

FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES



NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

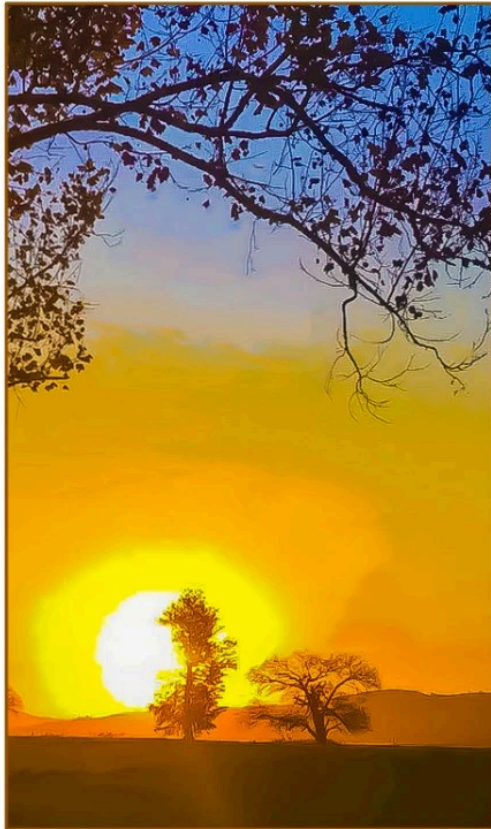
VOL. 54 NUMBER 5

PHOTO © RODNEY A. MORROW

# FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

September/October 2020 VOL. 54 NO. 5

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© **SUNSET IN AFRICA**  
BY RODNEY A. MORROW, FCM

This photo was taken in Africa in 2017 on a trip while Rodney was with Drew Seminary.

Rodney used his photographs while leading a meditation during the FCM Thursday evening prayer service.

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# IT'S TIME TO RENEW

CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE AND AMY SIMPSON BENNETHUM

Our renewal time for **2021** begins on **September 1 and runs through November 30, 2020**. Renewal rates are the same as last year with Early bird renewal fees in effect for the months of September and October and a slightly higher fee in effect beginning November 1, 2020. Once again, we are renewing memberships electronically using FCM's Realm software package. Remember your current 2020 membership does not end until December 31, 2020. However to avoid yearend busyness, the renewal period begins in September.

Please, please, please if you have lost income or are having health challenges during this unprecedented time, please contact your Regional Vice President. It is our policy and practice to not deny members renewal because of financial hardships. You will still need to complete your annual report within the established time frame to maintain your membership status.

**Ministry Listing:** When you renew, you are entitled to a free website listing of your ministry under three of the website's listed categories. Check up to three (3) categories. You will be listed by state, city, name, phone number, email address and personal website if you have one.

**To renew your membership for January 01, 2021 to December 31, 2021:** Choose **one** of the following two convenient methods. **Your Commissioning and/or Endorsement faculties end December 31, 2020, if you do not renew.**

**\*Please note** in order to renew this year, you need to sign into your profile on Realm. If you have previously signed in and created your unique password, you can just follow the steps below. **If you have not yet done this step, reach out to the Realm Administrator (Amy Simpson at [connect@FCMmail.org](mailto:connect@FCMmail.org)), the Chairperson (Christy Howard-Steele at [chairperson@fcmmail.org](mailto:chairperson@fcmmail.org) or the Vice President of your region, and they will be happy to send you an email link to get you started.)**

## Renew from your Realm Profile Account

- go to [www.onrealm.org](http://www.onrealm.org)
- log into your Realm profile using your email address and a password you created
- from your profile page, go to the Community Page, click "Events"
- click on 2021 Membership Renewal
- type your name in the "Add Registrant" box
- select the type of membership you are renewing (general, commissioned, commissioned and endorsed, faith community)
- answer all the questions that follow
- pay the registration fee (credit card, debit card, or electronic check)

## Renew from the FCM website

- go to [www.FederationofChristianministries.org](http://www.FederationofChristianministries.org)
- from the homepage, click on the blue "FCM Members Only Realm" tab
- log into your Realm profile using your email address and a password you created
- from your profile page, go to the Community Page, click "Events"
- click on 2021 Membership Renewal
- type your name in the "Add Registrant" box
- select the type of membership you are renewing (general, commissioned, commissioned and endorsed, faith community)
- answer all the questions that follow
- pay the registration fee (credit card, debit card, or electronic check)

Thank you and blessings for your commitment to ministry and to FCM.



RON DAVIS

# PRESIDENT

## FCM Values Inclusiveness

**Augustine** (354 - 430 AD) "Woman was merely man's helpmate, a function which pertains to her alone. She is not the image of God but as far as man is concerned, he is by himself the image of God."

**Pope Gregory I** (540 - 604 AD) "Nothing is so powerful in drawing the spirit of a man downwards as the caresses of a woman."

**Martin Luther** (1483 - 1546 AD) "Women should stay at home, keep house and bear children. If a woman dies from childbearing, let her die. That is all she is here for."

**John Calvin** (1509 - 1564 AD) "The word and works of God is quite clear, that women were made either to be wives or prostitutes."

**John Knox** (1513 - 1572 AD) "Woman was made for only one reason, to serve and obey man."

**John Wesley** (1703 - 1791 AD) "Wife: Be content to be insignificant. What loss would it be to God or man had you never been born."

**Southern Baptist Convention** (2000) "While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture."

These quotes were spoken by the leaders/founders of our major denominations and faith traditions. <sup>1</sup> Do you see your faith tradition's principles in these statements? Can you hear the message that has been echoed in the church of your heritage? One very clear message has been spoken about women in all of these statements and if I had the space, I could offer you many other parallel statements which shaped the treatment of women in our churches and throughout the American society. Take time to ponder this truth.

During this season of COVID-19, specifically the death of George Floyd, I have become mindful about how the church has used Scripture to advocate for slavery, treat ethnic peoples as less than humans, devalue women, offer unwelcoming practices towards the immigrants, and disregard the LGBTQ+ community. An aspect of the sad truth is that the church has used sacred texts to give less value to others as the church has championed the "isms" of racism, sexism, and heterosexism. These people who have been "othered" by the church have a common shared experience of mistreatment in the church and in this land that we call America.

On this day, I would like to remind you that the Federation of Christian Ministries is reimagining religion. We are striving to be that spiritual people who are working to fully unite ourselves with God and with **all** persons. We question and grieve aspects of the history that we share. We are listening to those hurt in the church and across this land. We are intentionally working to walk better today. We hope to be better in all of our tomorrows. My prayer is that when people look back on the Federation of Christian Ministries over time, we will look different and be a bright spot of hope in the world. We long to be that kind of church which is known for having devotion and love towards God and towards one another, equally and justly.

<sup>1</sup> Professor Miguel A. De La Torre is my source for these quotes. He is currently Professor of Social Ethics and Latinx Studies at the Iliff School of Theology, Denver CO.



CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE

# CHAIRPERSON

## Summary Report of the July 2020 Circle Meeting

For the first time, rather than an in-person gathering for the semi-annual Circle Meeting, FCM's Circle of Directors met via zoom. Though accommodating the different time zones was a bit of a challenge and we missed the opportunity to commune with each other during meal time and after the meeting, we were quite productive if I do say so myself. Below is a summary of highlighted actions from the meeting:

- Approved the commissioning of 34 candidates
- Approved the endorsement of 10 candidates
- Approved the budget for 2021
- Gatherings: Given the current level of uncertainty associated with the pandemic, decided to postpone an in-person assembly until 2022.
  - We may have in-person regional gatherings in 2021 if safe and permitted.
  - We will continue to have virtual gatherings beginning in January 2021. *If you would like to be on a committee to plan these gatherings, please contact me at [chairperson@fcmmail.org](mailto:chairperson@fcmmail.org).*
- Approved the creation of the new non-Circle position of Regional Commissioning Liaison. *See article by Commissioning Chair, Anthony Ercolano.*
- Made the following appointments for the term July 2020 – July 2023
  - Re-appointed Heidi Tierney as Treasurer
  - Re-appointed Joe Ruane as Chair, Ethics Committee
  - Appointed William McDonough to the Ethics Committee. We are seeking a person of color and/or female to add more diversity to the committee. *If you have a background in Ethics and are interested in being on this committee, please contact me at [chairperson@fcmmail.org](mailto:chairperson@fcmmail.org).*
  - Appointed Thomas Cusack and Cassandra Wood to the Endowment Committee
- Approved minor revisions to the by-laws. The revisions clarified:
  - The voting process for new members (e.g. you have to be a member when the ballots are distributed in order to vote)
  - Contractors are accountable to FCM's Circle of Directors and report to the Executive Committee
- Near the end of the Circle Meeting, Circle members spent time expressing their appreciation for the gifts, service, and presence of Kathy Bean, Tom Cusack, and Ron Davis who are transitioning to new roles in FCM. A plant, an E-card signed by the Circle and others with whom they had worked, and certificates of service were delivered to each one.
- The next semi-annual meeting of the Circle of Directors will again be a virtual meeting, February 4 – 6, 2021.

September/October 2020

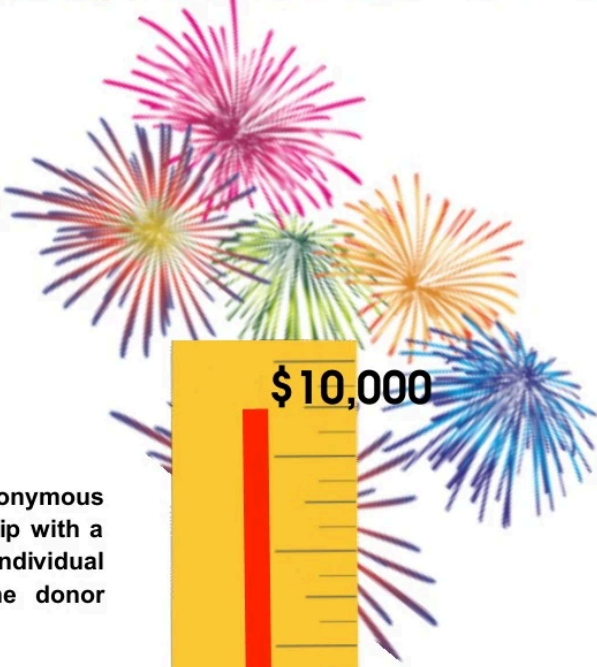
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FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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# WE REACHED OUR MATCH GOAL

## THANK YOU!



The FCM Endowment Committee had an anonymous donor who challenged the FCM membership with a \$10,000.00 match grant. We had to match individual donations equaling the \$10,000, then the donor would donate the match.

Thanks to you....We did it!





# ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT

The FCM Endowment Fund is here to provide us with financial security for the future. As the FCM has expanded and matured as an organization, we have recognized the need to provide for our long-term financial stability through the establishment of a permanent endowment. As stated in our policy, "The Permanent Endowment Fund the Federation of Christian Ministries" (February 2018) has the following purpose:

**"The purpose of the Fund is to enable FCM members, organizations, and friends to express their commitment to Christ through gifts that will support in perpetuity the inclusive and ecumenical missions and programs of FCM according to the guidelines appearing later in this document."**

(The entire Endowment Fund Policy can be found on the FCM Website)

We are honored to have the following individuals serving on the Endowment Committee.



CASSANDRA L. WOOD   ANTHONY ERCOLANO   GRAYCE LANE   JIM VERRECCHIA   TOM CUSACK   TOM STRICKER

**Cassandra L. Wood** earned her law degree from the University of Maryland Law School in 1991. In 2015, she earned a master's degree in Christian Ministry (Global Studies) from Liberty University. From 2016-2019, through chaplaincy internships and residencies with hospitals and hospices in Maryland and Florida, she earned six (6) units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). Currently, she works as a hospice chaplain in Florida. Since 2018, Cassandra has been an ordained and commissioned member of the Federation of Christian Ministries (FCM). Cassandra will contribute her legal knowledge of planned and charitable giving as it relates to non-profit organizations to the Endowment Committee.

**Anthony S. Ercolano** was ordained for the Diocese of Brooklyn, NY, in 1973. He served as an Associate Pastor in four large, urban parishes, as well as a spiritual director of an independent Catholic High School over 33 years of priestly ministry. He earned a Doctor of Ministry degree with a focus on Urban Ministry from New York Theological Seminary in 2002. He married Margaret in 2006 and then worked for two metropolitan hospital systems over the course of 13 years as a senior writer for development, marketing, and public affairs. Anthony was commissioned by FCM in 2006 and presently serves as Commissioning Chair on the Circle. He is one of the two Circle members on the Endowment Committee.

**Grayce Lane** earned her MDiv at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in May 2004, and was ordained in the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) in October 2004. She served alongside her pastor-husband, Vincent, in the AMEC in several locations in Florida and in Chicago, IL. Grayce has been a chaplain for over ten years, having completed two CPE residencies at Tampa General Hospital and UnityPoint Health-Des Moines. She is currently a Certified Educator Candidate pursuing her certification as a Chaplain Educator through the ACPE. Grayce was endorsed and commissioned with the Federation of Christian Ministries in 2015. She and Vincent have co-pastored a house church, Oasis, for the last five years. Grayce serves as a pool chaplain for BayCare Health System-St. Joseph's Hospital South in Riverview, FL.

## ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT

**Jim Verrecchia** has an extensive career and experience in Church administration and nonprofit communities. After serving as a priest for 17 years, he married and transitioned to be a Parish Administrator for an Episcopal congregation. Following this role, Jim began work with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Georgia, serving as the Director of Support Programs, Director of Operations and later as the Director of Development. After leaving St. Vincent de Paul, Jim began consulting work and served as a Fundraising/ Development Consultant with the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Following an interim role as Executive Director of the Cobb Community Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse, Jim became the Executive Director of Atlanta Master Chorale in 2017. An FCM ordained minister, Jim is also a licensed member of the Fellowship of Christian Ministers.

**Tom Cusack** recently completed six years on the FCM Circle of Directors as President. He joined FCM in 2000 and is a commissioned member. He served two three-year terms as FCM's Treasurer and stayed on the Circle until he became president in 2014. In his mid-twenties, after a short time as a Catholic priest in Iowa, Tom married and joined the insurance business. He spent 15 years in Prudential's Newark, New Jersey home office in agent training work and as a compliance manager. The bulk of his career, 26 additional years, was as an insurance agent and financial planner. He served on the board of a private school for five years. In addition to 60 graduate hours of theology and scripture study he holds a master's degree in American History from Notre Dame, and he holds several insurance industry designations.

**Tom Stricker** was ordained for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati in 1980 and served as an associate pastor at St. Luke and then in 1984 as pastor for Resurrection Church till 1995. He was the Program Manager of DePaul Center, a 38-room transitional housing program for homeless men. As program manager he was responsible for the program itself and for raising the funding for the program. Tom served as FCM's Great Lakes Region Vice-President for two terms and as FCM Chairperson for two terms. He was on the team that developed the policy for the FCM Endowment policy and program.

### Donate to the FCM Endowment Fund

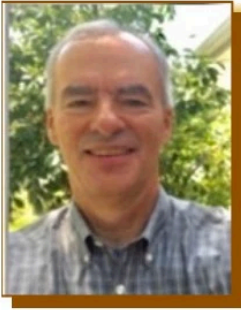
Go to the [FCM website www.federationofchristianministries.org](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org) or go to your personal account on [Realm www.onrealm.org](http://www.onrealm.org) and make your donation.

1. Sign in to [Realm](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

**No donation is too small.**







# FCM NATIONAL VIRTUAL MINI-ASSEMBLY

PETER STRENING



## Post Traumatic Growth Tools for Spiritual Care

*Finding personal strength, closer relationships, greater appreciation for life, new possibilities, and spiritual development after trauma.*

*--presented by  
Beth Reece, MDiv, BCC  
Manager, Spiritual Care, Shirley Ryan AbilityLab*



On Saturday, July 18 the FCM community celebrated a “virtual” gathering of members from throughout all of our regions. This virtual gathering was created in response to the postponement of the 2020 National Assembly.

Chaplain Beth Reece, an FCM Endorsed member and the Manager of Spiritual Care at the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab in Chicago, shared a presentation on “Post-Traumatic Growth”. Post-traumatic growth is an area of special interest and research for Beth. Her presentation drew on her extensive experience as a chaplain in the physical rehabilitation context, as well as on her research. In light of the COVID and racial injustice pandemics, which are an ongoing source of trauma, Beth’s presentation was especially timely, helpful and inspiring. Of particular note was Beth’s emphasis on the important role of community support in fostering growth and healing after the experience of trauma.

Over 100 FCM members registered for the presentation, with just under that number attending. Beth’s presentation was followed by real-time feedback, questions and the sharing of experiences by many of those in attendance. Though virtual in nature, it was a time of real engagement by the FCM membership. After a break, virtual regional meetings were offered, facilitated by our regional Vice-Presidents.

A special “THANK YOU” to Beth from FCM for sharing her wisdom with all of us, and creating this occasion for community. And, gratitude to each member of FCM who participated in the “Mini-Assembly”.

## Five distinct areas of positive change a result of trauma:

1. Increased inner strength

2. An openness to new possibilities in life

3. Closer and often deeper relationships with friends and families

4. An enhanced appreciation for life

5. A stronger sense of spirituality

“OUR WORD is always a word for others. Words need to be heard. When we give words to what we are living, these words need to be received and responded to. A speaker needs a listener. A writer needs a reader. Who are the listeners?” — Henri Nouwen



The spiral of spiritual growth



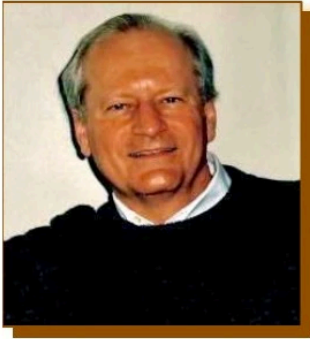
## TOM CUSACK SENT-OFF IN GRAND STYLE

During the Mini-Assembly “break” on Saturday, FCM members showered **Tom Cusack** with expressions of appreciation for his 13 years of service on the Circle of Directors. Tom was collaboratively presented with a glass plaque.

Many FCM members, of short and long tenure, shared words of appreciation, poems, or stories of their interactions with Tom. Tom was duly “inducted” into the Past Presidents’ Club and there was even a report of an intercept of a transmission between Princess Leia and Yoda.



Surprise presentation by Ginny Cusack



# VOLUNTEERS

ANTHONY ERCOLANO - COMMISSIONING CHAIR



## New FCM Regional Position: Commissioning Liaison

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

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

### They need help.

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

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

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

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

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



# JOHN LEWIS' CALL TO ORDINARY PEOPLE

Responding to FCM's call to empower and nurture those inspired for inclusive ministries that will transform society, and

in memory of John L. Lewis,



We encourage all members to respond to John Lewis' clear and consistent mandate to be a force in our time, **to be good and necessary troublemakers.** Grasping the torch where he left off, let us become a bridge that gets out the **VOTE.**

## Social Vision Committee

Thomas Cusack  
Diane Dougherty  
Shelley Gilchrist  
Marita Grudzen  
Tress Reed  
John Wentland





# FCM COMMUNICATIONS

ANTOINETTE MAROLD

FCM communicates with members by the following applications: **Constant Contact, Realm, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Blog, LinkedIn, Zoom, and our Website.**

We use **Constant Contact** to send information and news to members only. Newsletters, announcements, FCM nominations and elections the Circle of Directors.

**Realm** is database and information center for FCM members. Please keep your profile up to date. You will need **Realm** access to apply for commissioning & endorsement, renew your membership by completing your year-end report and paying your dues, and registering for events. You will also receive important emails via **Realm**. A membership directory is available to members on **Realm**.

**Facebook** is our face to the world. Comments from the Executive and Social Vision committees are posted as well as our newsletter and blog links. We could use your help to keep us growing on Facebook. First, Like our page. Second, please share the FCM page with your friends and/or on your page.

**Twitter and Instagram** are shorter versions of what is posted on Facebook.

If you would like to write an article for the **FCM Blog** please send it to me for posting at [communication@fcmmail.org](mailto:communication@fcmmail.org). You can send photos to enhance the article as well.

FCM also has a **LinkedIn** site for members only.

**Zoom** If you were not familiar with Zoom before the Covid-19 virus I am sure that you are now. It is probably the most used connection tool of these times. FCM has a wonderful meditation prayer hour every Thursday evening on Zoom. Watch your Realm email for the link or email Prayer Service Coordinator, Anthony Capone at [prayersupport@FCMmail.org](mailto:prayersupport@FCMmail.org).

The Circle of Directors meeting and a Virtual Assembly were held on Zoom in July. Many of the Commissioning ceremonies are being held on Zoom as well.

Our **FCM website** [www.federationofchristianministries.org](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org) is the place that holds information that would be of interest for both members, prospective members and the general public who are seeking the service of ministers.

Please keep in mind that the FCM also has a registry for **Baptisms, Weddings, and Holy Unions**. If you are an FCM member who is celebrant at a **Baptism, you must register the Baptism** with FCM at [fcmregistry.org](http://fcmregistry.org). The FCM Central Office also has certificates for Baptisms for a small fee.

I know that we are spending a great deal of time in front of our computers and phones trying to keep connected but I think it is worth it for now. If you would like to reach me, we can also connect by phone. Stay safe, wear your mask, and keep your distance. Namaste



**Baptism**

**ATTENTION**

All FCM members who preside at BAPTISMS  
 You are required to register the Baptism with the FCM Registry Office  
 Register the Baptism at [fcmregistry.org](http://fcmregistry.org)

Questions? Please email [registry@FCMmail.org](mailto:registry@FCMmail.org) Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

# CHAPLAINS CORNER

## CHAPLAINS REFLECT ON THE COVID-19 CRISIS



**Moments in this pandemic** - Lead Hospital Chaplain Reverend Hailey O'Keif, FCM

During this time of Covid-19, the hospital cannot allow any religious leaders and only a few family members in to see a patient. As a hospital chaplain, my role is to guide the dying toward a peaceful transition and to help the families through their personal grief processes; to witness and honor the great pain of a staggering loss. The gentle touch on a shoulder, holding the hand of a dying patient as they slip gently from earth, or giving a warm comforting hug for a family member is now shielded by an N95 mask, surgical gloved hands, gowns, and the face shield. Because of Covid-19 some members of a family cannot even be there to say goodbye.

One hospital chaplain mentioned that "as imperfect humans we rise and we offer what we can through whatever means we can." The doctors and nurses care for bodies; I became a hospital chaplain to care for the mind and spirit of a patient, and their families, or the hospital staff, to help usher people through moments of shock, moments of grief and try to help them make sense of some of the worst moments of their lives.

In an interview with Chaplain Adler from the University of Michigan Hospital, Adler mentioned "What we do is much more than to become religious experts; we use our ability to encounter somebody with curiosity, with a sense of wonder with an eagerness to say 'So tell me, how is it that you make sense of everything that's happening?'" Chaplains are not hired to proselytize but we have all learned and studied many different religions and faith-based practices in order to communicate with a family, to provide a prayer if requested in the language they are familiar with. "Our job" says The Reverend Jill Zimmer, a chaplain at Saint Thomas West in Nashville, "is to always be there at the worst thing." During my rounding in the hospital I will often ask a family member or patient "What brings you meaning in life?" or "Tell me about a time in your life that was amazing?" I will rarely bring up religion unless someone asks for prayer or I am asked what my religious background is. My goal is not based on an agenda to a preconceived notion of how a patient will be spiritually saved. I genuinely am interested in the person, who they are, how their life or lives are. And I give the most attention to being present and simple listening, allowing a patient or family member to share their life story. By this, the family or patient become focused on their story, not their illness.

Doctors and nurses talk to patients about their illness. I want to hear about their life outside the hospital. I will pull a chair or stool close and just listen. Covid-19 has changed the dynamics of being able to read a person's face. Wearing a mask is difficult to talk through but, even if I have gloved hands, I can still hold someone's hand, and even if I have to wear scrubs and a gown, a N95 mask and shield and keep my distance, I can still be present. For that reason, just being present is worthy, and is important to the patient just knowing I am there. Chaplains are often the person sitting by or standing near as a patient draws their final breath. Sending a condolence card or talking to the patient's family

# CHAPLAINS CORNER

## CHAPLAINS REFLECT ON THE COVID-19 CRISIS



Reflections on chaplaincy ministry during Covid - Chaplain Ron Cyktor, BCC

Last week at the end of my shift I was walking back to my car as I always do. I was focused on getting to my vehicle as quickly as possible as it had been a busy shift, walking hastily oblivious to my surroundings, with the mission to get home and comfortably in bed. As I was walking, I thankfully looked up, and noticed about thirty feet in the distance an unrecognizable fur object heading directly towards me. I stopped dead in my tracks, then the animal stopped dead in its tracks, and next this furry creature decided to again advance towards me. At first glance it looked like a skunk (skunks are known to be present in that portion of the parking lot), and my immediate reaction was to back up so that I could avoid having to bathe in tomato juice that night.

However, this animal was determined to be a new-found friend and continued advancing towards me in my direction. Once the animal walked underneath a light in the parking lot, I could easily see that it was a porcupine, and I breathed a sigh of relief knowing that in my mind it was somewhat less of a hazard than a skunk. The porcupine was interested in this chaplain until I started my vehicle and then it scurried off in a different direction. I left the parking lot thinking that the encounter with the porcupine is much like chaplaincy. Often, we who serve as chaplains are called to situations that are not what they appear to be. It is easy to assess a visit "at first glance" and not grasp the deeper dynamics. However, with active listening, suspending judgement, and self-awareness, we are led to the front-burning issue(s) and then able to provide professional spiritual care aligned with the patient's emotional and spiritual needs.

These past months have especially had a profound effect on chaplains as Covid has presented many deeper issues in meeting the emotional and spiritual needs of patients, families, and staff members. Our network asked the chaplains to primarily support fellow staff members at the height of Covid. We additionally provided support for families over the phone when visitation was not permitted, for patients who were under airborne precautions, arranged calls by video conference with hospital issued tablets, and continued our care always provided for those at the hospital, just to name a few. All staff members were and still are challenged to "dig deeper" in the face of Covid, and it was and is an incredible blessing to journey beside so many incredible coworkers in these days.

In conclusion, I must return to the parking lot story, and hope to never encounter either a skunk, or porcupine, when leaving the hospital again. My head is always up now scanning the parking lot for whatever creatures may be out there. In just the same way, I pray that we who serve as chaplains can enter each and every situation with awareness, patience, peace and respect for those we serve. May we "dig deeper" to unleash the spiritual reality that surrounds us in all situations.



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# SIMPLE SONGS, SIMPLE STORIES, EVERYDAY PEOPLE...

BY TOM CRUSE...FCM NEWSLETTER EDITOR

As we remember and honor the Honorable John Lewis in these past days, the words of this song by one of our long-term FCM members, singer & song-writer Jim Barrens, seem very timely.

Jim Barrens has been a storyteller all his life. Born an Air Force brat at Mitchel Air Force Base in New York, Jim was raised on airbases in New York and Germany. At age 17, he moved to Virginia, attended college in Washington, D.C. and began playing music. Jim and his family, wife Ruth, a former ballet dancer, Jacob, a professional voice actor, and Hannah, a singer and actress, relocated to St. Petersburg, Florida in 1991.

Jim's songs reveal a sense of justice and honesty that reflect his life's work as a peacemaker and activist. Trained as a Community Organizer, Jim has been on the front lines fighting for justice and peace. Having obtained a MTh. degree, Jim works at the grassroots level for interfaith justice and civil rights.

Having retired from his position as a hospice chaplain in 2018, Jim is semi-retired, but plays on special occasions at local and regional venues. After decades of community ministry, Jim felt a call to chaplaincy and served as a hospice chaplain for many years before retiring for health reasons in 2018. He can't remember when he joined FCM!



## Lead Me On (Selma, 1965)

Lead me on  
Take hold of my hand  
Lead me on  
Take hold of my soul  
Like a tree planted by the water  
Lead me on  
to my heavenly home.

As we go travelling down the way  
Let us sing  
Let us pray

And in the darkness give us light  
through the storm  
through the night

Lead me on  
Take hold of my hand  
Lead me on  
Take hold of my soul  
Like a tree planted by the water  
Lead me on  
to my heavenly home.

When we were young, it was easy to be strong  
The burden was light  
The days were long

But now we're weary and the ending is in sight  
Bring us strength  
Bring us might

Lead me on  
Take hold of my hand  
Lead me on  
Take hold of my soul  
Like a tree planted by the water  
Lead me on  
to my heavenly home.

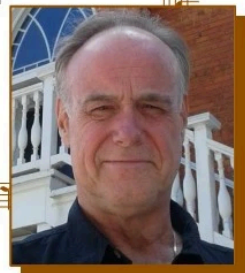
For as far as the east is from the west  
Grant us peace  
Grant us rest

Whether losing, whether winning, never fear  
Linger close  
Linger near

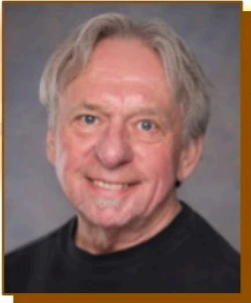
Be not fearful, be not boastful, be not proud  
Sing out strong  
Sing out loud

Lead me on  
Take hold of my hand  
Lead me on  
Take hold of my soul  
Like a tree planted by the water  
Lead me on  
to my heavenly home

<https://youtu.be/x-1GmGTT6-M>



JIM BARRENS, FCM



# NORTHEAST REGION

CARL YUSAVITZ, VICE PRESIDENT

**Congratulations** to three members of the region who were commissioned by the FCM Circle of Directors on July 17th. They are **Susan Booth**, **Bill Buelow**, and **Genikwa Williams**.



**Susan** is a per diem chaplain at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, PA, where she recently completed her 4-unit CPE residency program. Susan's Commissioning ceremony was held via Zoom on August 15th.



**Bill** is a per diem chaplain at two healthcare systems: Reading Hospital in Reading, PA, and the University of Pennsylvania Hospice in Philadelphia, PA.



**Genikwa** is a per diem chaplain at two healthcare systems: Penn Presbyterian Medical Center in Philadelphia, PA, and Cooper University Hospital in Camden, NJ.

We currently have 5 regional members who are exploring FCM Commissioning for February 2021. If you are considering FCM Commissioning, please contact me for help.

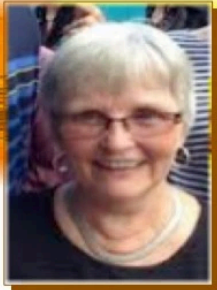
Over 75 members participated in our four summer regional Zoom meetings. These bi-monthly meetings during July and August were a wonderful opportunity for members to connect with one another during these difficult Covid-19 times. There was a number of introductions, "checking in" personally and professionally, and deep sharing about how people have been navigating these strange six months.

After a short break, our regional meetings will continue monthly, rather than bi-monthly. We're hoping to meet every **"Second Saturday."** After a short checking-in, the bulk of our time together will be spent in some form of **continuing education**. Our first Zoom gathering will be Saturday, September 12th at 9 AM. A Zoom invitation will be sent out in early September, with a topic for discussion.

I am grateful for the six regional members who volunteered to be **regional VP liaisons and FCM commissioning aides**. Like the African proverb, "it takes a village" to raise up FCM.

# SOUTHERN REGION

DIANE DOUGHERTY, VICE PRESIDENT



## Five Southern Region members were recently commissioned

**Susan Levy** of Clermont FL spent 40 years as an airline flight attendant and manager for Delta Air Lines and is in her second career. She has been the Volunteer Coordinator for First United Methodist of Clermont FL and a chaplain with Cornerstone Hospice of Clermont, FL.

**Kathy Anderson** of Groveland FL first joined FCM after learning about the ecumenical opportunities for fellowship, networking, continued education, peer accountability and broad umbrella of ministry support. She states that "When I read all the bylaws, the vision and mission, it resonates with what I believe. As I grow older-I want to have fellowship and the support of other ministers who acknowledge and support growth in each other. I want to belong and contribute whatever I can."

**Deborah Davis** currently lives in Fayetteville, North Carolina, on the campus of Methodist University. She is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree from Chicago Theological Seminary. She completed a CPE internship last fall at WakeMed Hospital in Raleigh and will return there in August for a one-year residency with the spiritual care team.

**Evan Edwards** of Raleigh, NC has a BA degree in Religious Studies with an emphasis in World Religions and Islamic Studies from Baylor University in Waco, TX. Evan attended Duke Divinity School in Durham, NC earning a Master of Divinity degree in May 2019. His interest in chaplaincy was affirmed in his CPE training at WakeMed Hospital and he is now beginning a residency year there.

**Tammy McNeal** of Newnan, GA has been a hospice chaplain for 5 years. She has 25 years of ministry experience as Pastor of Grief and Visitation Ministry and as a part time Hospice Chaplain for a Trauma One Center. She has a Master of Theology degree with an emphasis in Pastoral Counseling and has completed two units of CPE. Having recently moved to Georgia, she is working full time in Hospice.



## Four Southern Members are newly endorsed

**The Rev. Kamil Cak** of Chesapeake, VA was on staff at Nationwide Children's Hospital when our new president, the Rev. Ron Davis joined the staff in 2010. During those ten years, the Rev. Kamil Cak also worked as a Contingent Chaplain at St. Ann's Hospital, Westerville, OH with the Rev. Davis who encouraged him to seek FCM commissioning and endorsement.

**Brian Coleman** of Gainesville, FL was, until recently, working for the University of Florida Shands Hospital as a palliative care chaplain. However, his position was eliminated for budget reasons and he sought endorsement from FCM in order to seek further work in hospice and hospital chaplaincy.

**Rebecca (Becca) Bass** of Clearwater, FL became a commissioned member of FCM in June of 2019 and sought endorsement in her efforts to achieve Board Certification in APC in 2021.

**Ebenezer "Gregg" Aguirre** of Palm Harbor, FL currently works as a staff chaplain with Mease Countryside Hospital in Safety Harbor, FL. He sought FCM endorsement in order to achieve APC Board Certification.



## Three Southern District Members are newly Commissioned and Endorsed



**Dorie Griggs** of Roswell, GA is a fire department chaplain and a Facebook community builder. She began interfaith work after seminary as the producer of the cable television show, Faith and The City Forum: Interfaith Dialogue on Civic Issues.



**Erma Croom** of Atlanta, GA has been doing CPE training. Her goal is to become a Board-Certified Chaplain.

**H. Don Morris** of Greenville, SC is currently doing a CPE residency at Prisma Health in South Carolina. Don has been a long-time pastor and pursued Endorsement in order to serve as a hospital chaplain at Prisma Health.



## A Commissioning Service was held in Clermont, FL for two newly commissioned members

The Rev. Susan Levy and the Rev. Kathy Anderson were commissioned with the Rev. Beth Knight as the celebrant. The commissioning service for these two was broadcast to family and friends using Zoom. It was a lovely service under the current difficult conditions of the Covid-19 outbreak.




*With Deepest Sympathy*

Longtime FCM member Carl J. Hemmer past away on May 24, 2020. Carl was 88 years old.



Carl and his wife Patricia were both members of FCM and were presented with the FCM Soto Award at the 2011 Assembly in Sterling, Virginia. Carl was a Jesuit priest who left the order to marry. He was a family planner for the U.S. Agency for international Development and a certified member of the FCM Southern Region, officiating weddings in the Virginia.

We offer condolences to his wife Patricia and all who knew him.





# GREAT LAKES REGION

SHANNON QUEENAN, VICE PRESIDENT

## A view from the Great Lakes

Here we are moving toward the end of summer in this already no good, very bad year!! But wait, there is so much good news to share with you all. Let me start by simply saying hello!

I have been your Vice-President for already a month!! The thumbnail sketch of my life and call is that I am a cradle Catholic. I served as a youth minister in the Catholic tradition for over 20 years. I transitioned to chaplaincy in 2003. I was board certified by National Association of Catholic Chaplains in 2006. I left the Catholics and joined FCM in 2012. I have participated in an active local group and many regional/national gatherings. I very much appreciate the collegiality I have found in FCM. I currently serve as chaplain for a local hospice on a home team.

A lot has happened in my first month in this role. In our Circle (Zoom) meeting, we approved the commissioning for **Jessica Tinkham** and **Betsy Hamm**. Their commissioning services are scheduled for August 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Please hold them in your prayer as they prepare for their commissioning services. As you know, due to Covid-19, our biennial conference was postponed. In its place was a zoom mini-conference. The morning session, on Post-Traumatic Growth presented by Chaplain Beth Reece was both inspiring and informational. In the afternoon, we had break-out sessions by region. It was a delight to meet with the folks of our area and share about our work, lives and hopes. One of the things that came out of that gathering is a plan for a quarterly regional zoom gathering. Look for an email invitation for an October gathering.

The times we are living in are difficult. I have been thinking of two words recently, patience and persistence. The corona virus pandemic has separated us, and I think it has also shown us how connected and vulnerable we are. It has also made us see very clearly, even if just for a moment how our environment is impacted by our actions. As if this were not enough challenge and chaos for us, we are also invited to view the long-lasting impact of the evils of white supremacy, a second and more pervasive and long-lived pandemic. This was highlighted by the murders of George Floyd in Minnesota, and Breonna Taylor in Louisville, KY both by police. These two together with hundreds of other wrongful deaths have sparked a moment into a movement that cannot be ignored.

How does our faith lead us in these pandemic days? Are we ready to go into the streets (wearing our masks, of course) to stand together with our brothers and sisters of color to claim their and our dignity (because they are surely interconnected) as equals in this country that has created systemic oppression that excludes "them" and benefits only a select group? Do we see, and create relationships across cultures? Are we ready to be part of the realm of God where we truly are brothers and sisters? Where to love our neighbors means, literally, everyone? Are we ready for the good trouble that John Lewis emulated and encouraged?

In these pandemic days of virus, inequality and degradation of our earth, where do we need to be persistent and how does patience serve us? May we listen carefully to the deepest desires of our hearts, trust in faith and risk everything to follow the call of God in our lives, individually and collectively. May we be courageous people of great faith, willing to risk something big for something good! May we find the good trouble of faith in action.

## Patience and Persistence



# PACIFIC REGION

TRACY PETERSON, VICE PRESIDENT

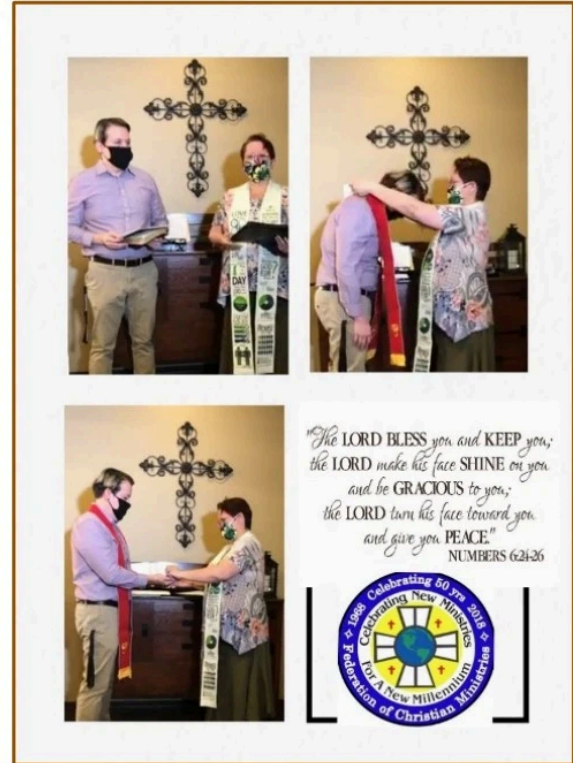
## Congratulations Newly Commissioned Members

The Pacific Region is so excited to share that 8 members were approved for commissioning. Let's give a shout out to:

**Rev. Brianna Capre**  
**Rev. J. Robert (Bob) Claus**  
**Rev. Bora Kim**  
**Danielle A. Pruitt Cummings**  
**Rev. Jody Robinson**  
**Michael Scott Thompson**  
**Rev. Daniel Windham**  
**Rev. Tres Adames.**

I'm so proud of you all for the work you did to apply for commissioning and I'm looking forward to commissioning you all either in person or virtually. I had the opportunity to commission Tres Adames on Saturday, August 8 in person using Facebook live.

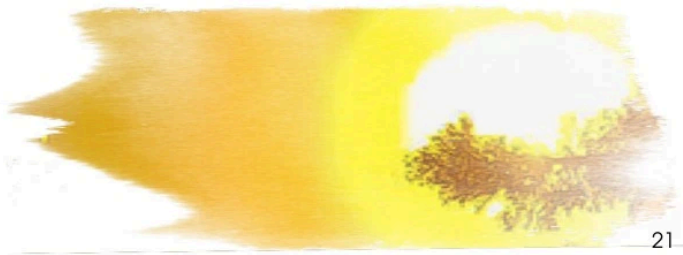
One of Tres' friends created this collage to share with you.



If you are interested in getting commissioned the next due date is October 15, 2020 to have your application and all materials into me (Pacific Region VP). If you have any questions, please email me at [Pacificvp@fcmmail.org](mailto:Pacificvp@fcmmail.org).

We just recently had a Zoom gathering on August 1, 2020 and we discussed the work that we are doing and how we can support each other. We will be having another Zoom meeting October 3 at 10am Pacific time (please note the change in time).

Also, I wanted to let you all know that we have openings for Regional Representatives and Regional Commissioning Liaisons. These are vital positions that provide key support for FCM growth regionally. Please contact me at the email address above if you are interested in getting more involved with FCM.



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FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES



# MTS, and PLAINS REGION

CONNER SIMMS, VICE PRESIDENT

The Mountains & Plains Region experienced a steady increase in membership, 12 new members, 11 Commissioning applicants, and 3 Endorsement applicants.

## Newly Endorsed Regional Members

### **Tara Parish, Minneapolis, MN**

Reverend Tara Parrish was commissioned by FCM in 2016. She is currently serving as Staff Chaplain at Regions hospital and was Endorsed by FCM as part of her pursuit of certification with the Association of Professional Chaplains.

### **Rebekah Jackson Maaz, Austin, TX**

Rev. Rebekah Jackson is a Commissioned member of FCM, completing a Clinical Pastoral Education Residency at Ascension Seton – Dell Seton Medical Center at the University of Texas. Rebekah intends to pursue Board Certification with the Association of Professional Chaplains.

### **Amy Tracy, Chicago, IL**

Amy Tracy has been in ministry holding several different positions including producing written content for a large non-profit organization and Director of Development. Coordinating hospice and palliative care programs led her to seek chaplaincy. She pursued Endorsement with FCM as a validation of her role as a minister on way to becoming Board Certified as a chaplain.

## Newly Commissioned Regional Members

### **Carolyn Woodhouse, Plano, TX**

Carolyn's ministry is as a PRN Chaplain at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Plano, Texas and Chaplain Resident at the same medical facility. She comes from an investment and business solutions background. After trying to put new wine in old wineskins, she found FCM. She sought Commissioning with FCM as a validation of her role as a minister.

### **David Kohls, New Holstein, WI**

David Kohls has been in ministry for 20 years and is now he is a resident Chaplain. David feels called to a chaplain ministry either as a board-certified chaplain or as a chaplain educator. David is highly motivated to serve others with clear convictions about his calling to the ministry of spiritual care.

### **HaLana Thompson, Chicago, IL**

HaLana has worked in various administrative roles as she oversaw and facilitated several vital programs at church in the areas of discipleship, bible study, and financial stewardship. Following that work, she transitioned to chaplaincy. As a staff chaplain she continued her pursuit of knowledge, collegiality and ecclesiastical recognition which brought her to seek Commissioning with FCM. She hopes one day to become a board-certified chaplain.

### **Jocelyn Jones, Oak lawn, IL**

Jocelyn has come to chaplaincy from the social services and ministry sectors moving from direct service to Executive Director with the socio-economically disadvantaged areas of Chicago, IL with the backing of the Roman Catholic Church. Jocelyn is currently completing coursework through the Biblical Counseling Center to become a certified Biblical Counselor. As a Roman Catholic, Jocelyn sought Commissioning with FCM as there is currently no path for her to accomplish this within the Roman Catholic Church.

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## Newly Commissioned Regional Members

### **Kelley Gray, Centennial, CO**

Kelley has worked as a Christian counselor for many years culminating in her joining a group practice known as Restoring the Soul. Kelley states that she believes her recent FCM Commissioning will add "gravity" to her work as a counselor who focuses on clients who identify within the Christian religious tradition mainly as pastors and leaders. Over the years she has counseled those also needing guidance in the treatment of PTSD, couples' issues, adolescents, eating disorders and other forms of "turmoil."

### **Rev. Kristen Sykes, St. Paul, MN**

Kristin (Kiki) Sykes grew up with many mainline denominational threads and is finishing her fourth unit of CPE this summer. She has enjoyed great experiences in ministry and has learned the Spanish language, able to speak it at an intermediate level of fluency. As an empathetic and insightful person, with an education background in childhood trauma, she is able to add her expertise to the team she is with and the people with whom she ministers. She sought commissioning with the FCM as adding weight to her ministry.

### **Kristy Goodwin, Chicago, IL**

For 34 years she served as the music minister and as youth minister in her local church community. She then pursued CPE to become a chaplain and continues to be passionate about helping others live out their purpose. Kristy has co-facilitated a woman's group and work with HIV/AIDS patients as well. She has a calm and a generous spirit and in FCM she has found a place to grow and thrive, now as a Commissioned member.

### **Lisa April Long, Austin, TX**

April Long experienced a call to ministry early on in life. CPE later confirmed a call to chaplaincy in healthcare settings. She feels that her skills and gifts are suited to this work, and she finds this ministry deeply fulfilling. Commissioning with FCM will support her desire to find an inclusive and supportive community ministry, specifically towards the LGBTQ community among other areas!

### **Michael Cusick, Lakewood CO**

Michael refers to himself as ministering out of a place of a "wounded healer" which he states greatly informs his thriving current practice and teaching. He desires an affiliation which aligns more with his current theology. Michael has published two books and various articles on a variety of topics regarding counseling and healthy living.

### **Michelle K. LaGrone, St. Louis, MO**

Michelle LaGrone has been in ministry for over 18 years. She began as a local church intern, became a pastor, worked with a Christian social services agency and then moved into hospital chaplaincy in 2006. Presently, she serves as the Supervisor of the Chaplain Service at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

# Congratulations!





**Newsletter Editor...Tom Cruse**  
Email: [newsletter@FCMmail.org](mailto:newsletter@FCMmail.org)

The FCM Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Federation of Christian Ministries, a non-profit religious body. As the informational publication of FCM, its mission is to keep members current with the organization and its activities, to provide ideas to further ministry and to promote community building among local FCM groups and the national organization. All current members receive a copy. Articles and feedback are welcomed and can be sent to : [newsletter@FCMmail.org](mailto:newsletter@FCMmail.org) by the 15th of each month (February, April, June, August, October and December). FCM member-submitted articles should aim for 500 words and 2-3 selected photos in MS Word and JPG formats.

## FCM Central Office



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

### FCM CERTIFICATES

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

## FCM Membership & Realm

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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](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org)  
Inquiries may be made by email at: [specmin@FCMmail.org](mailto:specmin@FCMmail.org)

### GLOBAL MINISTRIES UNIVERSITY

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