

Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter

November/December 2020

Vol. 54 Number 6



Federation of Christian Ministries

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VOL. 54 NO. 6



VOTE

Let Your
Voice Be Heard!

Exercise Your
Right to VOTE!

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Chairperson

CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE

News From the Circle of Directors

- As some of you may have heard from your Regional Vice Presidents, the Circle has decided to offer commissioning four times per year. That means that in addition to the Circle's regular meetings in February and July, the Circle will also meet virtually in November and in May to consider candidates for commissioning. Applications will generally be due one month prior to the meeting. Specific dates will be published on the website. The Circle made this decision in light of the high volume of candidates being presented in February and July. We hope that this will allow the candidates to be presented more evenly throughout the year. Endorsement will continue to be offered three times per year; February, July, and November.
- Applications for new members, individual and faith community, are being moved to Realm rather than continue as a separate process. A link on the website will connect the new member to the New Member or New Faith Community Member Application Event that has been created in Realm. The new member will be allowed as a guest to complete their application in Realm. This will enhance communication and further streamline our processes.

Opportunities to Serve FCM

- o **Quarterly Educational Events Planning Committee Members**– As mentioned in the last newsletter, volunteers are being sought to plan quarterly educational events via zoom. Please email chairperson@fcmmail.org to volunteer.
- o **Regional Commissioning Liaisons** – As mentioned in the last newsletter, volunteers to help regional vice presidents guide applicants through the commissioning process are being sought. Please email your Regional Vice President to volunteer.
- o **Ministry Peers** – we are always in need of ministry peers to pair with new members. Ministry peers help familiarize new members with FCM, provide support and accountability. Please email your Regional Vice President to volunteer.



BAPTISM

All FCM members who preside at BAPTISMS...are required to register the Baptism at www.fcmregistry.org



President

RON DAVIS

FCM Renewal Season

We are in the heart of FCM's renewal season, moving in to the holiday season and we are approaching the end of 2020. Should I say hallelujah? Actually my greater word on this day is to offer you a thank you for your ministry in 2020.

We have been God's ambassadors in 2020, working to the best of our abilities to share God's love, grace and mercy to those along our paths. At the onset of this year, no one knew that 2020 would be full with many and great challenges. If we knew what we were signing up for in 2020 year, I wonder if we would we have said, "Yes Lord, send me?" Yet, God did send us, and God did use us in ministry. Thank you for being available to God for service to others.

In all aspects of ministry, we have had to be thoughtful and learn how to pivot. Zoom, Microsoft Team and Web Ex have become common tools for how we execute ministry. I do not see these platforms going away at anytime soon. Whether our ministry is in the parish, hospital, prison, city, or care facility, we have learned to wear PPE, wash hands and be more mindful in our visitations. We were sometimes the only one who could be by the care recipient's side. America, due to social media, watched a modern-day lynching. Social justice became front and center and we had to discern if we would fight for social justice now or kick the can down the road...again. We watched our nation become increasingly polarized. And as God's ambassadors, we had to discern if we would engage the work of doing what we can to bring our nation back together. Weddings, funerals, worship, and Bible/spiritual study meetings had to change in 2020. Ministry became hard at times in 2020. For some of us, we lost our ministry because of budgetary challenges in our workplace. It was some year.

It is FCM's renewal season. It is that time when we give thought to God's call on us for 2021. As I anticipate our tomorrows, the election, the new year, I must admit that I do not know what we are signing up for in ministry. I know that the challenges that we will face as a nation will continue. I know that gathering as a convention of churches will be challenging for those of us who make up FCM.

Growth and change in America and for FCM can only come by our being fully engaged in life and ministry. We must be able to pivot. We must be prayerful and thoughtful too. America needs more love, grace, mercy and God's peace. As we continue along our spiritual journey, our ministry, let us offer the world these things. I pray that God will help us to bring forth healing in America.

Your ministry is encouraged in 2021. If you have not already, go through the renewal process. I do believe that FCM is part of what America needs at a time like this.



Chairperson

CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE

“Hol-i-y Days”

As we begin November, the 11th month of 2020 and the 8th month since the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic, I am aware of how much has changed in the ways we live life and how different this holiday season is likely to be. In the past, we could barely get to Halloween without being inundated with the commercialism that typically accompanies this time of year. With so many out of work, I hope for less of that this year. Many retailers such as Walmart and Target, in light of their responsibility to control crowds in the midst of a pandemic have decided NOT to open on Thanksgiving. News shows have already reported that many stores are stocking up on smaller turkeys and hams this year in anticipation of smaller gatherings. Though our gatherings may be smaller as we try to maintain some modicum of social distance, and perhaps our gatherings may be more somber as we take account those missing from our tables and homes due to Covid-19, our gatherings need not be less sacred. Our gatherings may be more intimate as we have been made to more fully realize how precious spending time with our loved ones really is. For me, the chaos and changes in the state of the world draw me to what is beyond and is within. It is what I hold as sacred and holy and unchanging that enables me to cope with all that is going on. As we enter into the holiday season, my invitation to you is to focus on the practices and themes that are sacred to you. I share a few that support me.

Gratitude:

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.”
William Arthur Ward

There is no substitute for gratitude. Taking the time to recognize and acknowledge the things we are grateful for helps us to cope with the disappointments and tragedies in life; to realize that life is not all bad. Whether I use beads or pause to make a mental daily list of the things I am grateful for, the process changes my perspective. Taking the time to express our gratitude to others, makes them feel appreciated and helps them cope. I know I have said it before and it bears repeating. I am so grateful for the existence of FCM that empowered me to fulfill my call to ministry as a chaplain and as a chaplain educator by providing commissioning and endorsement. I am also grateful for the warm, welcoming, accepting, inclusive community that is FCM and I can't say it enough how grateful and proud I am to serve with each of you who are part of FCM. After 3 heart failure events this year, I am acutely aware of how grateful I am that I still have more time with my husband. I could continue but that's enough about me. What are you grateful for?

Expectation:

“One of the essential paradoxes of Advent: that while we wait for God, we are with God all along, that while we need to be reassured of God's arrival, or the arrival of our homecoming, we are already at home.” *Michelle Blake*

The outcome of November's elections will have some impact on our expectations, what we believe will happen, for the coming years. And yet, as people of faith that cannot be the sole determinant of our expectations. Regardless of the election outcome, our faith continues to call us to love and to seek justice. As co-creators with the Divine Creator, we are to continue creating inclusive communities; to empower those on the margins; to be good stewards of creation; and to continue the transformative work of becoming more Christ-like. This is the expectation I have for myself and for you and I earnestly expect the Spirit of G-d to continue to empower us to do it! What expectation do you hold?

Celebration:

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” *Romans 15:13 (NRSV)*

There is no requirement that a celebration needs to be a large gathering full of people. All that is required is that we express our pleasure for something we deem worthy of celebration. Despite all that is going on, there is still reason for celebration. We live, we breathe, we love and are loved. We celebrate Creation and the One who creates and sustains us. We celebrate the One who chose to come into the world to show us how to live and love. We celebrate Love that heals us and Peace that comforts us. And we celebrate and hold onto Hope that calls us onward. What will you celebrate this holy-day season?

During this unusual holy-day season, my wish for each of you and your families is sacred time and holy moments. May it be so!

FCM Endowment Fund

BY TOM CUSACK WITH JIM VERRECCHIA

FCM Owns an Endowment Fund

The Circle voted final approval of the Endowment Fund in February, 2018. Today, its assets are over \$50,000.

What Is the FCM Endowment Fund? We can think of an endowment fund as a savings account whose principal can never be touched. Only a portion of the interest and earnings can be used every year.

Why Have an Endowment Fund? Our FCM Endowment Fund will help ensure FCM can have the financial stability to carry on far into the future.

An endowment fund also sends a message to people who appreciate FCM. The message is that FCM will endure. They can see that FCM manages its resources responsibly, plans efficiently, and will likely survive any crisis. The Fund gives our members and other donors the comforting option of giving a gift that keeps on giving well into the future.

The gifts you give are recorded and tracked by the FCM Endowment Committee. Over time even small gifts begin to add up.

Larger accumulations of gifts that equal \$10,000 or more may be designated **"Named Fund."** The donor designates a Named Fund to honor people or institutions by name.

Gifts of \$25,000 or more are called **"Legacy Named Fund."** The earnings of a Legacy Named Fund can be directed by the donor to support the donor's specific goals, with the acceptance of the Circle. Our Endowment does not yet have a Named Fund nor a Legacy Named Fund.

You can be first!

"Tribute Gift" in any amount is a meaningful way to honor the life of a friend or family member, living or deceased. It also provides the opportunity to make a donation to celebrate a special occasion - birthday, anniversary or wedding. Make a gift using our secure online giving form, or print off a mail-in form. We will notify the honoree or honoree's family about your gift.

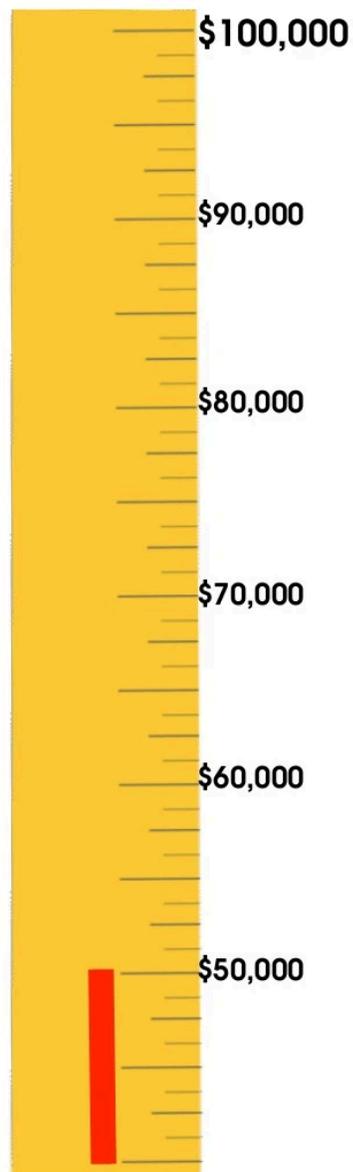
Please review the **Endowment Dropdown** on the FCM website.
Make a donation, or a stream of them.
Consider planned giving.
Your Endowment Committee is here to help.
Email: Endowment@fcmail.org.



FCM Endowment Goal



DONATED TO DATE: \$50,000
OUR GOAL: \$100,000



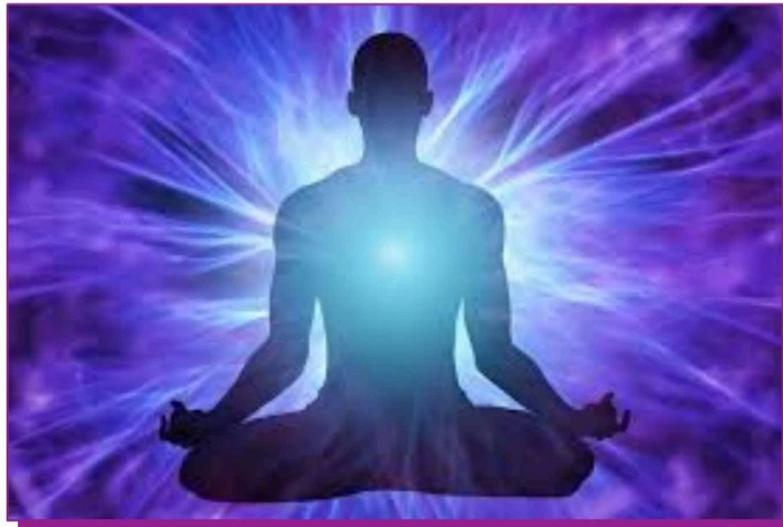
We need everyone to get involved
No donation is too small.

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

1. Sign in to [Realm](http://www.onrealm.org) 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

Prayer Gathering

BY TOM CUSACK WITH ANTHONY CAPONE



Prayer Gathering Continues Weekly

Every Thursday at 8:00 PM EDT 20 to 40 FCM members gather together in a video conference to pray and meditate. The Gathering idea originated early in the pandemic in discussions between **Tom Cusack** and **Anthony Capone**. **Tom** hosts the Gathering and **Anthony**, our *FCM Prayer Ministry Coordinator*, leads it and administrates. The zoom meeting is characterized by one half hour of prayer and meditation followed by open discussion for one-half hour. The opening spiritual half hour is led by a member of FCM who has volunteered to lead. The volunteers are from across our five Regions.

Many participants are regulars; they are on every week. This has led to the building of an online community. We recognize one another and know elements of our new friends' pathway through the pandemic. The community building occurs in the second half of the hour, from 8:30 to 9:00 PM. Discussion, sharing and reflections take place in an open format.

During the Gathering, participants add prayer intentions and other communications to the Chat facility. Anthony captures the chat and then forwards the prayer requests to the growing FCM Prayer Ministry.

We offer thanks to those participating, and we invite you to join us for a time of spiritual concentration with other FCM members. Emailed invitations go out weekly.



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FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

The FCM Faithful Major Membership Anniversaries September - December 2020

The people listed below have worked long and faithfully to build FCM to its place today. If you wish to congratulate them, search them online in Realm (www.onRealm.org) or on the Realm app. If you are not signed into Realm, ask your Regional Vice President or connect@fcmmail.org for authorization.

Compiled by Carolyn and Tom at the FCM Central Office:

25 Year Anniversary

John Haag, Northeast Region

20 Year Anniversary

Ellen Six, Pacific Region

15 Year Anniversaries

Anthony Ercolano, Northeast Region

Jan Magray, Southern Region

10 Year Anniversaries

Jeanette Love, Pacific Region

Marlen Mayers, Southern Region

John Polanski, Great Lakes Region

Beth Reece, Mts. & Plains Region

Adelin Rival, Mts. & Plains Region

Anna Todd, Mts. & Plains Region

5 Year Anniversaries

Margaret Brower, Northeast Region

Ginny Cusack, Northeast Region

Comfort Fordjour, Northeast Region

Katelyn Melcher-Sarantis, Mts. & Plains Region

Pamela Meyers, Great Lakes Region

Donna Pellegrin, Northeast Region

Franklin Reagan, Southern Region

Claire Richardson, Pacific Region

Conner Simms, Mts. & Plains Region

Staci Striegel-Stikeleather, Great Lakes Region

Congratulations!



Chaplain's Corner

What are the Chances?

Two FCM ministers stood side-by-side on the platform in Philadelphia during the 2018 General Assembly Commissioning Ceremony. They never spoke or crossed paths the entire weekend event. Months later, Jacqueline Cook accepted a staff chaplain position at Geisinger Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. Justin Ferko, a recently hired GHS staff chaplain, was assigned to assist with her orientation process.

The newly acquainted chaplains made small talk as they rode the elevator to Justin's unit on the eighth floor. As they placed their binders down at the nurse's station, Jacqueline asked, "What denomination is your ordination through?" Justin replied, "It's a group called the Federation of Christian Ministries." Jacqueline's eyes widened as Justin explained, "My CPE Supervisor told me about FCM and their wide embrace of all people and support for all people's gifts in ministry." Jacqueline exclaimed, "Me too!" Justin asked, "What do you mean?" She replied, "I'm with FCM too! What are the chances?" As they talked about the unlikelihood of two FCM chaplains landing at the same community hospital, they realized that they were standing right next to each other on the stage during the 2018 National Assembly. They each found photos on their cell phones that confirmed it! And, so their relationship began.



2018 ASSEMBLY
JACQUELINE IN LONG BLACK SWEATER - JUSTIN IN TEAL SHIRT



TEA FOR YOUR SPIRIT

During their time together at Geisinger Holy Spirit Hospital, Justin and Jacqueline co-hosted the first ever "Tea for Your Spirit" on the Maternity/NICU Unit. "Tea for Your Spirit" is designed to create a relaxed space for staff to visit with each other, engage in reflective activities, enjoy snacks, and talk with chaplains. They also developed a group called "Sacred Space" for the Behavioral Health Inpatient Unit. "Come as you are with whatever you believe," is the motto for this all-inclusive spiritual group. Justin shared, "I love seeing patients supporting one another, claiming ownership of the space by setting up chairs, lighting battery-operated tea lights on the tables." Jacqueline added, "Every group is unique. We show up with a general program and follow the patient's and Spirit's promptings. It is a beautiful thing to experience."

Justin and Jacqueline became FCM ministry peers in 2019 and Justin presided over Jacqueline's FCM Endorsement panel. The two attended the FCM Northeast Regional Retreat at Eddy Farm last October. In March of 2020, Jacqueline accepted the position of Chaplain/Director of Pastoral Care at Claremont Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. In September of 2020, Justin celebrated his 2-year anniversary at Geisinger Holy Spirit Hospital. Although the two no longer work at the same facility, they remain ministry peers, good friends, and trusted confidants.



FUN AT EDDY FARM
NORTHEAST RETREAT



Chaplain's Corner

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by Sarah Powell, LT, CHC, USN

(The views presented in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of DoD or its components)

Greetings from Gulfport, MS! I have the privilege of being an endorsed member of the Federation of Christian Ministries since 2017. I have experience in hospital and military chaplaincy, the latter in which capacity I am currently serving. I often find myself engaged in one-on-one conversations about resiliency and thinking about what it is about *people* that helps them endure stressful situations that oftentimes are prolonged.

This year has proven to be challenging in many ways. Prolonged travel restrictions keeping us from seeing family and friends, tumultuous times, the added work stress of needing to produce on-line resources and media, not being able to meet in-person for coffee, encountering divergent views and attitudes toward social-distancing, seeking and waiting for physical healing have been several of many stressors.

I wonder what it is that has helped you get through this time. I know for me it has been helpful to remember my roots—from where it is that I've come. Isaiah's words for a discouraged people during the difficult time of exile, "Look to the rock from which you were hewn," have been helpful for me. The rock for me is God: my spirituality and all the people and events that have helped shape me. God in providence has led me to where I am, in John Newton's famous words, "through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come," I know that the same grace that has brought me this far will continue to guide my life and path. This too shall pass. God hasn't brought me this far to leave me here. I will get through *this* too.

Through this time, which in many ways has been a pause, I became profoundly and acutely aware of my need for connection. To meet that need, I began to meet weekly with a spiritual director as well as to rekindle several friendships that had gone uncultivated due to my pace of life. Intentionally connecting with my spiritual director as well as several friends and family members, even if over FaceTime, phone, and Zoom conversations, proved to remind me that we truly are "in this together." The "alone" factor is truly an illusion—that illusory thought that can become our default that says, "I am in this all alone" and "There is no one who understands." I quickly realized that everyone is carrying their own cross, their own burden. Burdens of under-employment, a traumatic injury, postpartum depression, the death of a loved one, loneliness, etc. It is in the sharing, the knowing, the loving and the praying that we become stronger and more resilient together.

As I seek to be a connector for those of all ages in my midst, one thing is certain, and that is our need for connection with *one another*. It is in the isolation that one's path becomes dark and unbearable—even to the point of ending it all. Yet, it is through meaningful conversation and checking in with *people* where light, health, wholeness, and hope brighten the human spirit, making each of us better and more resilient.



THE HISTORIC FRIENDSHIP OAK TREE IS LOCATED ON THE FRONT LAWN OF THE SOUTHERN MISS GULF COAST CAMPUS IN LONG BEACH. THE FRIENDSHIP OAK RECENTLY SURVIVED HURRICANE KATRINA, ANOTHER IN A LONG STRING OF HURRICANES THAT HAVE ROCKED THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST.

ON THE BEACHFRONT CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST (FORMERLY KNOWN AS GULF PARK), OVERLOOKING THE GULF OF MEXICO, IS A MAGNIFICENT LIVE OAK TREE 500-PLUS YEARS OLD. THIS OAK TREE IS A WONDERFUL PLACE FOR MEDITATING ON ITS STEADFAST PRESENCE AND ENDURANCE THROUGH CENTURIES OF STRESS.

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Chaplain's Corner

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For each issue, I reach out to members who have indicated their interest in submitting material that is of spiritual interest to our membership. Grant Fifield submitted this prayer that he "wrote for [his] hospice team relating hospice to racial unrest and injustice" in these challenging times. I am happy to share this prayer with you all.

Tom Cruse, Newsletter Editor

"Creator, God, Higher Power, today we come before you in collective prayer as the events of this week, month, year, weigh heavily on our hearts and minds.

We in hospice are not new to death and dying, yet we feel the burden of our national family, like many families we work with, unconsolable...unprepared with...unfinished business.

Today, we ask that you give us a peace that passeth understanding and the calm assurance that this too shall pass. Give us focus and freedom to live today to our fullest. Amen"

© 2020 by Grant Fifield, FCM Member & Chaplain



Northeast Region

CARL YUSAVITZ, VICE PRESIDENT

Northeast Region Report

One of our regional members, **Chaplain Terra Epps**, was recognized for her outstanding pastoral work during the on-going Covid-19 pandemic by her hospital, The University of Maryland Medical Center. Here is an excerpt of what Terra wrote on the hospital website:

"Each day continues to bring challenges, new learnings, adjustments, and varied emotions. Yet, I strive to maintain gratitude. I am grateful to work for an institution that values the essential nature of the professional healthcare chaplain. I am grateful that I can continue to support patients, families, and staff, whether it is over the phone, via secure Zoom video conferencing, from our newly developed UMMC pastoral care Facebook group, or during in-person visits. I am grateful for the challenge and space to continue to develop innovative ways of providing spiritual care in times of such uncertainty, anxiety, grief, and loss."



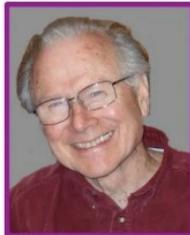
Our region is now meeting via Zoom every month. On September, 13 of us participated in a workshop on "Self-care during Covid-19." The workshop ended with these suggestions:

- > Look upstream, rather than downstream (Respond, rather than react)
- > Take fuller charge of the need for intentional balance in your life (Live the Serenity Prayer)
- > Set limits in what you will do and what you will not do at work (Remember to say 'no' to some things in order to say a deeper 'yes' to other things)
- > Work at knowing yourself better, however that happens best for you (Therapy, Spiritual Direction, or Peer Support)
- > Exercise more and eat well



On October 10th, we began a 3-part series on marriage: theology, prep, and counseling. Our first presenter was the **Rev. Dr. Shanon Sterringer**, ARCWP. Shanon is commissioned member of FCM, ordained priest, and the pastor of The Community of St. Hildegard (<https://hildegardhaus.com>) in Fairport Harbor, Ohio. She is also a professor at the People's Catholic Seminary (<https://pcseminary.org>). Previously, Sharon has led marriage prep for the Cleveland Diocese.

Grounded in feminist/relational theology, Shanon presented material on the history and theology of marriage as a contract and a sacrament. She also introduced us to St. Hildegard of Bingen's unique core value of "viriditas," (greening power that integrates body, mind, and spirit). Feedback was very positive and we are so grateful to have Shanon as a colleague in FCM and for her generosity in "crossing" FCM regional lines!



On November 14th our presenter will be **Thomas Quinn**, former president of FCM and psychotherapist, who will help us with the psychological dynamics that goes into marriage prep and marriage counseling. Tom has been a commissioned member of FCM for many, many, years.



On December 12th our presenter will be FCM member **John Haag**, who will help participants share their experience of doing marriage prep and counseling and open a discussion on the future of marriage. John is a long-time commissioned member of FCM.





Southern Region

DIANE DOUGHERTY, VICE PRESIDENT

New Members - Welcome

Jill Striebinger, St. Helena Island, NC. Jill is a trained Reiki Teacher and Practitioner, a Roman Catholic by upbringing, a trained Special Needs Family Peer Advocate (specifically autism). She is participating in ongoing training by People's Catholic Seminary and has 20 years plus professional experience leading and facilitating teams. Jill has come to FCM seeking a community that is inclusive and affirming.

Phillip Crenshaw, East Point, GA. Phillip Crenshaw was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia and lives in East Point. He has been with Harbor Grace Hospice currently for two years. He is looking forward to talking and hopefully meeting the rest of his fellow FCM Members!

Kathleen Blank Riether, Alexandria, VA. Kathleen is completing a training program in Spirituality and Pastoral ministry with the Eastern Region of Roman Catholic Women Priests. She has been a church administrator and spiritual leader for over 15 years and was recently ordained in the organization. She belongs to *Communitas*-a Roman Catholic Eucharistic Community.

During the Time of Covid 19, members of the Southern Region have gathered a collection: Prayers, Songs and Rituals for a Grieving Nation

This is a resource for ministers to use as over 220K have died due to Covid 19. It is meant to be a support for a grieving nation, grieving families and caretakers. Contact Rev. Diane Dougherty, doughertyadd@gmail.com if you would like a copy. In a special way, we remember families, caretakers and all who are grieving.

"Blessing the Distance"

from Circle of Grace: Jan Richardson

"It is a mystery to me
how as the distance
between us grows,
the larger this blessing
becomes,
as if the shape of it
depends on absence,
as if it finds its form
not by what
it can cling to
but by the space
that arcs between us."



Great Lakes Region

SHANNON QUEENAN, VICE PRESIDENT

In the last newsletter, we announced the impending commissioning of Jessica Tinkham and Betsy Hamm. Below are their reflections and a photo from each ceremony. Several other things are happening in the Great Lakes. I have had the joy to meet many people in our region via the phone. Our membership is diverse and varied in interest and work. As a way to connect, our region agreed to trial a quarterly zoom meeting. The first one is Tuesday, October 27th @ 7:30 for no more than an hour. The second will be scheduled for late January.

It has come to my attention that some people are struggling with the ministerial colleague aspect of FCM. If you need some assistance brain storming or connecting, please call me at 502-568-2174.



Photo: Jessica Tinkham pictured with a friend during her commissioning ceremony.



Photo: Betsy Hamm with her spouse and son during her commissioning ceremony

My name is Jessica Joy Tinkham, and I'm from Kettering, OH. I was called into ministry in 2014. I started my journey at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH and graduated in May 2019 with a Master of Divinity degree. During that time of study, I was blessed with a work study opportunity as a student chaplain at the Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center. I knew in that experience that God had been calling me into healthcare chaplaincy. I earned my first units of CPE training at Trinity Community at Beavercreek (Ohio). I am currently in the CPE residency program at Kettering Medical Center. I plan to apply for FCM endorsement and then to becoming a board-certified chaplain after I complete this program. My close friends and family joined me in a small commissioning service at my home church.

I am Betsy Hamm from Medina, Ohio. I completed my Master of Divinity through Loyola University Chicago and have felt called to chaplaincy since I took my first unit of CPE as part of my curriculum. I currently work at MetroHealth Medical Center in Cleveland where I am a Staff Chaplain. I never thought I would say I love my work but I really do because, as the county hospital, it allows me the opportunity to care for "the least of these." I also work with, and am supported by, three wonderful colleagues - Jim, Sandie, and Mulba - who joined me for my nice, small, COVID-19 commissioning at my home. Along with my husband Paul, son John, brother Bob, sister-in-law Heidi, and Shannon we enjoyed a gorgeous day on our deck overlooking our backyard and creek. For me, it was a much-needed emphasis on God's creation and included those who have been with me on my journey, including our three dogs. I was drawn to the inclusive emphasis of FCM and look forward to being involved in some aspect. I hope my next FCM step will be endorsement.

Being commissioned, serving as a minister in any capacity is all about saying YES! In these days of chaos, division, and plague, it can be easy to lose sight of the mission we are called to live and share. This is a brief excerpt from the preacher, Jack Jezreel at our church in late September:

"The good news in this parable and the invitation that Jesus is offering is simple: we can change our minds. We can have a change of heart. Like the second child, who first said "no," we are still invited to a "yes." And that "yes" will still change everything. This "no" to "yes" is powerfully chronicled in the most popular Christian hymn ever written. "Amazing Grace," written by a former slave ship captain, speaks to movement from "no" to "yes." John Newton, who at one time was selling human beings, makes his way to "yes," recognizes his blindness, and becomes the spiritual advisor to William Wilberforce, who would be remembered in history as the man most responsible for ending the slave trade in Great Britain. "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound, that saved a wretch like me. I was once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see." I once said no, but now say yes. And that yes changed my life."

May we all remind each other as needed, that this Amazing Grace is always inviting us in to YES!



Mts. & Plains Region

CONNER SIMMS, VICE PRESIDENT



Greetings FCM Community,

I am writing this article on behalf of **Conner Simms**. Conner has been deployed to the Middle East through next February. He wrote me to share that he is settled in at his base. The start of the deployment has not gone smoothly. One of his new Chaplain colleagues was placed in quarantine following an outbreak that happened the week of October the 7th. Because of this chaplain's test results, the entire Chapel team has been placed on quarantine and the chapel will be temporarily shut down. Yes, Conner is on quarantine. There is a real need for us to pray for Conner, this group of Chaplains and other soldiers who are in quarantine and for the spiritual health of this troop.

Whether Conner is deployed or serving at home in Minneapolis, Minnesota, he welcomes support from fellow FCM members in the Mountains and Plains Region. When we are approached by people who are interested in membership, commissioning, and endorsement by FCM, Conner would love to have a couple members in good standings to work with us to meet with the individual(s) and move the process forward for the candidates. So, I ask you in the Mountains and Plains to prayerfully consider volunteering to work with us and with Conner to fill this void. I know that I am personally available to work with you as you work to discern if you are able to say yes to this task. If you are interested in providing support to the Mountains and Plains Region, please reach out to me by email at president@FCMmail.org. I would be pleased to hear from you.

Conner would like to say a thank-you to Diane (VP of the Southern Region) and Tracy (VP of the Pacific Region) who have been working with our candidates for membership, commissioning and endorsement. They have truly been a blessing by shouldering this responsibility for Conner and he appreciates them.

**Let us remember to pray for our troops on deployment,
For our chaplains on quarantine, for their safety, health and life giving ministry,
For their families which are longing for the one who they love,
For the world, the United States that we may have a vaccine against COVID-19. Amen.**

Thank You! Grace and Peace,

Rev. Ronald G. Davis on behalf of
Rev. Conner Simms,
Mountains and Plains VP



**St. Louis Meeting - Saturday, November 7, 2020 - at 1:00 p.m.
Marybeth McBryan's home, 3914 Burgen, St. Louis, MO 63116**

RSVP Phone: 314-277-3212 Email: mbmcpriest@yahoo.com

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR A MASK!



Pacific Region

TRACY PETERSON, VICE PRESIDENT

The Pacific Region would like to welcome two new members to FCM: **Nina Goulet** in Arizona and **Elias Burgos** in California. Welcome aboard and we look forward to getting to know you both better.

We just recently had a regional Zoom meeting at the beginning of October, we will be having the next one the first Saturday in December. These are just times for us to gather and share what's going on in our lives, laugh at the crazy things we are dealing with and pray for each other. I'll send out an email when we get closer to the date to remind you all of the meeting.

I'm also excited to announce that **Rev. Dan Windham** will be acting as the Arizona Commissioning Rep, and **Rev. Puanani Lalakea** will be acting as the Hawaii Commissioning Rep. I'm still looking for someone who can act as the Commissioning Rep for Washington/Oregon, Northern California and Southern California. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact me at pacificvp@fcmmail.org.

I just want to add a friendly reminder that if you want to be commissioned in February, 2021, you need to meet the deadline of **January 4, 2021**. Please let me know by emailing me at Pacificvp@fcmmail.org and I'll send you a checklist and walk you through the process.

And finally, I leave you with the Prayer of St. Francis:

Peace Prayer of
Saint Francis

"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
 Where there is hatred,
 let me sow love;
 where there is injury, pardon;
 where there is doubt, faith;
 where there is despair, hope;
 where there is darkness, light;
 where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
 to be consoled as to console,
 not so much to be understood as to understand,
 not so much to be loved, as to love.
 For it is in giving that we receive,
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 and it is in dying that we awake to eternal life."



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.

FCM Central Office

COORDINATORS



Carolyn Horvath & Tom Leonhardt
Email: centraloffice@FCMmail.org
NEW PHONE NU. 216.571.7698
1709 W. 69th. St., #1
Cleveland, Ohio 44102-2957
Phone:

FCM Website: www.federationofchristianministries.org

FCM Blog: fcmblog.org

FCM Registry: 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 - 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

Inquiries may be made by email at: specmin@FCMmail.org

GLOBAL MINISTRIES UNIVERSITY

GMU offers degree completion programs, certificates, a Celebrant Training Program, and individual courses online. FCM members are eligible for a 5% discount on degree programs. **For more information, visit the web site:** www.globalministriesuniversity.org
Email: info@globalministriesuniversity.org
Phone: 866 419 8020 toll-free

FCM Circle of Directors

Chairperson: Christy Howard-Steele

Phone: 708.285.5845 | Email: chairperson@FCMmail.org

President: Ronald Davis

Phone: 513.262.2210 | Email: president@FCMmail.org

Treasurer: Heidi A. Tierney

Phone: 908.217.8981 | Email: treasurer@FCMmail.org

Secretary: Sarah Lindberg

Phone: 712.249.3410 | Email: secretary@FCMmail.org

Chair, Commissioning Committee: Anthony Ercolano

Phone: 718.461.7128 | Email: commissioningchair@FCMmail.org

Co-Chairs, Specialized Ministries:

Jeanne Hale Phone: 919.350.7853

Peter Strening Phone: 970.817.1409

Email: specmin@FCMmail.org

Chair, Faith Communities:

Marita Grudzen Phone: 408.674.0343

Email: faithcommunity@FCMmail.org

REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENTS

Pacific: Tracy Peterson

Phone: 602.448.5971 | Email: pacificvp@FCMmail.org

Mountains & Plains: Conner Simms

Phone: 847.204.8994 | Email: mts_plainsvp@FCMmail.org

Great Lakes: Shannon Queenan

Phone: 502.568.2174 | Email: greatlakesvp@FCMmail.org

Southern: Diane Dougherty

Phone: 678.918.1945 | Email: southernvp@FCMmail.org

Northeast: Carl Yusavitz

Phone: 215.453.5170 | Email: northeastvp@FCMmail.org

FCM ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

Ethics Committee: Joseph Ruane

Phone: 215.387.7998 Email: j.ruane@uscience.edu

Prayer Support Leader/Coordinator: Anthony Capone

Prayer support button on the website or:

Email: prayersupport@FCMmail.org

FCM Communications: Antoinette Marold

Email: communication@FCMmail.org

FCM Realm: Amy Simpson-Bennethum

Email: connect@FCMmail.org