

Federation of Christian Ministries



Newsletter

November/December 2021

VOL. 55
NO. 6



*“Snow was falling,
so much like stars
filling the dark trees
that one could easily imagine
its reason for being
was nothing more
than prettiness.”*

Mary Oliver

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Christy Howard-Steele

Chairperson

Renewal Season Continues

*There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens:
Ecclesiastes 3:1*

November 1st begins the regular season for renewal of your FCM membership for 2022. Early bird renewal fees have ended, and regular renewal rates are in effect November 1st thereafter. Renewal encompasses both completing your annual report and remitting the appropriate fee. While your current 2021 membership does not end until December 31, 2021, the renewal season runs September 1 through November 30, 2021, to avoid yearend busyness.

Please be mindful that if you do not believe you will have the money to renew by November 30th, it is more helpful to both FCM and you to contact your Regional Vice President to request a partial or full waiver of your dues. Renewing your membership well into 2022 perpetuates an unnecessary hardship. You will still need to complete your annual report within the established time frame to maintain your membership status. It is our policy and practice not to deny members renewal because of financial hardships.

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 1 to December 31, 2022: follow the convenient method listed below. *Commissioning and/or Endorsement faculties end December 31, 2021, if you do not renew.*

***Please note** in order to renew, 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 Tom or Carolyn in the Central Office at membership@fcmmail.org, the Chairperson (Christy Howard-Steele at 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
- 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 2022 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

Letter from the President

Often times after I respond to a person's greeting, I ask, "how are you doing?" The most curious response to that question is, "I can't complain."

How can you not complain, I think to myself? We are living through one of the most challenging years in history, and you tell me that you can't complain about anything. Are you serious? This is something that I ponder. I admit that I am much too easily given to complaining about this, that and the other thing too.

I can't complain. (I need to be quiet and reflect right now). It really is an inspiring thing to say and an inspiring spirit to walk in. Let me work at putting this thought into practice.

Perhaps, I must work to reframe what I see by viewing life circumstances through lenses of hope, possibilities and gratitude to God. As a hospital chaplain, I have had the privilege of being with patients and their families as they've wrestled with illness related to COVID-19. I have witnessed more deaths during this period of time than at any other time in my history as a minister. But the rest of the story is that I am thankful for the medical team because they've worked harder, were steadfast, and provided quality health care under very difficult circumstances. And, thanks to God, they have saved more lives than I have seen saved over many years. Almost every day, our patients, even the COVID-19 patients, have left the hospital and have been able to keep living among their families and their friends.

Sometimes, when we are negative, we don't see God at work in the world. Yet, I do see God at work in this world. There are days and times when I must proclaim that I have seen miracles. I have seen children battling cancer, brought so low that they seemed to be outside death's door. Even the doctor's hands were extended in an attitude of, "there isn't anything else that we can do." My friends, the parents and their churches kept praying for the child. I was asked to keep praying for the child. And I did. I have seen these children live. It is simply amazing. I can't thank God enough for days like that.

I'm at a place in life where my siblings, friends, and some work peers retire. They ask, "When are you going to retire?" In my mind, retirement is their blessing. My blessing is to wake each morning and go to work. You see, I have an extremely rewarding job. It is a privilege and a blessing to be a hospital chaplain. There is something special about providing care to patients and families that keeps me waking up each day. I love what I do and the opportunities afforded me in my work. So, I happily go to work each morning. I'm grateful for my job and to be in ministry. Thank you FCM for commissioning me and holding my endorsement.

When I pause and train my mind to focus on the good, what has gone well, the presence of God and the joy of work, I see the good and the blessing. I find the smile. I am grateful and thankful in life. I find perspective in doing these things. Perhaps, with time, I will be the person who gives that response, I can't complain, my life is good.



Christy Howard-Steele

Chairperson

The Intricacies of Inclusion

*Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness;
Genesis 1:26a NRSV*

Inclusion is a foundational value of FCM. Being inclusive is not as easy as it may seem. To feel included is to feel like we belong. It is to feel valued and respected for who we are. It takes practice and self-examination to become aware of the ways in which we are not being inclusive.

As a CPE educator who works in a pluralistic, secular setting, I regularly invite my students to reflect on the spiritual or philosophical grounding that supports their work in this setting. Several Christian students cite Genesis 1:26 as their grounding or source of support. To these students, all humans are created in the image of God and therefore worthy of love, care, dignity. In my most recent unit, I had a non-theistic student who felt excluded by this grounding. She stated that she realized that the Christian students were doing their very best to include her with this grounding. Yet as a person who did not believe in God or creation, she felt outside this definition of human and therefore "dehumanized". While her challenge to her peers was not directed toward me, I never-the-less felt included in it. Not because I use this scripture as support for my ministry, but because I had not recognized the implication of exclusion. While great rebuttals can and have been made, that the intent of this Genesis text is to include all humankind, it requires imposing my belief on someone who does not see herself nor want to be seen that way.

How do we wrestle with texts or beliefs that leave others feeling excluded? Certainly, I could have concluded that this is my belief and the non-theistic student can believe differently. However, I don't believe that adequately creates a space for her to belong; for her to be fully valued and respected for who she is. I think inclusion requires that I re-examine this text and ask myself the following question: Do I need this text to see, understand, treat others as fully human? For me, the answer is no. The spiritual source that grounds my work is found in the command to "love others as well as you love yourself" (Matthew 22:39 MSG).



FCM REGISTRY
www.fcmregistry.org
BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS & HOLY UNIONS

All FCM members presiding at Baptisms must register the
 Baptism with FCM

Forms to register Baptisms, Weddings & Holy Unions can
 be found at www.fcmregistry.org

Weddings and Holy Unions can also be registered but are not mandatory

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Federation of Christian Ministries...

Happy November from the Faith Community Committee!

The Faith Community Committee's mission over the past year has been to bring our small faith communities to the forefront of FCM members' attention. FCM small faith communities are the foundation of FCM and we've been excited to bring energy into this committee.

However, when viewing the website, I clicked on the Welcome tab and saw:

Who We Are

We are a convention of faith communities and churches, gathering and inspiring Christians and individual ministers. Ministering to God's people, we serve as equals and partners by providing pastoral and spiritual care, leading worship services, officiating at weddings, baptisms and funerals. We offer spiritual direction, lead retreats, offer healing and interfaith outreach.

Please reflect on the term "convention of churches." Having faith communities as members of FCM is critical to carrying out our mission and to our existence as a religious body.

I wonder how many of FCM members realize that a convention of faith communities is "who we are"? I ask that because when I clicked on the Faith Communities tab on the FCM website, I counted a 20 individual faith communities (<https://www.federationofchristianministries.org/fcm-faith-communities/faith-communities.html>) Compare that with 600 plus individual members, and I see a rather wide gap.

FCM has been energized by its faith communities since its beginning in 1968. One of FCM's first faith community members, La Comunidad Ministerios Cristianos of San Jose, CA, is still meeting and inspiring its members.

If faith communities are the core of "who we are", we have work to do. Please review the 20 faith communities on the FCM website and see if one of these communities is near enough for you to attend.

So many of us can benefit from belonging to small faith communities. Perhaps many of you already belong, but your community has not registered with FCM. This renewal season would be an excellent time to ask your faith community to become an FCM member.

The Faith Communities Committee will be working with Circle and other individuals and teams to explore ideas on how best to grow our faith community membership. Please look for more to come as we engage all of FCM on the topic of small faith communities. Contact me at the email below if you would like more information about our committee or small faith communities.

Thank you,

Judy Lorenz
jlorenz@verizon.net



FCM Member Randy Dawson represents FCM at the



A huge thank you to **Randy Dawson**, FCM member from the Great Lakes Region for volunteering to represent FCM at the Wild Goose Festival 2021 which took place in September 2021.

Following is a recap of the experience sent to us by Randy.

Well, Wild Goose 2021 is now in my history book and it was absolutely wonderful. A glorious time of renewal, reflection, discernment and revival for me with the beautiful French Broad River and the majestic Smokey Mountains as my Cathedral !!!

The first of the week was a bumpy start as the remnants of Hurricane Ida were rumbling through. Lots of flooding, rain and wind in the area but long about Wednesday the heavens parted and it was absolutely beautiful through the end of the week. My only casualty was a patchwork of chigger bites on my legs ... looked like I had the measles.

A really kewl thing was, as this was the first time the festival was in September (has always been July) the wild Canadian Geese kept flying over the festival, honking quite loudly, on their migratory path. That was a nice touch from our Creator :) (if you hadn't heard, the name "Wild Goose" for the festival comes from the Celtic Christian metaphor for Holy Spirit.)

And representing FCM was an awesome experience.

I was able to meet, share and pray with so many people about FCM, their journeys or just whatever was on their heart. Very kewl!

There was an amazing amount of interest in FCM ... our history, mission and vision ... as well as the opportunities and resources we offer.

Of all of the Folks I shared with, most of them were either chaplains who were done with their schooling, training and their CPE work, ready for vocational Chaplaincy but needed Ecclesiastical Endorsement (much like myself.) The others were pastors or ministry leaders who were denominationally-tied but who have had various changes in their faith journeys so they no longer fit the mold of their denominations.

Most were afraid to admit to their churches and congregations for fear of losing their jobs ... they have families to raise and mortgages to pay. All in all it was SO heartbreaking to hear the stories and there were many tears shed at our FCM booth (mine included).

And as always, WG was packed full of diversity and inclusivity ... with the presenters, speakers, performers and attendees.

We shared the Eucharist in the morning at sunrise worship services and it was breathtaking to stand in the far back and watch hundreds and hundreds of African Americans, Caucasians, Asians, Hispanics, First Nations, Humans of all races and cultures, Gay, Cisgender, Transgender, LGBTQIA+, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Catholic, Protestant, Nones & Dones ... and ... you name it ... sharing space together.

I always get a sense that I am looking at the Kingdom of God when I see it!

I was very blessed to be able to represent FCM and want to again thank you for the opportunity!

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Endowment

by Tom Cusack

FCM Endowment Thoughts

Here, at the end of 2021, are three thoughts to consider about FCM's Endowment and how you can be part of it.

First, at this time of year some members over the age of 70 must take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from their IRA. [There are new rules for those attaining age 70 ½ in 2020. The age requirement is now 72. Please check out these rules.] You are taxed on the funds you take from your IRA. Also, you have to take these funds out, whether you need them or not. Please consider directing your financial institution to distribute some or all of your RMD to the FCM Endowment. A direct contribution to the Endowment is not taxed, and it counts toward your RMD. Have the check sent directly to FCM's Treasurer, **Heidi Tierney**. Her address is found at <https://www.federationofchristianministries.org/about-fcm/circle-of-directors.html> If your financial institution asks for FCM's Employer Identification Number (EIN), it is 23-7089016.

Second, a little bit goes a long way. Make a contribution of any kind to the Endowment, so you don't let 2021 slip by without giving back financially to FCM. It can be a once per year contribution. Or, you can follow the lead of a number of FCM members who have set up monthly contributions. Some are small and some are substantial, but the fact that they continue monthly builds the Endowment in a predictable way.

Third, make a memorial contribution to the Endowment. You can honor someone who has lost their life in 2021 to COVID-19 with your contribution. The Endowment Committee will send a confirmation of your gift to the person you designate to receive notification of your contribution. This memorial is a wonderful way to honor people, both living and dead.

To learn more, ask the committee at Endowment@FCMmail.org, or visit the Endowment site at: <https://www.federationofchristianministries.org/fcm-endowment-fund/permanent-endowment-fund.html>

Thank You
in advance for your gift!





by Tom Stricker

Endowment Fund Report

VALUE AS OF 10/16/2021: \$95,395.00
OUR GOAL: \$100,000

Donate to the FCM Endowment Fund
HELP US REACH OUR \$100,000 GOAL...NO GIFT IS TOO SMALL!

Regular Donation

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

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

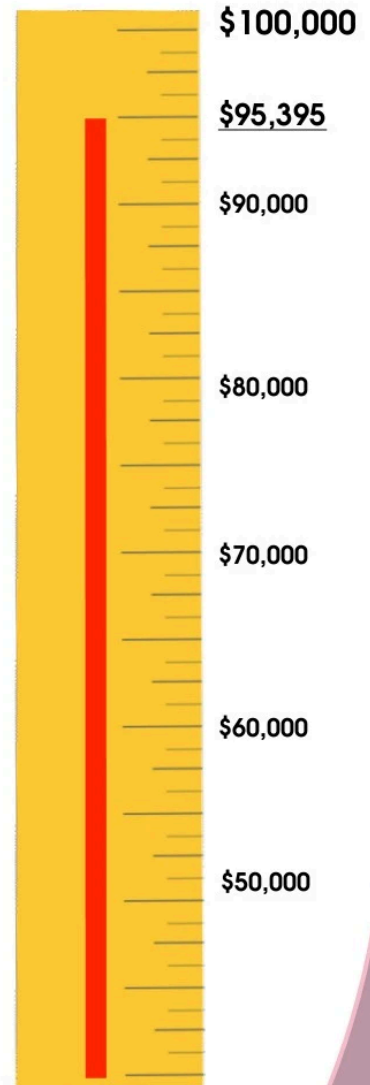
Tribute Gift

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@fcmail.org



Thank You
in advance for your gift!

Measuring Our Success

Major FCM Anniversaries

November - December 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 years

Carolyn Horvath	Great Lakes
Tom Leonhardt	Great Lakes
Joyce McFadden	Northeast

15 years

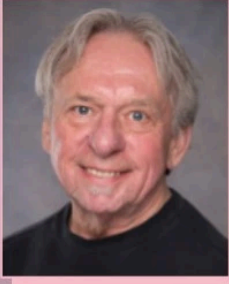
James Krisher	Northeast
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10 years

Carolyn Evans	Northeast
Joo Young Hong	Northeast
Maureen Mancuso	Pacific

5 years

Eileen Hogan	Northeast
Marjory Holt	Great Lakes
Lisa Koch	Southern
Puanani Lalakea	Pacific
Julia Polter	Northeast



Carl Yusavitz
Vice President

Northeast Region

The Northeast Region has six candidates applying for FCM Commissioning this fall. Please keep them in your prayers on November 6th when the FCM Circle of Directors meet. I will introduce each of them to you in the January newsletter.

Congratulations to FCM members **Julie Corron** and **Denise Hackert-Stoner** who were ordained to the priesthood with the Association of Roman Catholic Womenpriests on September 18th.

Our gratitude to Dan Pellegrin, former Northeast VP, who ably represented FCM at the ordinations. May their priestly ministry bear much fruit!

We have had very sparse participation in our "Second Saturday" regional Zoom gatherings. A number of members said that a Saturday morning just wasn't a good time for them to meet, so I'll be sending out a request for other day/time suggestions.

Be safe. Be well.



ARCWP Ordination of
Julie Corron and Denise Hackert-Stoner
September 18, 2021
Albany, New York

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Shannon Queenan
Vice President

Great Lakes

Region

A View from the Great Lakes Region

Connect and Reflect is what we call our regional Zoom meetings (coming up Wednesday December 8). We continue to have a couple dozen people that join in each time. We also continue to encourage, foster and nurture local groups to gather for support. If you want to be part of a local group gathering, let me know and I will help you find one.

It's Renewal Time The early bird renewal period has come to a close.

New Member **Donna Caputo** joins us from Ashtabula, OH. Welcome Donna!

Circle of Directors Meets next on Saturday, November 6. We will be reviewing candidates for Commissioning and Endorsement, as well as moving forward with some initiatives to better serve our membership. One of the most exciting agenda items is the National Assembly slated for July 14-18, 2022 in Chicago. Please mark the dates on your calendar, pray for our assembly and join us if you are able to do so.

Commissioning We have one member who is in the process for Commissioning this time around. **Mark Feldbush** is a Chaplain educator at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, OH. Welcome Mark!

Other Celebrations In another part of the newsletter is an article about the Wild Goose Festival. It was held over Labor Day weekend in North Carolina. Please take a moment to read the article by **Randy Dawson**, who represented FCM at the Festival this year.

A well done good and faithful servants to **Carolyn Horvath and Tom Leonhardt** for 40 years with the community of **Hope House of Prayer**.



Happy 40th. Anniversary

Shannon Queenan, Carolyn Horvath and Tom Leonhardt at the Hope House of Prayer 40th Anniversary Celebration. Right: The Group photo from the same celebration.



Congratulations FCM member Rev. Mary Coffey pictured at her ordination at St. Hildegard.

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Great Lakes Region - cont'd

The same day, St. Hildegard installed their cornerstone, celebrating their second anniversary as a thriving, growing community, led by Rev. Shanon Sterringer.



Bishop Philip Belzunce and Rev. Shannon Sterringer celebrate the placement of the cornerstone at St. Hildegard, an FCM community.

Final Thoughts I recently read a recap of the last two years by political writer Heather Cox Richardson. At the end of the article, she said, if you are tired, you have earned it! These times we are living in are challenging indeed. The best advice I was ever given was from a humble Bishop from Guatemala. He said hold on to God with one hand and onto your brothers and sisters with your other hand.

I leave you with the inspiration of **St. Hildegard of Bingen**: "Humanity, take a good look at yourself. Inside, you've got heaven and earth, and all of creation. You're a world—everything is hidden in you."





Mary Vidas
Vice President

Mts. & Plains

Region

Sharing Stories of How and Where is God at Work in Life and Ministry

Greetings from FCM Mountains and Plains Region! In recent reflections, I have been contemplating the blessings that occur when we share our stories of how and where God is at work in our lives, community and world.

The theology of omnipresence assures us that there's "not a spot where God is not;" and when listening to other's stories, I am witness to firsthand accounts of how the One Presence has been experienced in life's joys and challenges – in all of our stories.

Storytelling bridges the gap between reality and possibility – life as it is and life as it can be. Throughout history storytelling has formed, reformed, renewed and resurrected cultures and traditions. Telling stories also conveys wisdom from one generation to the next.

Stories invite our imagination beyond our current circumstances and into other worlds and points of view, engaging not only our minds, but our hearts and senses. In this way, stories help us shape our future and make it brighter.

With this thought in mind, and with great joy and excitement at the prospect of what we will discover together, members throughout the Mountains and Plains region are invited and encouraged to share their stories in our upcoming Regional Zoom meetings. Time for Q&A from participants will be allotted. Special thank you to the generous souls who have offered to be our featured storytelling guests for November and December. (See below)

If you are interested in sharing your story, please contact me about being put on the schedule (mvidas@comcast.net). Let's grow our souls and serve the world as we gather, listen and learn from one another's stories.

Regional Zoom Meeting Schedule

November 3rd, 2021 (Wednesday) 7:00 pm CT (Link will be shared in regional email notice). **Guest Speaker: Rev. Conner Simms, MDiv, FCM** Chaplain, Capt. United States Airforce Reserve. Staff Chaplain Regions & Gillette Children's Hospital, MN.

Conner will share his experience as Chaplain on the tarmac during the massive global humanitarian airlift of Afghan refugees and relocation efforts underway.

December 1, 2021 (Wednesday) 7:00 pm CT (Link will be shared in regional email notice). **Guest Speaker: Rev. Latosha Ramsey, MDiv**, Certified Educator Student and Chaplain, Parkland Health & Hospital System, Dallas Texas.

Latosha will share her journey as Minister and ACPE Educator, reflections on gender and racial equality and her passion to work toward inclusive ministry that will positively impact society.

Welcome New Members!
Ryan Wooley and Servasio Mtseka

Recently Endorsed Members
Koren Willetts, Christopher Lellehei, Claudia Lee Dorsch, Latosha Ramsey, Phuc "Phil" Phan, Scott Chapman

Area News
The next local **Saint Louis FCM Zoom** meeting will be on **Saturday, November 6, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.** To receive meeting link and/or further information about this meeting or other future meetings of the St. Louis FCM group contact:

Marybeth McBryan, coordinator: 314-277-3212; or Paul Reithmaier: p.reithmaier@att.net

Blessings on all this holiday season! Thank YOU for making a difference for so many through your presence, prayer and ministry! Mary

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Tracy Peterson
Vice President

Pacific

Region

The Pacific Region wishes Mi Chun congratulations on her Commissioning. It was a special occasion and I thank everyone who joined us. I also want to thank **Stephanie Johnson** of the Mountains and Plains region for allowing me to work with Mountains and Plains VP **Mary Vidas** in her Commissioning.

Thanks, too, for everyone who joined our October Zoom meeting. The discussion about how we are all doing and the advice and care and concern that each had for the others is just a small part of why I love being in the Pacific Region. You are all wonderful caring people and it's an honor to be your Vice President. We will be having our next Zoom meeting on Saturday, December 11, at 10am PST/11am MST. At that time, we will be talking about what is going to be happening over the upcoming year and talking about the National Assembly in Chicago in July. I look forward to seeing you all there.

I also want to let you all know that the position of Vice President for the Pacific Region will be open as I finish my time as your Vice President – if you have any questions or would like to learn more about the position, please contact me at pacificvp@fcmmail.org and I'll set up a time for us to talk.

I leave you with this blessing:

*This particular mind of the ocean
Filling the coastline's longing
With such brief harvest
Of elegant, vanishing waves
Is like the mind of time
Opening us shapes of days.*

*As this year draws to its end,
We give thanks for the gifts it brought
And how they became inlaid within
Where neither time nor tide can touch
them.*

*The days when the veil lifted
And the soul could see delight:
When a quiver caressed the heart
In the sheer exuberance of being here.*

*Surprises that came awake
In forgotten corners of old fields
Where expectation seemed to have
quenched.*

*The slow, brooding times
When all was awkward
And the wave in the mind
Pierced every sore with salt.*

*The darkened days that stopped
The confidence of the dawn.
Days when beloved faces shone brighter
With light from beyond themselves;
And from the granite of some secret
sorrow
A stream of buried tears loosened.*

*We bless this year for all we learned,
For all we loved and lost
And for the quiet way it brought us
Nearer to our invisible destination.*

■ John O'Donohue

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NEWSLETTER EDITORS
Carole duBois
Sandy Tracy

Newsletter Email: newsletter@FCMmail.org
The FCM Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Federation of Christian Ministries, a non-profit religious body. As the informational publication of FCM, its mission is to keep members current with the organization and its activities, to provide ideas to further ministry and to promote community building among local FCM groups and the national organization. All current members receive a copy. Articles and feedback are welcomed and can be sent to : newsletter@FCMmail.org by the 8th 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

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
Emails: connect@FCMmail.org - membership@FCMmail.org

Endorsement for Specialized Ministries

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

GLOBAL MINISTRIES UNIVERSITY

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

FCM Circle of Directors

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