that rather than recommend specific pathways for that inner and outer change, the Circle would state its commitment under the rubric of its fifth Core Value: "Mindful Living." The goal of this aspect of mindful living is to embody an ever-growing ecological consciousness leading to a personal and community ecological conversion. To achieve this way of life we need multiple forms of education and collectives of committed individuals.

What do we as individual members and as faith communities in FCM need to do to live more mindfully in response to the climate change? A good place for us to begin is with educating ourselves on the current status of the problem and why it is so critical to become involved **NOW**. Within less than an hour we can get a sense of why it is so important to bring our attention to this global crisis. Simply enter "Climate Change" and New York Times or Washington Post in Google for a survey of the problem. Katherine Hayhoe's seventeen-minute Ted Talk, is another great place to start. After familiarizing ourselves with an overview of the issues and the urgency for action, the second most important thing we can do is to locate a group within our community that is focusing on climate change. Find the group where you can identify with the focus and the potential impact. In addition to faith-based communities we will find that there are lots of choices for personal action: e.g. your local Sierra Club, Mothers Out Front, and Environmental Justice, just to name a few. There are also opportunities to become a partner with municipalities and to promote clean energy networks.

If we want jump in to start lowering our carbon footprint, two examples of low cost and low effort practices that make a substantial difference are eliminating beef from your diet, if not every day, then several days a week and eliminating as much food WASTE as possible. The latter, scientists tell us, is the third largest cause of methane gas being released into the atmosphere.

For those many Catholics among us, we recommend taking a course on *Laudato Si* to ground our spiritual commitment and sustain our action. On April 25 we celebrate the fifth anniversary of this Papal Encyclical and there are so few of us who have read it. This document which was written with scientists addresses everything we need to know to begin raise our ecological consciousness and move us to action.

It can be helpful to study it in a group where we can our share responses to the reading, talk with climate change experts, field ideas and questions all in one place. Therefore, I have decided to offer an eight-week course online with four Zoom sessions. The course will be offered through Global Ministries University and can be taken as an individual course or part of a Certificate Program in the field of **Climate Change Leadership**. If interested, please contact me directly. [maritagrudzen@gmail.com]

It is what we need to do for the children, ours and others,' and for the future of humankind. As *Laudato Si* writes, God's "love constantly **impels** us to find new ways forward" (p. 245).



Who Needs Formal Celebrant Training?

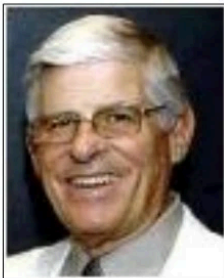
Global Ministries University offers a Celebrant Training Program (<https://www.becomeacelebrant.org/>) – but who is a candidate? Actually, anyone who performs ceremonies and services could benefit from this program. Granted, if you have years of experience, you might not need training but if you have conducted just a few services and/or ceremonies, our program would give you a great deal of detailed information that would assist you in ‘unexpected challenges.’ As an example, you would be given direction related to how to handle untraditional situations within a family setting.

Needless to say, there is a great deal of responsibility involved in conducting these sacred rites of passage; consequently, the peace of mind and confidence you would acquire is well worth the investment.

Our Staff is comprised of long-time FCM members that have years of experience to pass on to you:



Antoinette Marold is the Mentor for the Weddings and Other Commitment Ceremonies track. She is a professional Wedding Celebrant at (<https://www.eleganteventsbyantoinette.com/index.html>) who has conducted hundreds of ceremonies throughout the years. Antoinette is the FCM Communications Chairperson and formerly was the organization’s Chairperson. If you have questions related to her track, feel free to contact her_ ammweddings@gmail.com



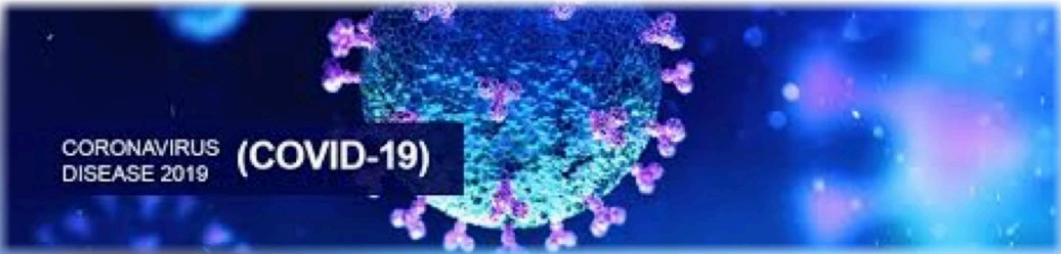
Mike Conley is the Mentor for the Funerals and Other Rites of Passage track. He is a former Roman Catholic priest, which gave him an abundance of training and experience. He then continued to be a celebrant after he left the active priesthood. In addition to mentoring the Funerals track for the Center, he also facilitates a number of theology courses for Global Ministries University. He has been an FCM member since 1989 and has served on the FCM Circle as Vice-President of the Pacific Region and Development Director with his wife, Jean Conley. If you have questions related to the Funerals track, feel free to contact him (celebrantjmc@gmail.com).

For general information about the program, take a look at the FAQ page (<https://www.becomeacelebrant.org/faq.html>), or contact our office (celebrancytraining@gmail.com). You may also want to check out the testimonials (<https://www.becomeacelebrant.org/testimonials.html>) of our satisfied participants.

If you are considering formal training, this is the perfect time to enroll. For a limited time, we are giving members of FCM a 25% reduction in tuition. If you submit your application (<https://www.globalministriesuniversity.org/application/>) and \$25 application fee (<https://www.globalministriesuniversity.org/tuition-payment/>) by June 1st, we will drop the last payment!

May/June 2020
VOL. 54 NO. 3

Federation of Christian Ministries



CORONAVIRUS
DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Personal Reflections on the Coronavirus Pandemic

Submitted April 15, 2020 by Michael M. Meyer, D. Min., FCM Member

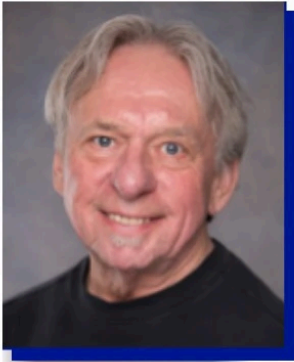
For a month now, the citizens of the USA have joined citizens of the world in addressing the horrific plague now commonly known as the Coronavirus (aka: COVID-19). The impact of the disease is only gradually becoming apparent. Here we are one month after the alert was issued. Never before in our lifetime has the economy of our nation come to a halt in order to keep people home so they might be sheltered from the spread of the virus with its quick and deadly attack.

Today there are over 25,000 individuals who have died so far from the virus in the USA. To some this number is still not impacting their consciousness. We hear the comment: "Why such drastic measures, 80,000 individuals died of the seasonal flu in 2019 and no one shut down the economy over that?" The reality is that 'staying home' and 'social distancing' are clearly paying off in spades each day.

The great challenge right now is the desire on the part of many to restart the economy in spite of the risk that many more than 25,000 individuals will die if the restarting processes are not done very thoughtfully. The challenges of home schooling, family members getting on one another's nerves, the inability to pay for basic food, shelter, and clothing, are all adding up to the frustration many are feeling as they face a shutdown of a way of living that may never return. Hopefully the assistance of the Federal Relief package will bring some relief. Shared love and compassion locally are also happening each day; we can rejoice in such local and personal responses to suffering.

Yet, the medical experts are very clear that this change in our lives today will not all go away by May 1st. We face a longer period of time to truly deal wisely with the coronavirus. So, it is important that we spend some of our quarantine time praying for a vaccine to be discovered which will protect a majority of citizens. We may also find ourselves taking some of this precious downtime to reflect on how we used to spend our time (prior to the virus) and how we may assume a different lifestyle once the veil of uncertainty lifts. Recently, in India a clear view of the Himalayas was seen by many for the first time in decades. Recently, a satellite view of China revealed a clear view rather than an orange cover for the first time in ages. The potential implications of these visual changes are hard to imagine but might lead to deeper care for our environment and our interdependence and interactions with it.

Finally, let us honor the many nurses and doctors on the front lines of the Covid19. Some have tested positive for the disease. May we always be grateful for their dedication and devotion.



CARL YUSAVITZ
VICE PRESIDENT

NORTHEAST REGION

May/June 2020

VOL. 54 NO. 3

Spiritually Navigating this Pandemic

In preparing this Northeast Region Report, I kept wondering what to say. So much of our lives have been turned upside down with the Covid-19 pandemic! So, I decided to ask FCM colleagues in the region how they were navigating this pandemic – spiritually. I received so many responses and decided to share a paraphrased and combined sampling of those responses as my report. Hopefully, they will resonate with your experience of navigating this pandemic.

“I’m watching two meditations by Eckhart Tolle on You-Tube: ‘Staying conscious in the face of absurdity’ and ‘How do I handle the fear I am feeling?’”

“I am experiencing a new and deeper collegiality with the people I minister with in my hospital. Having a sense of togetherness in all of this feels empowering and gives me strength.”

“Centering prayer every morning helps me face the day.”

“I feel like we are all ‘sheltering in place’ at my place of ministry – patients, residents, and staff. This is very comforting.”

“Prayer via ‘Zoom’ with others is both a new experience and something I am very grateful for. It’s great to see people’s faces and hear them ‘live.’”

“We hold ‘parades’ in our neighborhood (with signs, party hats, and singing) for children celebrating birthdays!”

“Something new for our family is checking-in on the house-bound elderly regularly.”

“During this Lentiest Lent ever, I have found it comforting to remember Christ’s redemptive and transformative suffering as a way of connecting to my ‘neighbors’ who are experiencing poverty, illness, alienation, and violence.”

“When everyone in our house is asleep, I find it comforting to light incense and sit quietly by myself. I also practice Yoga Nidra, a type of spiritual experience that is grounded in abundance and creation. This practice gives me hope. His writings help us accept what is.”

“Short hikes in a nearby forest really help me. Sometimes I go alone. Sometimes with others.”

“I am practicing breath rituals, from the spiritual practices of Thich Nhat Hahn.”

“Being something of a linguist, I spend intentional time reading a passage of Scripture in 8 different languages. It’s amazing what emerges.”

“I have connected with a frightened and elderly neighbor who is having nightmares going back to the Second World War, when she was a child in Paris. Being with her renews my spirit and sustains my faith at this time.”

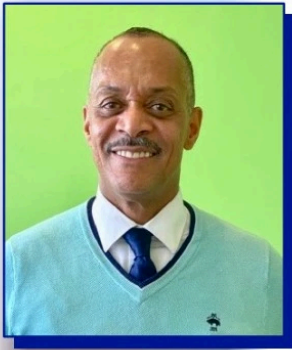
“What has helped me most during this pandemic is breathing into my heart chakra for myself, those close to me, and out into this frightened world.”

“Preparing a ‘Pray from home’ booklet for my Dignity community has helped me feel more connected to my community.”

“Journaling, journaling, and more journaling.”

“I am now walking my dog more than usual and doing it more slowly, taking in the sights and sounds I normally miss.”

May we all be well...



RON DAVIS
VICE PRESIDENT

GREAT LAKES REGION

May/June 2020
VOL. 54 NO. 3

CHANGES

A lot has changed over the last month. New terms, words, and approaches to work have become a part of our new normal over this last month. COVID-19. The corona virus. Who knew that there was such a thing prior to this time along our life's journey? Yet, it is here and very real. COVID-19 has been all consuming recently. It has changed so much of how we approach life and ministry.

I don't see myself as being gifted technologically. And because of COVID-19, I am forced to embrace technology and give it my time and immediate attention. I have no choice but to learn new skills so that I can do the work that I am called to do. For instance, a month or so ago, I didn't know that there was a thing called telechaplancy. I would rarely meet with my patients and their families over the telephone. I held face to face visits with people in the patients' rooms or with the family in a consultation room. Then came COVID-19. Pastoral visits during this period of time have challenged my former practice. So, I have accepted the invitation to be open and creative, discovering new skills so that I can reach my patients and families. Telechaplancy is one that I use today. I draw on it daily.

Skype and WebEx meetings happen daily in my workplace. Prior to COVID-19, Zoom meetings were a way that we would connect with one another from FCM. Some of our regional Vice Presidents have used the Zoom.us tool very often becoming very proficient in their use of it. That wasn't me, I admit. Yet, due to COVID-19, I have had to change. In order to function in my many roles, I am initiating Skype, Zoom, and WebEx meetings at home, at work and for FCM. What a change!

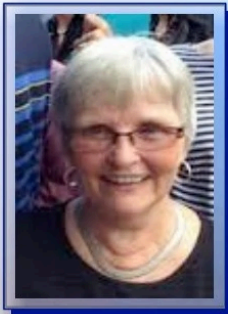
I am changing and growing in the midst of this pandemic because life goes on—the work must move forward. Whether I speak of the ministries and work of FCM or the ministries and work that I do at Nationwide Children's Hospital, the work goes on.

The work is going on and going forward. Over this past month, I have been blessed to become the President Elect of FCM. It is an exciting new role for me, and I look forward to growing into it. In addition to this, the voting has taken place for the next Vice President of the Great Lakes Region of FCM. We had three talented and capable candidates running for this office. Each one of them is a fine, gifted and abundantly qualified candidate. So, I prayed to God for wisdom, direction and discernment for us as we have cast our votes in the Great Lakes Region. Do know, Great Lakes members, that I totally enjoyed my time as your Vice President, and you have helped me to grow in my faith and in my love of God. Thanks to each of you who cast your important vote for this new Great Lakes Region FCM leader.

As I consider how the work is going on, remember that we are still receiving candidates for commissioning and endorsement during this season. Much of the work of building relationships in the future will take place through Zoom meetings. Also, there will be opportunities for regional conversations over Zoom. My hope and goal over the next few months is to stay connected. I will work with the Elected VP of the Great Lakes to go over best practices for this ministry. I will also work with Tom Cusack to learn best practices for the presidential role.

COVID-19 has brought forth many challenges to how we live, to how I live. These challenges have impact on our work, our leisure, and on our ability to worship together face to face. Yet, I am finding many rainbows during this period of time. I am finding that living with a positive attitude and a loving heart toward others has helped me find sweetness in my days. My prayer for us all is that we are seeing the rainbows, keeping a hopeful attitude and a loving heart.

God Bless you.



DIANE DOUGHERTY
VICE PRESIDENT

SOUTHERN REGION

May/June 2020

VOL. 54 NO. 3

Southern Region New Members

Jim Sandeval; McIntosh, FL

"I have worked in different ministries over the years. I currently am a Chaplain Intern at a local hospital and a Deacon at McIntosh Presbyterian Church. I am currently working on my Master of Theology and my CPE training."

Evan Edwards; Raleigh, NC

Evan is currently a Chaplain Resident at WakeMed Hospital in Raleigh, NC and hopes to continue doing ministry as a chaplain, specifically in the context of mental health rehabilitation. He is originally from Georgetown, TX

Leta Kravig; Ocala, FL

"I am in the season of exploring and discerning the next step in my ministry journey. I am searching for a place to center and ground my calling in the validation of a professional ministry community, commissioning and endorsement."

Andrew Sagayam; Harrisonburg, VA

Andrew is an Archbishop of the Holy Catholic Church International. He is working as a chaplain and is glad to be part of FCM.

H. Don Morris; Greenville, SC

"I was an Administrative Pastor for Revival Center United Pentecostal Church for more than 14 years and Senior Pastor of Turlock United Pentecostal Church for 9 years. I am currently a Chaplain Resident with Prisma Health at Greenville Memorial Hospital."

Newly Commissioned Waiting in Joyful HOPE

We were saddened to have had to cancel the formal commissioning's scheduled for April in Raleigh and May in Tampa of those named below. We virtually extend our hands to each of these newly commissioned members, praying that "as God is surrounding us with the presence of His blessings" (Ps. 139), we too surround them with our presence and blessing.



- Ebenezer Gregg Aquire, Palm Harbor, FL
- George L. Francis, Port Richey, FL
- Joseph Anthony Musco, Dunedin, FL
- Kellin Nicole Kamanchik, Norfolk, VA
- Rev. Evelyn Hahn, Apex, NC
- Wanda Marie Thomas, Raleigh, NC

Our sincere condolences are sent for the family of our Former Vice President-Sally Sherry who died December 11, 2019.

In the midst of this global crisis, and while sheltering in place, Michelle Meehan-Conklin, Port Richey, FL, reads the signs of the times and gets busy after her work as a chaplain making masks. **Thank you, Michelle! This was very well done.**

**Our Zoom Meetings: Connecting while sheltering in place
Our Schedule for Spring and Summer**

May 28
June 25
July 30
August 27

In Memory of Sally Sherry ... by Tom Cusack, FCM President



It is with sadness that I announce to you the death of our long term member, Sally Sherry, Ph.D. She passed away in Palm Beach Gardens, FL on December 10, 2019. Her passing was only discovered when Diane Dougherty, Southern Region Vice President, called her home about her membership renewal. Sally's son was there and answered the phone. Then we learned of her death. We offer him and her family our condolences. At the time of this publication, her obituary is not available to us.

Sally joined FCM on December 15, 2003 as a member of the Great Lakes Region. She was commissioned on February 7, 2004. In her commissioning comments she stated

This era in our history is filled with war and greed, thus making it even more important to infuse ourselves and others with the substance of love. It has been a life long quest for me to give voice to the disadvantaged and disenfranchised, and a new rite of passage into equality is now urgently needed.

Being a member of FCM will hopefully connect me with a conscious group of individuals with camaraderie and aspirations that may give a clue to the meaning of life and this cosmic dance. The members of FCM that I have met care inordinately, and the choice that Jesus seemed to teach us is to choose justice for all of humankind.

By July, 2015, Sally had moved to the Southern Region and responded to FCM's call to become the Regional Vice President of the Southern Region. Her time in the position was only about six months, due to health problems she faced. She is now with her Teacher, Jesus. We thank Sally for her service and her striving to help others realize their highest potential. May she rest in peace as we reflect upon her favorite saying:

*Vocatus Atque Non Vocatus Deus Aderit
(Bidden or Not Bidden, God will be Present)
Carl Jung*



CONNER SIMMS
VICE PRESIDENT

Mts. & Plains Region

May/June 2020

VOL. 54 NO. 3

A Personal Introduction and Letter to the Mountains & Plains Membership of FCM

I'll start first with an exclamation and a confession...

I'd like to say first how honored that I am to be serving in my new capacity! It is truly a gift to serve alongside each of you, especially in difficult times like this. I am grateful for the immense work that each of you are providing in each of your ministry contexts. Thank you!

Next, I have a confession. Ramping up over this past month has been hard. With the state of things in the world as they are, I have not been as responsive as I would like to be.

As a civilian, I work at a level one trauma center here in St. Paul, MN and as I'm sure has been true for many of you, my work has been in flux and thus my capacity has too. As a chaplain and officer in the United States Air Force I have also been pulled in several directions. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, it's been a lot.

You, the Mountains & Plains Region have my commitment that from this point onward. I will be available (within reason) and ready to not only assist you as you do the good work of ministering to those around you but as you continue to grow in your own spirituality and piety.

So with that in mind; here is my cell number; (847) 204-8994. Give me a call.

Seriously, as your regional VP, I am here for you all.

I know that the loss of our in-person 2020 Assembly stings, but I think that this opens up all kinds of possibilities for a renewed intentionality on our parts to connect with one another. Be on the lookout for a phone call and zoom call from me to each and every one of you this spring/summer as well as some fun virtual gatherings only for our region!

Be blessed, be healthy, be safe as you live, love, and minister to one another.

Grace & Peace.



CONNER, HIS WIFE MAYME, AND DAUGHTER SYDNEY



TRACY PETERSON
VICE PRESIDENT

Pacific Region

May/June 2020

VOL. 54 NO. 3



The Pacific Region Welcomes Six New Members

The Pacific region is excited to welcome six new members to the region. We welcome

**Brianna Capre
J. Robert (Bob) Claus
Danielle Cummings
Bora Kim
Ethan Halliday
Michael Thompson**

I look forward to connecting with you all in the future and please feel free to reach out to me with any questions you have.

On Saturday, April 4th, we had a Zoom meeting for the Pacific Region with about 12 people. We discussed different ways we are all dealing with the stress of this pandemic and offered different suggestions for self-care. We will be having our next Pacific Region Zoom meeting on Saturday, June 6th at 9am Pacific time. I look forward to seeing the Pacific region members who can join me.

One suggestion provided prayers for those affected by COVID-19:
<https://www.professionalchaplains.org/Files/resources/Covid19%20Prayers%20from%20Cincinnati%20Children's%20Hospital%20Chaplains>.

Another suggestion was for Spirituality Practices for the Coronavirus Pandemic:
<https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/features/view/28853/spiritual-practices--for-the-coronavirus-pandemic>.

We also came up with links to various parodies about the virus to bring a smile to your face:

Coronavirus Rhapsody (based on Bohemian Rhapsody):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr_tEdQvFcc

Hello From the Inside Parody: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5azNpTwVk8>

Do-Re-Mi Parody: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMBh-eo3tvE&t=42s>.

Stayin Inside Parody: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmUXntGlgFI>

Enjoy the links and stay safe everyone.

Federation of Christian Ministries



Newsletter Editor...Tom Cruse
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). FCM member-submitted articles should aim for 500 words and 2-3 selected photos in MS Word and JPG formats.

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FCM CERTIFICATES

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

FCM Membership & Realm

REALM ADMINISTRATOR & MEMBERSHIP

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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, 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
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