

# Federation of Christian Ministries

DON'T LET THE WORLD DIVIDE US WHEN GOD CREATED US TO LOVE EACH OTHER



## NEWSLETTER



MARCH/APRIL 2021  
VOL. 55 NUMBER 2



He is *Not Here*  
for He has  
**Risen**  
as He *said*  
*Matthew 28:6*  
**Happy Easter**

**Life More Abundant**  
Christy Howard-Steele, FCM Chairperson.....Page 2

**FCM Circle of Directors**.....Page 3

**News From the Circle of Directors**  
Christy Howard-Steele, FCM Chairperson.....Page 4

**Major Membership Anniversaries**  
(March/April 2021)  
Carolyn Horvath and Tom Leonhardt.....Page 5

**TRUTH**  
Ron Davis, FCM President.....Page 6

**FCM Endowment Committee**  
Tom Cusack, FCM.....Page 7

**FCM Endowment Fund**  
Tom Stricker, FCM.....Page 8

**FCM Faith Community**  
Tom Stricker, FCM.....Page 9

**Social Visions Committee**  
Diane Dougherty FCM .....Page 10

**FCM Chaplain's Corner**  
Rick Cruse, FCM.....Page 11

**FCM Assembly Planning Committee**  
Peter Strening, FCM .....Page 12

**FCM Prayer Meeting**  
Tom Cusack, FCM .....Page 13

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Regional News

**Northeast Region..Commissioning Congratulations**  
Carl Yusavitz, Northeast V.P.....Page 14

**Southern...Welcome New Members**  
Diane Dougherty, Southern V.P. ....Pages 15-16

**Great Lakes...A View From the Great Lakes**  
Shannon Queenan, Great Lakes V.P.....Pages 17-18

**Mountains & Plains ...Greeting to all of FCM**  
Conner Simms, Mts. & Plains V.P. ....Page 19

**Pacific ...Welcome New Members**  
Tracy Peterson, Pacific V.P. ....Page 20

**FCM Directory**.....Page 21





# CHAIRPERSON

CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE

## Life More Abundant

*"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10 (NRSV)*

FCM NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021...VOL. 55 NUMBER 2

For me the Lenten season is a time to reflect, repent, and renew. It is the time of year that I have what I call "my annual spiritual checkup." Not that this is the only time I do a spiritual checkup but just as with my medical care, I have certain tests run once a year even though I also have routine doctor visits more frequently. As part of this checkup, I seek G-d's input – what have I done, what do I need to do or do better, and what would G-d have me to do next? It is through this time of reflection that I realize some additional things for which I need to repent and some commitments I feel compelled to renew.

This year, my spirit is concerned about the divisions and strife in this nation – how am I contributing to the division and strife? What in me needs to change? Is there something specific that G-d requires of me? In the Faith Community gathering as well as in the Circle meeting, some time was spent discussing how to help heal the divisions and strife going on in the United States. I realize that as a person, a mother and grandmother of persons descended from American slavery who has lived over six decades of the more than four hundred years since my ancestors were brought to this country as slaves, I have a particular perspective. I have been patient, kind, and compassionate as those who have and continue to "breathe" freely wrestle with acknowledging the needs of black and brown persons to also breathe freely. Now I find my patience exhausted with those who refuse or deny their need to be open and informed enough to interrogate the false narratives used to justify the inferior treatment of others. During this Lenten season I encourage us all to do our own work.

In addition, I believe there is a spirit of entitlement and an underlying economic fear provoking the divisions and strife in this nation. How we interpret the ideology of "unalienable Rights endowed by their Creator" referenced in the Declaration of Independence<sup>1</sup> seems to be at the crux of these divisions and strife. The "men" with these rights have been expanded by Constitutional amendment and judicial interpretation beyond the original founders of European, white-bodied men. Women, Black Americans, other people of color, Queer, and the differently abled are included. Some of the conflict is about including the environment (other parts of creation) and those conceived and unborn. As more and more people and interests make claims on these unalienable Rights, the fear of not enough emerges. In my opinion, this is the real source of the division and conflict. In his book [The Common Good](#), theologian Walter Brueggeman states, *"Those who are living in anxiety and fear, most especially fear of scarcity, have no time or energy for the common good."*

Jesus, our elder brother, our Lord, and our Savior tells us in John 10:10 that he came so that "they" may have life and have it abundantly. "They" refers to his sheep. It is inclusive. It includes all of us. In the kin-dom of G-d there is enough for all of us. There is enough for all of creation. Generosity and abundance are G-d's trademarks. During this Lenten season, I invite your prayer and reflection on the matter of abundance and scarcity.

**What does John 10:10 mean to you? What does it mean to have abundant life?  
Is abundance the same as wealth?  
Where in your life do you fear scarcity?  
Where do you lack trust that G-d will provide what you need?**

<sup>1</sup> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.  
Preamble to the Declaration of Independence



# FCM Circle of Directors

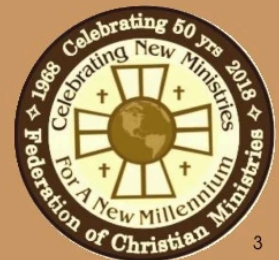
FCM CIRCLE MEETING IN SQUARES...ON ZOOM...FEBRUARY 4 - 6, 2021



- LEFT TO RIGHT
- SHANNON QUEENAN  
GREAT LAKES VP
- TRACY PETERSON  
PACIFIC VP
- ANTHONY ERCOLANO  
COMMISSIONING CHAIR
- CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE  
CHAIRPERSON
- CARL YUSAVITZ  
NORTHEAST VP
- SARAH LINDBERG  
SECRETARY
- PETER STRENING  
SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES  
CO CHAIR
- CONNER SIMMS  
MTS. & PLAINS VP
- RONALD DAVIS  
PRESIDENT
- HEIDI A. TIERNEY  
TREASURER
- TOM LEONHARDT  
CAROLYN HORVATH  
CENTRAL OFFICE/  
MEMBERSHIP
- DIANE DOUGHERTY  
SOUTHERN VP
- MARITA GRUDZEN  
FAITH COMMUNITIES  
CHAIR
- JEANNE HALE  
SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES  
CO CHAIR

FCM 2021  
Circle of Directors

MARCH/APRIL 2021  
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# CHAIRPERSON

CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE

## NEWS FROM THE CIRCLE OF DIRECTORS

As many of you know, the Circle of Directors met virtually in February. Below are highlights of some of the information discussed and some of the decisions we made on your behalf:

- As you are aware, the renewal period has ended. Over 530 members renewed. Those who did not renew were made inactive. Membership can be reactivated by contacting your Regional Vice President or the Central Office to renew.
- The number of members who have not created a Realm account and logged on is now less than 50. Kudos to you our members!!! This means that we can now use more of Realm's features including its membership directory to find other FCM members and its interactive communication features.
  - To facilitate use of our membership directory, on **March 20-21**, the default privacy settings for all members will be changed to allow any current and active FCM member access to your contact information. The information they will have access to is your name, email, and mobile phone number. While we realize that region or city/state would also be helpful, we did not want to include your full address at this time. As we go forward, we will look to add region and/or city/state. If you have logged into Realm, you will receive a notification from Realm when this happens. If you wish to reset your privacy settings, after the notification, you will need to login to Realm to change them. Going forward all new members will automatically be included in the directory and will need to choose to login to Realm to "opt-out". **Please note that only current active FCM members can login and access our Realm directory.**
  - Under News, members have the ability to post information, pictures, and to chat with one another. We hope to begin using this facility more as we go forward. Please let me know if you have other suggestions. Instructions on how to use these features will be distributed soon.
- The Circle is developing resources for the FCM community that can support us as we help heal the divide in our nation. Over the next several months we will announce some initiatives and provide more information.
- Rebekah Maaz was appointed to the Endowment Committee to replace Cassandra Woods who resigned.



## FCM Major Membership Anniversaries March - April 2021

The members 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. The list is compiled by Carolyn & Tom at the FCM Central Office.

### *30 Year Anniversaries*

Sheila Linn, Mts. & Plains Region  
Dennis Linn, Mts. & Plains Region

### *25 Year Anniversaries*

Roger Fecher, Great Lakes Region  
Patrick Shinnick, Southern Region

### *20 Year Anniversaries*

Antoinette Marold, Great Lakes Region

### *10 Year Anniversaries*

Caryl Johnson, Northeast Region  
Judy McBride, Great Lakes Region  
Ann Penick, Southern Region  
Cheri Sadler, Mts. & Plains Region

### *5 Year Anniversaries*

Maria Gullo, Northeast Region  
Christine Haider-Winnett, Pacific Region  
Steven Stitely, Southern Region  
Jamez Terry, Southern Region



# PRESIDENT

RON DAVIS

FCM NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021...VOL. 55 NUMBER 2

## TRUTH

Attention chaplains, pastors, teachers, spiritual directors, and other people of faith. My heart is heavy for America. I encourage you to work towards ushering in a new season of unity in America. I hear current political leaders speaking to this need. Yet, unity in America is a spiritual concern too. My hope is that spiritual leaders will choose to engage in this effort. The challenge for us is to speak to that which is concerning in our society, from our various spiritual perspectives in order to help one another to listen to and show genuine love to all people, that we would become unified.

When I was a child, one plus one always equaled two. Now it seems like truth is nuanced or belief based. In public discourse, there is a spin on news and stories offered by the mainstream media platforms and those offered on social media platforms. Facts are woven so tightly into political and social agendas such that it is hard to discern between the factual truth and the spin. One person's truth is rejected by another person's beliefs. Politics is but one form of this truth-disconnect between persons.

I am wondering have we made a grave mistake in communicating news with this kind of spin or personal bias. I also wonder if it is irresponsible for us to take in and receive news with a spin, for in doing this one runs the risk of taking on an extremist message that could adversely change one's spirit (multiple and diverse sources is a better practice in the America of this day). That, it is possible to lose compassion for others because one receives one's information from one source that leans left or right.

I am wondering if there are danger zones in some forms of free speech. In America, if one yelled "Fire" in a movie theater, and there was no fire, one would be charged with inducing panic. This is an appropriate consequence to one's behavior. I wonder if some of the America's spun news or alternative news is likened to one who yells fire in a movie theater. I wonder if some of the news that we pick up on social media platforms does this same thing. It causes me to wonder if people really recognize that spun news has consequences for the reader and the hearer of those words. And do we recognize our own consumption of "news" has consequences to our own thinking and behavior?

Perhaps, it is time for us to admit that all speech isn't free and isn't helpful. Perhaps, all of us should remember the words of grandparents from long ago who would say, "be careful little ears what you hear." Or there's the spiritual principle from Ephesians 4 which teach that all speech does not edify. This principle should be understood in our own lives and ministries. As we work to move this nation towards unity, we must balance that which the Holy Writings teach with the rights which are afforded us as Americans. Perhaps in our public discourse, we should err on the side of showing love, grace and kindness towards others and choose to measure one's words.

In my mind, as we work to bring forth spiritual healing in America, we must work hard at being honest and truthful with one another. I wish that we could lose the spin in public and private discourse. I hope that we can become much more committed to honesty and to truth. I am sure you have thoughts about this too. I would love to hear your thoughts.





# FCM ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

FCM NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021...VOL. 55 NUMBER 2

## FCM Endowment Help for Your 2021 IRA Required Minimum Distribution by Tom Cusack, CLU, ChFC, CPCU

In 2020 the CARES act waived the 2020 requirement that those over 70 ½ years old must withdraw money from their retirement accounts, such as IRAs. These 2020 Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) were waived. This felt good. You may now realize that you did not miss this money. You certainly didn't miss the taxation on the distribution. In 2021 this unprecedented relief is not yet on the horizon and probably will not be available to us. Thus, those over 70 ½ years old will have to take an RMD from their IRA. This distribution is always taxed. The FCM Endowment can provide relief from the taxation on your IRA distribution. Here's how:

An IRA charitable rollover or contribution from your account can go directly into the FCM Endowment Fund. It does not come to you but comes from your annual RMD for that year. This has many benefits. You pay no taxes on the transfer and your gift counts as part of your RMD. You are also able to do a direct transfer of up to \$100,000 from your IRA into charities such as the FCM endowment. This has the effect of lowering your gross income and therefore your taxes in this year. A lower adjusted gross income may reduce your taxation rate and protect some of your Social Security retirement benefits from taxation; and it may help avoid an increase in the cost of your Medicare Part B premiums.

Please consider a tithe of your RMD for the endowment, or simply roll over the full RMD directly to the FCM endowment.

The process of making a direct charitable rollover is understandable and simple. For help with this process, please reach out to the Endowment Committee at [endowment@FCMmail.org](mailto:endowment@FCMmail.org)

Not 70 ½ yet? Donate monthly to the Endowment. Ask [endowment@FCMmail.org](mailto:endowment@FCMmail.org) how.

## FCM ENDOWMENT

VALUE AS OF 2/10/2021: \$73,289.73  
OUR GOAL: \$100,000

HELP US REACH OUR \$100,000 GOAL  
NO GIFT IS TOO SMALL!





# FCM ENDOWMENT

TOM STRICKER

VALUE AS OF 2/10/2021: \$73,289.73  
OUR GOAL: \$100,000

**HELP US REACH OUR \$100,000 GOAL  
NO GIFT IS TOO SMALL!**

## Thank You!

We are so grateful for the 26 donors who donated to the Endowment Fund in 2020. We have set a goal of 50 donors for 2021.

We are very appreciative for the two donors who gave "Inspirational Matching Gifts" that totaled \$12,500.

## Regular Donation

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

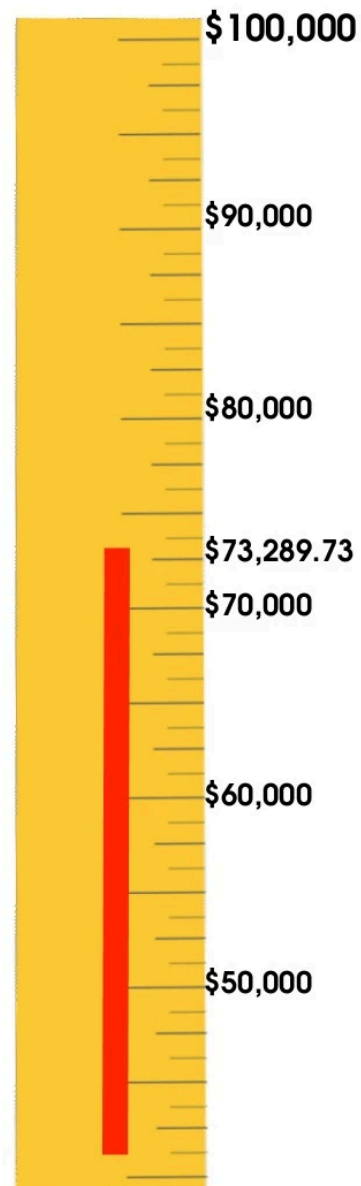
## Tribute Gift

Is there a friend, family member, teacher, or mentor you would like to honor on their special day or send an expression of sympathy?

Consider a small donation to the **FCM Endowment Fund**.

A notice of your gift will be sent to the honoree or a member of their family. You will also know that your gift will help ensure that FCM will be able to support future generations of ministers and congregations.

For more information go to the FCM web site under FCM Endowment Fund for the online **Tribute Gift Form** or [endowment@fcmmail.org](mailto:endowment@fcmmail.org)





# FCM FAITH COMMUNITY

TOM STRICKER

## Remaining alive and thriving in the pandemic

FCM NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021....VOL. 55 NUMBER 2

**The Living Beatitudes Community (LBC) of Dayton, Ohio** is managing to do both. March of 2020 compelled us to find a new way to pray together and continue our mission of being a social justice community. Zooming on Sunday mornings find us pushing 55 plus in attendance. We now see members not only from Dayton but from other parts of Ohio, Florida, New York and Pittsburgh. By having services on Zoom, we have re-gained members who had moved out of the area as well as gaining new members in the Dayton area and beyond. Although it took some trial and error, we were able to learn how prayer and singing, along with the homily, can involve the LBC community members in making our Sunday prayer experience enriching. In addition, we are now able to offer a transcription application called Otter.AI which enables our hearing-impaired members to fully participate. We miss the face-to-face Sunday liturgies of the past, but the pandemic has stretched us to see new possibilities. When the day comes that we are able to return face-to-face, we are considering the possibility of how to continue streaming our services to reach to out-of-state and home-bound members.

In addition to using Zoom for our Sunday liturgies, we now also use Zoom for our previous once-a-month Faith Sharing group. This Faith Sharing discussion group not only grew in numbers attending but has also changed from monthly to weekly discussions. Coupled with all adaptations, LBC has continued the LBC Book Club meetings, Social Justice action discussions, New Homeowners Initiative (NHI) financial community support, and outreach using Zoom. We thank God for the technicians who have made it possible for us to stay in contact. Although we deeply miss being physically together, the distance has challenged us to grow stronger spiritually and emotionally. In a different way, we have come closer to each other and come to see how that no matter the space between us we are all united as one.



### The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



# SOCIAL VISIONS COMMITTEE

About one year ago this month, a small band of thought provokers and writers interested in translating the values and mission embedded in FCM got together to brainstorm ways in which we might translate our spiritual insights onto a broader stage. Looking back over the year, I find the work of the *Social Visions Committee* mighty impressive. This was no easy task, but we shattered the boundaries of our own comfort to produce rapid responses in the form of statements and articles that relate directly to our mission and values.

I am proud to work with those who pushed FCM to reflect on and bend toward realizing our call within the broader needs of today's society.

Thanks to all who participated in this initiative and welcome to all who may be interested in joining us for 2021. Go to the blog and review our good work-AND remember it is not too late to leave a comment.

## A Year in Review

- Values: Investing in Beloved Community, 2/25/20
- Statement: International Women's Day, 3/7/2020
- Statement: Earth Day Challenges, 4/22/2020
- Statement: Memorial Day, 5/24/2020
- Statement: 7/4/2020, 7/7/2020
- Values: Women's Equality Day, 8/25/2020
- Values: A Season of Creation-Mindful Living, 9/9/2020
- Statement: LGBTQ History – Domestic Violence, 10/8/2020
- Values: Five Women Witnesses, 11/23/2020
- Values: Wisdom for Blue Holidays, 12/14/2020
- Statement: Insurrection at the Capital, 1/21/2021



### Committee Members

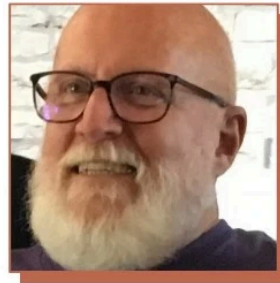
- Diane Dougherty Chairperson
- Jack Wentland
- Marita Grudsen
- Tress Reed
- Shelley Gilchrist
- Thomas Cusack

We are also grateful for the oversight of the Executive Committee.



# FCM CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

FCM NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021....VOL. 55 NUMBER 2



**RICK CRUSE**

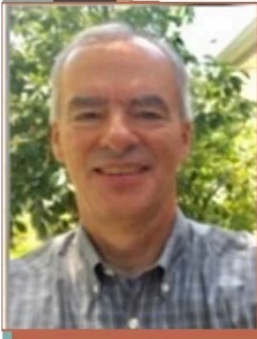


Just a few days ago, I received word that a man I admired immensely and worked with closely during our ministry years in Africa died of Covid-19 in a hospital in Johannesburg, South Africa. He and his wife (and kids when they were young) lived in Swaziland (now eSwatini), a kingdom situated between South Africa and Mozambique. For the last 20+ years, he and his wife have worked closely with their eSwati partners to (initially) found and (now) run "New Life Children's Homes," a live-in, self-supporting community of small homes for AIDS orphans. Each small home has an eSwati "mum," often women who have also lost family to AIDS. Initially just houses, it now has a primary school for 70+ local children and a farm that covers many of the costs. His death has devastated that community.

Why do I write about the death of a man you haven't met who lived in a country many might find difficult to locate? I'm not certain myself, yet the death of a man I know has somehow cracked open a reservoir of grief I've suspected was present in my soul. As a hospital chaplain, this is grief I've experienced second-hand from the many Covid deaths in my hospital. It has sat within, untapped and un-grieved. I discovered what many already know: it's easy to keep trauma and grief at arm's length. However, when it slips inside your defenses, its true toll comes to light.

I often console grieving family members with the truth that grief is the price we pay for love. If we didn't love, we wouldn't grieve. The love will never end, but it can change over time; so too with grief. Yet the Covid (and other hospital) deaths with which I've been involved weren't people I knew. These too caused grief that I witnessed and felt but couldn't get a handle on. When I received news of Peter's death, all that earlier "witnessed/felt grief" became very real in and through his person and family. Quite literally, I felt undone and shattered. I still can't believe it. Thankfully, I shared my grief, my shattered-ness with a friend. My healing has begun!

[For Rick, chaplaincy is a third, and the most invigorating and most challenging, career. Getting there required only 43 years, three continents (North America, Africa, and Europe) and five countries (USA, Kenya, Germany, England, Canada, and the USA). When asked why he didn't just start as a chaplain, he replied, "I had to travel that long and that far to grow up enough to become an honest student of myself." ]



# FCM ASSEMBLY

PETER STRENING, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAIRPERSON

FCM NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021...VOL. 55 NUMBER 2

## FCM National Assembly Planning Committee

The FCM Circle has decided to move forward with plans for an in-person National Assembly in **July of 2022**. While there remains a great deal of uncertainty about the impact of COVID on travel and gatherings, we are standing in hope that over time the vaccine will provide the safety needed to allow gatherings to take place.

Given all of the significant changes and events that have taken place over the past year, we are planning for a different type of program than what was envisioned originally for our postponed 2020 Assembly. We would like to focus on the joy and gratitude of being able to be together, after all that has happened. More details to follow.

Our 2022 National Assembly is planned for July 15-17 in Chicago.

If you would like to share your perspectives on having an in-person meeting in 2022, please feel free to contact me at [peterstrening@comcast.net](mailto:peterstrening@comcast.net). Our committee appreciates any input we receive from our fellow FCM members.

Blessings,

Peter Strening  
FCM National Assembly Planning Committee

# 2022



**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.

# FCM PRAYER MEETING

TOM CUSACK

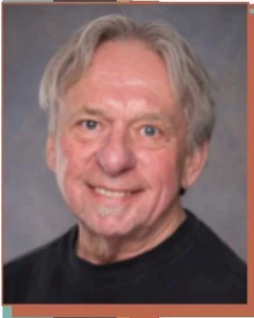
FCM NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021....VOL. 55 NUMBER 2

Our Prayer Gathering is coming up to being one year old. Every week at 8 PM EST on Thursdays a videoconference of 25 to 35 FCM members takes place. Many of these are regulars, and each week other members come into the meetings on an irregular basis, participating when they can. The effect of this continuity is the building of a community within FCM. We welcome new members by name, and they introduce themselves often for the first time to other FCM members.

Here's how the one-hour unfolds: an FCM member is the leader for that night's first half hour. The leader has prepared a reflection or prayer or meditation, and then brings us all through some of our own inner spaces. Then we move into the second half hour when most everyone has a chance to offer their personal response to the prepared first half hour. Some simply share events of significance in their life, perhaps a new job, a move to a new residence, and good or bad news. All this is shared with the group. We also write our requests and comments in the chat, and any prayer requests are shared out later to the FCM Prayer Ministry. We end at 9 PM.

FCM is a geographically separated community. The geographical separation is a detriment to coming to know one another. However, this Prayer Gathering has created a focal point of community. Anthony Capone is the FCM prayer Ministry Coordinator, and I facilitate the Gathering. We both invite you to join us when you can. Rest assured that Jesus the Christ is at every meeting.





# NORTHEAST REGION

CARL YUSAVITZ, VICE PRESIDENT



## Commissioning Congratulations

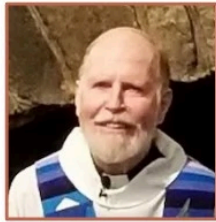
**Congratulations** to our two recently commissioned members: **Chera Wertz** and **Jack Wentland**. I asked Chera and Jack to share some personal reflections with all of you.

FCM NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021...VOL. 55 NUMBER 2



**Chera writes:**

I am currently serving as an Associate Chaplain at St Lukes University Health Network. During my experience with CPE I discovered that chaplaincy is what I am called to do. It's a privilege to walk alongside others on their journey, and support them along the way. I am drawn to FCM based on similar values to my own. It is very important to me that no one be excluded. All are welcomed to the table.

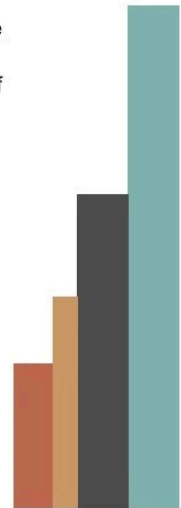


**Jack writes:**

"All movements are based on dreams...there are those who maintain or tolerate the status quo, be it ever so oppressive, and there are those who in their dreams create a new order. Their task is a simple one: To share that dream with all who will listen, trusting that it will activate a similar dream within the hearts of others. When many people join dreams, a movement comes to life." (William Powers in Free Priests—the movement for Ministerial Reform in the American Catholic Church)

*Jesus began a movement that called on the religious leaders of his time to leave legalism and return to the spirit of a covenant relationship with his Father. We are the people of that new covenant, now institutionalized by administrators who resist moving from an oppressive status quo to a liberating new order. The dreams of people like those of FCM who continue to hold to the ideal of the Gospel Jesus embody the organization's mission "empowering and nurturing those inspired for inclusive ministries" in a ministerial reality based in listening to the Spirit's call to ministry offered to all God's people. Commissioning by FCM confirms my being committed to the work of the Gospel of Jesus.*

**We finished our recent monthly on-line** marriage preparation/counseling/officiating workshops in January and refocused our future attention on mutual support during these tumultuous times. Not sure about you, but this past year for me has been a time of anticipation – wondering what's next, wondering how I need to prepare for what's next, what should I be getting used to, etc. - forgetting, of course, Jesus' suggestion to consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field and stay in the moment! Perhaps this is one of "gifts" or at least a "learning" from this on-going pandemic and our current cultural/political polarization?





# SOUTHERN REGION

DIANE DOUGHERTY, VICE PRESIDENT

## Welcome New Members

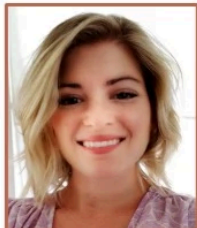


Jennifer Carpenter, Orlando FL  
Jesse O'Neal, Raleigh, NC  
Rance Cannon, Gainesville, FL

Ashley Cooper, Lewisberg, TN  
Althea Truman, Clearwater, FL  
Albert Risdorfer, Dayton MD

John Herberger, transferred from Hawaii, living in Stone Mountain, GA

FCM NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021...VOL. 55 NUMBER 2



Kristin Fulton

### Congratulations on your Endorsement

**Kristin Fulton** of Chesterfield VA works at Bon Secours St. Francis Medical Center, Midlothian, VA Staff Chaplain

**Wendy Tingle** of Buies Creek, NC, works at Kindred Hospice, Oxford, NC Chaplain/Bereavement Coordinator



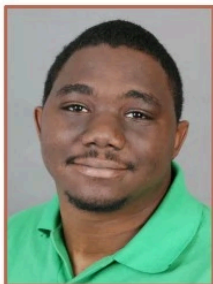
Wendy Tingle

### Two FCM South Zoom Commissioning's

February 22 at 8PM

March 7 in Groveland, FL in person as well as on Zoom.

### Congratulations to our Newly Commissioned



#### Phillip Crenshaw, East Point, GA

As Phillip grew through CPE training, he realized the small networks offered through his former church- specifically their call for him to pastor outside of chaplaincy to parish work which would limit his access to a broader community as well as limited doctrinal understandings of who could be included. These networks that were not in keeping with the broad understanding of the inclusive ministries demanded as he moved into chaplaincy. He finds in FCM a possibility to branch out to find communities of faith that would nurture his understandings.



#### Latasha Ramsey, Evans, GA

Latasha Ramsey highly values inclusiveness, diversity and social justice and feels she has outgrown the National Baptist Convention. She desires to be part of an organization whose values align with hers. She has a strong heart for racial and gender equality and a desire to work towards inclusive ministry that will positively impact society.



#### David Browning, Palmetto, FL

David is hoping that the Federation of Christian Ministries (FCM) will be a support to his ministry and vocation as a hospital/hospice chaplain. Discovering his former church did not fully support his calling and ministry as a chaplain he is hoping FCM will be a better fit.





**Larry Watchorn, Orlando, FL**

Passionate about providing spiritual care and support for patients and families, Larry is team member who recently completed a Master of Divinity working with the VITAS Health Care System to become a chaplain. He is the zoom coordinator for the Southern Region.



**Yuri Yamamoto, Raleigh, NC**

Yuri is drawn to FCM as her Christian identity and relationships has grown over the last two years. She finds the commitment of FCM to inclusion and justice to align with her own values.



***The White Flags of Covid 19-Georgia's Devastation***

In a collaborative effort to deal with our collective grief, FCM -Southern Region is participating with a multitude of churches and organizations, by joining in the planting of over 16,000 flags-for those who died of COVID. During the week we will participate in services at noon and 5 PM.



# GREAT LAKES REGION

SHANNON QUEENAN, VICE PRESIDENT



## A view from the Great Lakes

We have now held two regional Zoom meetings (one in October and the other in January). Each was well attended and offered members an opportunity to connect and reflect. There will be a work group zoom meeting in late February with the goal of building some more regional leadership (offering regular opportunities to connect), creating a calendar and a plan for our continuing regional zoom meetings, exploring the best ways to implement commissioning liaisons for our region, and to discuss the possibility of our regional retreat this Fall.

The Circle of Directors met in early February. The five candidates for commissioning for the Great Lakes were each unanimously approved. Below they share a few thoughts on what this means to them. Additionally, the Circle is cautiously optimistic about having our twice pandemic-postponed National gathering in 2022! We are also planning to offer another Zoom Mini-Assembly, perhaps with a focus on how we can all be part of the healing needed in our country by having and leading compassion based conversations.

As you may know, FCM has established an Endowment Fund, intended to provide for the growth, stability and enhancement of our organization. The Endowment Committee has made a goal of educating membership about the fund and encouraging participation. If you'd like to know more about it, please reach out to me. If you are interested in supporting the fund, it is very easy to sign up through Realm.

I feel like I have just completed the steepest part of my learning curve hill as Great Lakes VP. It has been my great joy to meet so many of you (albeit, mostly via zoom and phone). I know the pandemic continues to create challenges for all of us. As we round into our second year, take some deep breaths and remember our God is with us in it and will lead us through, if only we are brave and vulnerable enough to allow it.

I leave you with this blessing of Jan Richardson:  
**That God will make of your life a circle, an offering, a gift sufficient and whole. Amen.**



Joining FCM as a commissioned member is an exciting honor! I am so grateful to become a part of a community of ministerial leaders who are living out their call all over. I have known several FCM members since I have first learned of this community, and have constantly been blown away by their overall spirit of welcome and inclusivity and commitment to doing just, ethical, and thoughtful ministry. Being a commissioned member of FCM means being a part of a group of people working hard to serve the world faithfully and fully ourselves. I am eager to see where this journey with FCM takes us. **Maija Mikkelsen**



I am a Chaplain and my service/ministry is with the Incarcerated (adult and juvenile) populations as well as Restored Citizens. Not being affiliated with a specific denomination has presented some challenges in moving forward within the state prison systems which require "Ecclesiastical Endorsement" for vocational consideration. After considering several options, I found the FCM online last year and started reviewing the entire site. The more that I read through all of the information the more I sensed that I had finally found my ministerial affiliation "home"! I became a member and after a few months I sought Commissioning as the first step towards Endorsement with the FCM. My Regional VP, Shannon Queenan, became my guide (and encourager) through the process. I am now commissioned and am both humbled and honored to be serving with all of my FCM colleagues both within FCM and with the Incarcerated and Restored Citizens. **Randy Dawson**



I am so grateful to rejoin the Federation of Christian Ministries as a Commissioned Member. I sought Commissioning back in 2011 and decided to reapply this year because of the FCM community and the values which it embodies. Being a commissioned member of FCM will strengthen and support my current ministry as an oncology chaplain and will help expand my ministry as an officiant. I look forward to connecting with members in my region and beyond as well as to continuing to participate in the weekly Zoom prayer meetings. Thank you, FCM Circle of Directors and Shannon Queenan, my VP, for welcoming me to the FCM family as a Commissioned member. **Deirdre Manning**



To whom does a caretaker turn when a caretaker needs care? Where does one who gives of themselves to look after others go when they need tending? The answer is relatively straight-forward, I think. The caretaker turns to other like-minded caretakers, and the giver turns to other givers in accord because they travel the same path and are on a similar journey. To me, the Federation of Christian Ministries is a gathering place for like-minded caretakers and givers in accord.

Greetings, friend; my name is John Diller, and I am a recently commissioned member in FCM. I serve as a chaplain at an organization that provides assisted living and memory care services to senior adults and residential services for adults with intellectual and physical disabilities. Throughout the past few years, my spiritual journey has expanded my vision of the inclusiveness and vastness of God's love for creation, and humans in particular. Within the Federation of Christian Ministries, I see an organization that can assist me in continuing my spiritual journey by challenging me to grow in professionalism, inclusiveness, and love and service to others. I look forward to getting to know you and others within FCM as we represent the organization together. **John Diller**

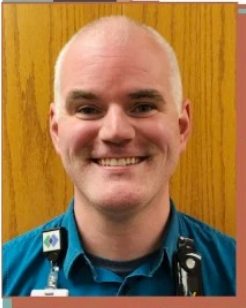


I am so grateful for FCM commissioning me. This process not only helps to affirm my call to the ministry of chaplaincy, but enables me to build a stronger foundation by learning from people with a wealth of knowledge and experience. The learnings I am getting from people who understand God's calling is precious. Thank you **Bhoke Kirigiti**

### *Irish Blessing*

*May the road rise up to meet you,  
May the wind be always at your back,  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
And the rains fall soft upon your fields,  
And, until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.*

*Happy St. Patrick's Day*



# MTS. & PLAINS REGION

CONNER SIMMS, VICE PRESIDENT



## Greeting to all of FCM from the Mountains & Plains Region

I write these words from the comfort of a warm room in Minnesota feeling the full weight of gratitude on my shoulders. Gratitude for a warm place in this cold winter, yes, but even more so I feel gratitude that I have returned home safely to my wife and daughter. For the past several months I have been deployed to Kuwait with the United States Air Force as a Chaplain. I'm glad to be back.

I want to say right off the bat a hearty thank you to Diane Dougherty and Tracy Peterson, our Southern and Pacific Region VPs respectfully. If you're relatively new to FCM or newly Commissioned/Endorsed (we'll get there in a second) than you likely came under their exquisite care during my absence.

Thank you again Diane & Tracy!

Let's keep the gratitude train rolling down the tracks shall we? I am also grateful for our three newly-Commissioned members and two newly-Endorsed members.

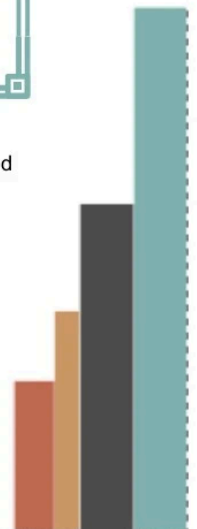
### Commissioned

- Claudia Dorsch** - Staff Chaplain at UnityPoint Health-Finley Hospital in Dubuque, IA
- Phuc (Phil) Phan** - Local Church Pastor in Austin, TX
- Jennifer Underwood** - Chaplain Resident, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago, IL

### Endorsed

- Carolyn Woodhouse** - Staff Chaplain at Texas Health Resources, Denton, TX
- HaLana L. Thompson** - Staff Chaplain at Saints Mary & Elizabeth Medical Center, Chicagoland, IL

I am grateful in these wonder women and men who continue to dedicate their lives to the service and spiritual health of others. Please join me in a hearty congratulations to them all!





# PACIFIC REGION

TRACY PETERSON, VICE PRESIDENT

## Welcome New Members



The Pacific Region is delighted to welcome **Lance Baker, Mi Chun, Judy Clarence, Kendra Dickinson, Jocelyn Obermeyer, and Brent Watson**. We are also very happy to announce that **Jennifer Crouse** has been approved for Commissioning and her ceremony will be happening in the very near future.

Our regional Zoom meeting for February was held February 13 at 10amPST/11amMST. We discussed "How do we each imagine the new normal? What does the future look like for each of us?" The discussion was wonderful, and we all related on a variety of points. We will be moving our regional Zoom meetings to the second Saturday of every other month. So, we will be meeting again in April, June, August, October and December this year. I'll continue to send out invitations to everyone in the region to join us. Our next meeting will be April 10, 2021 at 10am PDT. I look forward to seeing you all there!

And let me leave you with this blessing:

*May God bless you with discontent with easy answers, half-truths, superficial relationships, so that you will live from deep within your heart.*

*May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, abuse, and exploitation of people, so that you will work for justice, equality, and peace.*

*May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that you will reach out your hand to comfort them and to change their pain to joy.*

*May God bless you with the foolishness to think you can make a difference in this world, so that you will do the things which others tell you cannot be done.*

*If you have the courage to accept these blessings, then God will also bless you with:*

*Happiness—because you will know that you have made life better for others*

*Inner peace—because you will have worked to secure an outer peace for others*

*Laughter—because your heart will be light*

*Faithful friends—because they will recognize your worth as a person.*

*These blessings are yours—not for the asking, but for the giving—from One who wants to be your companion, our God, who lives and reigns, forever and ever. Amen.*

*Sister Ruth Fox, OSB*



**Newsletter Editor...Tom Cruse**  
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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 Registry: [fcmregistry.org](http://fcmregistry.org)

### FCM CERTIFICATES

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

## FCM Membership & Realm

### REALM ADMINISTRATOR & MEMBERSHIP

**Amy Simpson Bennethum**

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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 three times 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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