

Federation of Christian Ministries

# Newsletter

May / June 2022

Vol. 56 No. 3







FCM National Assembly  
July 15 - 17, 2022

**THE STORIES OF OUR LIVES**

**Free for FCM Members Only!**

**Register to attend in person or  
virtually in your  
FCM REALM Account**

See additional information  
in this Newsletter



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# Congratulations



Christy Howard-Steele

Christy has been elected to serve a second term as  
FEM Chairperson  
July 2022 - July 2025





**FCM CHAIRPERSON  
CHRISTY HOWARD-STEELE**

# Federation of Christian Ministries

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Thank you, thank you, thank you for granting me the honor of being able to serve as FCM's Chairperson! I look forward to our continuing ministry together building community and serving one another. FCM is a ministry established to honor and celebrate, even in the midst of uncertainty and fear. We are called to live as a people who know the hope of resurrection in this life and the life to come.

In the fifty days between Easter Sunday and Pentecost, we honor Mothers and Fathers with their own days; remember the fallen on Memorial Day and commend graduates of many kinds. We also have opportunities to honor and appreciate our family members and friends. If we have learned any lessons from the pandemic, I hope we have learned not to take these moments for granted; that they are not guaranteed for 'next year;' and whenever possible to participate or engage in opportunities to honor, to celebrate, or to be with one another.

I know many are still concerned about how safe it is to gather in person. As an immuno-compromised person, who lives with an immuno-compromised person, I too must be cautious. As nearly everyone in the public sphere has become mask-less, I continue to be the odd-one wearing my KN95 mask.

My witness of the vaccinated immuno-compromised recovering from Covid gives me strong confidence in the effectiveness of vaccines and recommended boosters; and I am encouraged by the new treatments available for those who are unable to get vaccinated. But each of us must decide for ourselves what it means to be cautious or careful. I just know that I refuse to live the rest of my life in a bubble and in fear.

Dorothy Thompson, an American journalist, radio broadcaster, and daughter of a Methodist pastor said, **"Only when we are no longer afraid do we begin to live."** Dorothy was the first American correspondent expelled from Germany for reporting on the Nazi movement. At great risk to her own safety, Dorothy interviewed Hitler because she thought reporting on the threat to democracy was worth the risk.

Sometimes we get to choose; sometimes things happen and the only choice we have is how to respond. We each must decide what is important enough for us to step out beyond fear. I'm not sure we always get to the place of "no longer afraid." However, I believe we must make our choices in light of something more important that motivates us to move beyond our fear. That motivation is the solidarity we know is necessary to move forward together.

I am inspired by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky who, against the advice of his consul, refused to preserve his own safety and chose to remain in Ukraine; to be with his people as they fight.

This is the story and the hope of the Gospel! Knowing that G-d is for us and G-d is with us gives us the resolve to move forward into life's uncertainty in concert with one another. My prayer for FCM is that we will be a people who move courageously forward in ministry together.

## Give Me the Courage to Live

by Howard Thurman

Give me the courage to live! Really live—not merely exist.

Live dangerously.

Scorning risk!

Live honestly.

Daring the truth—

Particularly the truth of myself.

Live resiliently—

Ever changing, ever growing, ever adapting.

Enduring the pain of change

.As though 'twere the travail of birth.

Give me the courage to live,

Give me the strength to be free

And endure the burden of freedom

And the loneliness of those without chains;

Let me not be trapped by success

Nor by failure, nor pleasure, nor grief,

Nor malice, nor praise, nor remorse!

Give me the courage to go on!

Facing all that waits on the trail —

Going eagerly, joyously on,

Without anger or fear or regret

Taking what life gives,

Spending myself to the full,

Head high, spirit winged, ...

Gracious God, hear my prayer;

Give me the courage to live.







**FCM PRESIDENT**  
**RONALD DAVIS**

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## Spring is a Time for New Beginnings

I'm happy that spring is here. Daffodils, crocus plants and forsythias are in bloom in central Ohio. Leaves are forming on some of our trees. Day light is lasting a little bit longer each day. And my favorite, the temperature is getting warmer, God knows that I have seen enough snow and felt enough cold for the rest of this year.

Spring is a time for new beginnings. My hope is that it will be a time for those of us who are members of FCM to move forward into more active and intentional ministry. Ministry was hit hard during the pandemic. Fear of the virus caused us to pull back on all forms of gatherings from assemblies, gatherings, to local church meetings and events. Pulling back helped to minimize the spread of the virus. Yet, it came with a high cost—we lost a lot of connectedness in our spiritual relationship with one another. We became much to use to sleeping in and doing other things than coming together as the people of God.

We are excited that **Mary Vidas** has been elected as the Mountains and Plains Vice President. Our prayers are for God's grace and favor to be on her as she continues her ministry in this role. We are thankful for the election committee—**Marybeth McBryan, Erlinda Perlado-Mertens, and Richard Hadley** who ran this election. Please be aware that the Pacific Region's Vice President election is in process.

The number one priority for FCM over this spring (in my mind) is to building up our ministries. Many of us have returned back to work in person. I know that I have been working in person throughout this past year without problems or concerns. By following recommended best mitigation strategies, I haven't had to be tested even one time. I thank God for an effective vaccine. Some of us have been traveling over the last six to nine months across America—without problem. I will travel in April, my first time out of the state of Ohio in a long time. I can't wait! Many of us have been receiving family and friends into our homes since last summer without concern. I know that I have seen my children and grandchild most every weekend throughout this past year.

In contrast to this, many of our churches are still experiencing poor attendance. Some of us are fearful of attending an Assembly and welcome the continued use of zoom meetings only. I think it is time for each one to reflect on and discern if this is the time to reestablish our commitment to and engagement in our spiritual communities.

My hope is that we will be that people of faith which comes together. I got my second dosage of the booster shot this April. Getting the booster shot has given me a peace about attending worship, funerals, weddings and other forms of life and ministry. I am excited that we will have in person Circle Meetings and the Assembly in July. I am excited about attending gatherings, commissioning ceremonies, and other FCM meetings with you.

Happy Spring as we move forward in life and ministry.





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## FCM National Assembly Gathering 2022

**ASSEMBLY CHAIRPERSON**  
**PETER STRENING**

### THE STORIES OF OUR LIVES

"I will give thanks to you, O my God, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds." Psalm 9:1

The last time that the larger FCM community was able to gather was in July of 2018. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration in Philadelphia was an occasion of grateful remembering. We celebrated the history of FCM by hearing the stories of those who had the grace and courage to answer the call to ministry that was anchored in their hearts.

Our stories throw light on the ministry that God is working through us. In our stories we hear of the "wonderful deeds" that bring love, justice, peace and hope to the world. We discover the depth of blessing that we and others have received.

Our 2022 FCM National Assembly, *The Stories of Our Lives*, which will take place in Chicago in July, will be a time of sharing our stories with one another. Our program will consist of the telling and honoring of the stories that have made us, and that continue to challenge us to be God's people. We are devoting our program to our stories.

Our goal for the 2022 Assembly is ....**to be together!** Mindful of the separation and isolation many have experienced over the past two years, we look forward to joining one another especially in person. We hope that by telling and hearing our stories, we will be affirmed, encouraged, comforted, challenged and inspired.

Share your story with your FCM colleagues! Perhaps you have a story about....

- Your call to ministry
- How FCM has enriched your service to others
- Bringing justice and peace to bear upon privilege and racism
- Hope and resilience during the pandemic
- Your faith community putting the love of God into practice
- Blessings discovered
- Theological insights that sustain and inspire you
- Gratitude
- And.....!!!

Please present a story at the 2022 Assembly. Our format will offer the opportunity for the sharing of a story (15 minutes) and responses from the community. It will help us to honor and appreciate one another, and draw from the richness of our stories to empower our ministry to others.

***If you wish to be a presenter at the Assembly, please send a brief summary of the story you wish to share to Peter Strening at [peterstrening@comcast.net](mailto:peterstrening@comcast.net). Also indicate if you plan to attend in person or virtually.***

Please take this opportunity to share the beauty and wisdom of your ministry with the FCM community.





## FCM National Assembly 2022

**ASSEMBLY CHAIRPERSON**  
**PETER STRENING**

### THE STORIES OF OUR LIVES

The Circle has decided that FCM will subsidize the cost of the Assembly for all FCM members who wish to attend.

**There will be no registration fee for FCM members the 2022 National Assembly.**

In addition, FCM will cover the cost of lodging at the Holiday Inn O'Hare for one night for the first 50 FCM members who register for the Assembly (this is for members who will be staying for two or more nights at the Holiday Inn). We encourage our members to take advantage of the opportunity to come together at a greatly reduced cost.

**Registration for the Assembly both virtually and in Chicago, along with hotel room reservations instructions will be made by logging in to your REALM account and clicking on the Community Tab and then the Events Tab.**

**Assembly information will also be on the EVENTS page of the FCM website with a link to REALM.**



**SHARE THE STORY OF YOUR MINISTRY AND GOD'S AMAZING DEEDS**

### FCM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**July 15 - July 17, 2022**

**TIME:** Assembly begins 6:00 p.m. Friday, ends 12 Noon Sunday

**REGISTRATION FEE:** \$0 (FREE for FCM members)

**MEALS INCLUDED:** Friday evening hors d'oeuvres  
Saturday: Breakfast, Light Fare Lunch, Dinner  
Sunday: Breakfast

**VENUE:** **Holiday Inn Chicago O'Hare**

5615 N. Cumberland Avenue

Chicago, IL

Adjacent to Chicago O'Hare Airport, with shuttle service

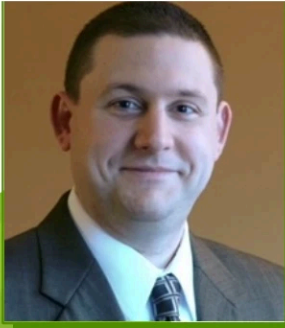
Complimentary parking

**ROOM RATE:** \$149. per night (plus 17.4% tax)

FCM will cover one night's lodging at the Holiday Inn for the first 50 FCM member registrants

Questions? Feel free to contact Peter Strening at [peterstrening@comcast.net](mailto:peterstrening@comcast.net) or 970-817-1409.





**FCM ADMINISTRATOR**  
**BILL APPLETON**

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## *A Message from the FCM Administrator*

As FCM continues to evolve, so do all of us. Life experiences and good mentors, like our recently deceased FCM brother Tom Leonhardt, help us to appreciate that our understanding of ministry evolves over time. This really hit home when my son was born and again recently in January as I began my role as the new FCM Administrator. I do not see this role as merely an administrative function. It is another opportunity to redefine my ministry. As Administrator, I have the opportunity to serve all of you so you can continue to serve in the myriad of ways you do. While there are days I do not operate out of my highest self, I continue to see this role as sacred responsibility.

In addition to working closely with our FCM Circle of Directors and other support staff, I am humbled and blessed as I get to know many more of you. As I have assisted members (some of whom I have known for years and many I am just meeting) I continue to be touched by the stories of how members came to FCM and I am encouraged by the many ways members are ministering.

**Two of my primary functions include assisting members who are in the Commissioning process and maintaining our Realm database.**

We continue to tweak the process for Commissioning and have moved to having all Commissioning materials come centrally to me.

I have received many requests to assist members with Realm related matters. In doing so, I have identified several common themes which I will address below.

**Logging in to Realm-** When logging in to Realm, please make sure you are typing in [www.onrealm.org](http://www.onrealm.org) directly into the address bar of whatever search engine you use. It is important to not have any extra characters and that you do not use the search feature. Realm has informed me that this can cause issues. Another issue that has come to my attention is that some members use Realm for FCM and for a church they are serving. While Realm has many good features, one of the limitations it has is that you cannot have more than one Realm account with the same email address.

**Updated information-** Please make sure when any of your contact information changes to make you make the appropriate changes in your Realm profile.  
**Passwords-** If you have forgotten your password please click on the "Forgot your password?" and follow the steps to create a new password. We are not able to reset member passwords on our end.

If I can be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to reach out by phone (216-210-0855) or by email at [connect@fcmmail.org](mailto:connect@fcmmail.org)

May we continue to be open to new ways of ministering to each other.

In service,

Bill Appleton





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## The FCM Faithful Major Anniversaries of Membership

CAROLYN HORVATH & TOM CUSACK

THE PEOPLE LISTED BELOW HAVE WORKED LONG AND FAITHFULLY TO BUILD FCM TO ITS PLACE TODAY. IF YOU WISH TO CONGRATULATE THEM, SEARCH THEM ONLINE IN REALM (WWW.ONREALM.ORG) OR ON THE REALM APP. NOT SIGNED IN TO REALM? ASK YOUR REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT OR [CONNECT@FCMMAIL.ORG](mailto:CONNECT@FCMMAIL.ORG) FOR AUTHORIZATION.



### 30 Year Anniversary

TOM WILT - SOUTHERN REGION - 6/1/1992

### 10 Year Anniversary

JACQUELINE HEITMANN - NORTHEAST REGION - 6/20/2012  
LIVING PRESENCE ZEN - NORTHEAST - 5/20/2012

### 5 Year Anniversary

DAWNE BANKS MTS & PLAINS REGION - 5/1/2017  
CASSANDRA HILL - PACIFIC REGION - 6/15/2017  
HELEN MADDIX - MTS & PLAINS REGION - 6/6/2017  
DENNIS MCDONALD - NORTHEAST REGION - 6/9/2017







**DAN PELLEGRIN, FCM**  
NORTHEAST REGION

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*“Editor’s comment: **Dan Pellegrin** is one of the FCM members who contributes on a periodic basis to the FCM Endowment. Since contributions may be made in any amount, periodic or regular giving can be manageable for anyone’s budget.”*

## Me and the Endowment

### Dan Pellegrin

Why do I give regularly?

1. It's painless. I have my bi-weekly paycheck direct-deposited, then have the bank make the bi-weekly payment (free) to the FCM Endowment Fund. My net is what I make every two weeks. It's painless.
2. It benefits people. My wife **Donna** (FCM member) and I recently reviewed the organizations to which we make bi-weekly donations. Donna wants to emphasize donations that directly benefit people (e.g. St. Jude's Hospital, Operation Smile, FCM Endowment) rather than animals or ecology (even though they are worthy also). Given the state of our world, people need our resources so much.
3. Donations to FCM Endowment have a special spiritual aspect that other sites don't have.
4. Gifted and spiritual people hand-picked by FCM say where the money will be disbursed. I don't know that about other sites.
- 5) 100% (!!!) of the donation goes for the good.

Peace,  
Dan Pellegrin







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## Endowment Fund Report

**ENDOWMENT CHAIR**  
**TOM STRICKER**

# Thank You

FOR HELPING US TO REACH  
OUR FIRST \$100,000. GOAL

**VALUE AS OF 4/26/2022**  
**\$100,000.00**

### Donate to the FCM Endowment Fund

**NO GIFT IS TOO SMALL!**

#### 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

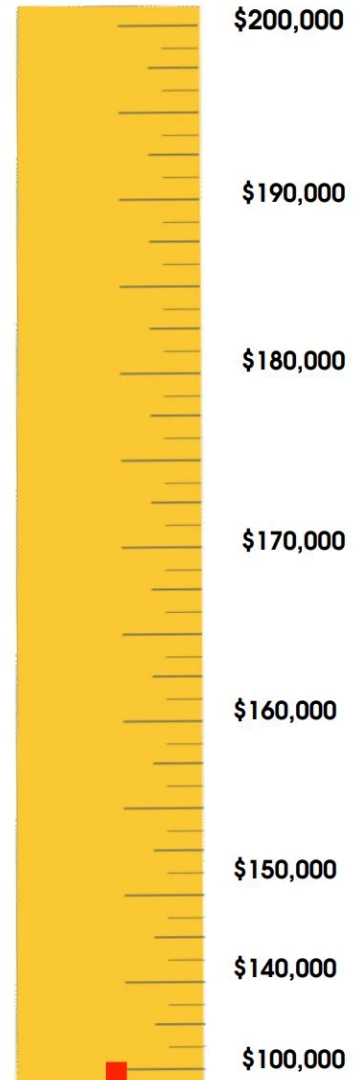
#### Tribute Gift

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](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org) or [endowment@fcmmail.org](mailto:endowment@fcmmail.org)



## Measuring Our Success

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We are **Our Lady Undoer of Knots Inclusive Catholic Community**. We are a parish within the **Progressive Catholic Church**, located in the Baltimore metropolitan region. We are also the Baltimore Chapter of **DignityUSA** which is the oldest and largest community of **LGBTQ+** Catholics and friends in the world.

We are an independent community of Catholics and as such we are a Eucharistic and Sacramental church that adheres to the rubrics of Roman Missal from Vatican II; however, we are not affiliated with the Roman Church.

We follow a different "GPS" than other catholic communities. By that we mean, we differ in areas of:

- **Gender:** we have no gender bias regarding who may serve in ministry or leadership.
- **Power:** each branch of our community - laity and clergy - contribute to governance in a spirit of collaboration and collegiality. We also believe in the primacy of conscience.
- **Sexual morality:** we embrace the diversity of sexual expression as long as it is just, consensual, and not destructive.

We welcome everyone seeking to build a deep loving relationship with God and neighbor:

- *Those disenchanted with the fundamentalist and authoritarian trends in many churches and who seek a collaborative and listening community of faith.*
- *Women seeking an equal voice including attaining ministerial roles.*
- *Those who are divorced and seek the sacraments.*
- *Members of the LGBTQ+ community.*
- *Married folks wanting ministerial roles.*
- *Former clergy who want to minister again.*

We welcome anyone who approaches with respect. Anyone coming to us will find an affirming, loving, non-judgmental community.







**ALFRED BURNHAM, FCM**  
**SOUTHERN REGION**



## What I learned about destiny from the movie "Gravity"

Just a second there, my friend, will you really feel like you're in outer space with Sandra Bullock and George Clooney floating around the Space Shuttle when you see the film, Gravity? This movie is so much more than a Sci-Fi flick. I discovered a type of parable in the midst of the story, and that is what makes this film such a good film, in my opinion, because the story captures the initial sense of hopelessness for the woman astronaut/engineer who is drifting in space after a horrendous accident. Ultimately, she finds herself questioning whether she truly wants to go on living in the face of tragedy. At first, it is stark survival, but, as the story unfolds, it is even more. It's survival with meaning and destiny.

The two surviving astronauts are eventually separated, and George determines that he must let go of Sandra if she is to have a genuine chance to survive. Then she's on her own and somehow, she manages to enter the empty space station. George shows up, but that is impossible, right? He must have run out of O2 in his space suit? She is overcome with surprise and then we realize that whether you're on earth or out in space, the world of the spirit is within you, coaxing you to absorb all the strength and love and joy that you can muster and to persevere in what seems impossible. Isn't this the type of moral lesson that we truly crave? Why stage this entire drama unless you have some deeper questions to probe? I enjoy probing and, in fact, I never get enough of looking at profound lessons learned within desperate circumstances.

The film makers took us on a little journey, but if you look at archetypes, I believe that Sandra is the so-called "universal character." She faces the big question. How can I possibly survive? George represents a Savior-type figure, one who makes the ultimate self-sacrifice to ensure some chance of survival for his companion. We, the audience, become companions with Sandra as we ponder our destiny and why we strive to live and breathe and struggle against all odds. Of course, I wish to add my unique perspective as well. George's reappearance reveals a striking parallel to the arrival of Jesus with his disciples after his Resurrection, and the Paschal Mystery continues when the Astronaut Sandra seems to rise from the waters at the End.

Think of the grace of Baptism and Easter. Well, that's where my mind wandered. If you haven't seen the film "Gravity", then I highly recommend you see it. I believe it would be best to view it with a family member or a friend who is willing to talk about it afterwards and to share their point of view about the story and listen to your insights as well. Blessings to all my FCM brothers and sisters.

Alfred Burnham, FCM member and hospice chaplain



SHARED BY:  
GINNY CUSACK, FCM

# Federation of Christian Ministries

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JULIA TATSCH, MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM DESIGNER  
AND HUMANITIES TEACHER MAR 15

## Arrested Development: A Vision Shatters in War-torn Ukraine



AN EARLY TEACHER-TRAINING SESSION AT A MODEL  
MONTESSORI SCHOOL IN UKRAINE IN THE 1990S.

JFK, 1993: A slight woman with a long maroon coat descends a bustling stairway in an airport terminal. As she walks down the hall, the lighting grows so dim she cannot read her ticket. She wonders if she is in the right place. She turns to ask, but she can find no one in this hallway who speaks English. It's all Russian and Ukrainian — which almost makes sense, since she's on her way to Ukraine, except that she's still in New York. Her mission? To help a small team of invested Ukrainian educators and administrators set up a model Montessori school and teacher training center in the very recent wake of the Soviet Union's downfall.

That woman was my mother, Joyce Tatsch. She was slated to make this journey with Nancy Rambusch, who was appointed as the representative of [Association Montessori Internationale](#) in the United States back in 1959, and shortly thereafter founded [American Montessori Society](#) — the association to which Wellan belongs (along with [Association of Independent Schools in New England](#)). Nancy was a force to be reckoned with, and Joyce, a then-primary teacher at Princeton Montessori School and a teacher-trainer for [Princeton Center Teacher Education](#), knew she would be in good hands. She was nervous and excited, but with Nancy's unwavering commitment and vision, Joyce felt at ease about this journey to a country that was waking up to a world closed off from them for seventy-five years.

Shortly before the trip, Nancy fell ill. Diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, she could no longer make the trip. She was devastated. My mother, then, was on her own.

She uses the word "terror" to describe how she felt when she found out that this was a journey she would take alone. The flight didn't help. "Everyone was drinking so much vodka," she recalls, "and my husband [a pilot] told me later that the kind of plane I was on should not have been in use." But after finding her four (unheard of!) bags in a pile of luggage (there were no fancy baggage carousels in Kyiv at that time), many of which were filled with pencils, band-aids, and other basic supplies, she found so much more.

She stayed with the Minko family on that first trip. Stepan was the principal of a school and his wife was a teacher. They had two daughters, Vita and Natasha. She remembers their hospitality and endless kindness despite the fact that no one spoke a common language. "On the first morning, they served me coffee at breakfast, and I asked for milk, which they did not have. The next morning, they offered me milk for my coffee, and I discovered that their twelve-year-old daughter had gone off to wait in line for milk at four in the morning for me. Oh, I felt so terrible!" she takes a deep breath, remembering, "But I also realized then how gracious, kind, and open these people were." For the remainder of this trip, and during all subsequent trips, she continued to be overwhelmed by the kindnesses, big and small, that she either witnessed or experienced herself.







LEFT: JOYCE TATSCH DURING HER FIRST VISIT TO UKRAINE IN 1994. RIGHT: JOYCE TATSCH HAVING DINNER WITH THE MINKO FAMILY.

This was just the beginning of a partnership, friendship, and love that would develop over the next thirty years. Sure enough, Joyce and two strong administrators (**Ginny Cusack** and Marsha Stencel) wasted no time in setting up the model Montessori school and shortly thereafter, the training center.

Yet none of this would have happened without Borys Zhebrovsky, the Deputy Head of the Main Education Board of Kyiv or Tetiana Mykhalchuk. When the Soviet Union collapsed and Ukraine regained independence (again), Borys knew that the first priority needed to be restructuring education. The Soviet regime established free schooling for children from a young age, but one could hardly call it joyful. Small children sat in rows, recalls **Ginny Cusack**, who made countless trips to contribute to the administrative efforts of setting up schools and training folks over the years. "Children of three to four years old sat in desks all in rows with a pencil. They wrote letters and recited them. It was surreal, like a high school classroom but with tiny children and desks. Teachers talked, and the children listened. That was the entire day. One could hardly call it learning."

Borys knew this wasn't the way to teach a generation of people to lead a democratic country, so he went on a pilgrimage of sorts. In the United States, he saw all kinds of methods that interested him, from Waldorf to Reggio Emilia (among others) and of course, Montessori. He saw possibility in choice for families, but saw the most potential in the Montessori method. During a visit to Princeton Montessori, he told Ginny, "It is a fairy tale. I would like to tell this fairy tale to parents and teachers, and make this fairy tale real in Ukraine" (Montessori Life, Issue 2, 2008). He saw the collaboration between teachers in the break room, he saw relaxed relationships between teachers and administration ("teachers aren't nervous!"), and he saw peaceful interactions between teachers and students. He knew that to promote this kind of peaceful independence of spirit and thought in Ukraine's youngest generation would be the best chance at forging a peaceful future.

He appointed Tetiana, a former high-school vice principal, as the school's first leader. Ginny and Joyce both describe Tetiana as sophisticated, well-spoken, and as a "woman with a mission." Sure enough, she proved herself quickly as a highly adept leader, and this, along with a supportive team, led to a positive ripple effect in education over the course of the next thirty years that was felt in classrooms across the country.



PICTURED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: VERA, GINNY, BORYS, AND TETIANA.

Now, we are all watching in horror as events unfold in Ukraine. Everyday we apprehensively check the news, wanting to know — and not wanting to know — what is happening, or what is going to happen. Through email communication in the first week of the Russian invasion, Ginny learned that Tetiana and her family have escaped and are on the run, but they are safe for the moment. My mother learned this weekend that her close friend's sister (a pulmonary physician) was able to get her two teenagers out of Ukraine, but that she must remain because her father is too feeble to travel. Another Primary teacher from the Montessori school took up arms and is fighting.

We are bearing witness to an unfolding atrocity, not unlike many other power struggles-turned-violent. But this story is not just a story of a catastrophic humanitarian disaster. It's also a story of development arrested just at a time of its greatest beauty. Ginny, Marsha, and Joyce, and to a much greater extent Borys, Tetiana and many other Ukrainians who poured their hearts and souls into intentionally developing education for healing in their country, are suddenly wracked by trauma. Ginny says tearfully, "I'm not in the war, and yet, my heart is there. It's all gone."

My mother, ever the optimist, is hopeful. "You know," she says, "I told Ginny that not all is lost. So many people have worked to make this happen. Since 1994, an entire generation of independent-thinking children have become the adult future of Ukraine. They have learned about the power of peace and know what life can be like. They will rebuild when all of this is over. They have to!"

I hope with all my heart that she is right.



JULIA TATSCH AMONG THE GROUP OF STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND STAFF WHO PARTICIPATED IN WELLAN'S PEACE WALK FOR UKRAINE.







**COMMUNICATION**  
**ANTOINETTE MAROLD**

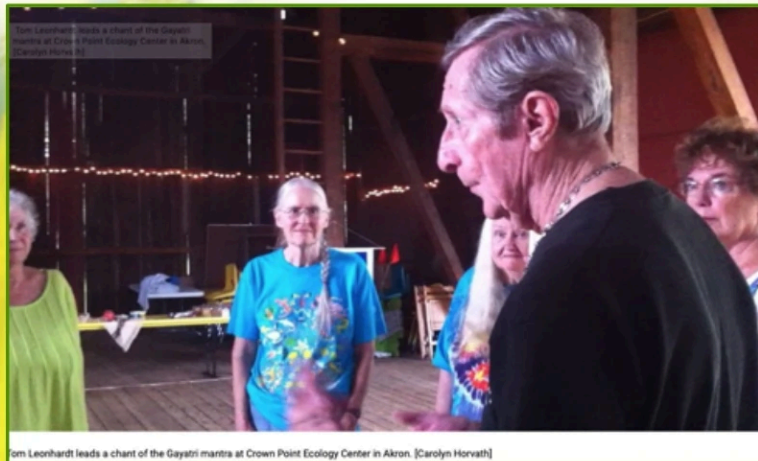
# Federation of Christian Ministries

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## Spiritual leader for Cleveland's non-conformists leaves a legacy of slowing down and opening up

FCM member Tom Leonhardt, who passed on to his new life in December 2021, was featured on ideastream. You can view and read the segment here:  
<https://www.ideastream.org/news/spiritual-leader-for-clevelands-non-conformists-leaves-a-legacy-of-slowing-down-and-opening-up>



Tom Leonhardt leads a chant of the Gayatri mantra at Crown Point Ecology Center in Akron. [Carolyn Horvath]

### FCM REGISTRY

[www.fcmregistry.org](http://www.fcmregistry.org)

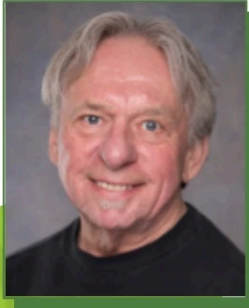
#### BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS & HOLY UNIONS

**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](http://www.fcmregistry.org)

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





**NORTHEAST REGION**  
**CARL YUSAVITZ, V.P.**

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## Welcome & Congratulations

FCM Northeast Region welcomes two new members: **Quanita Hailey** is a clinical chaplain at Brooklyn Methodist Hospital in New York, New York, and **Christie Walkuski** is a chaplain resident at Albany Medical Center in Albany, New York.

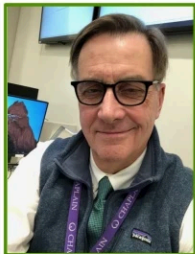
Congratulations to FCM Northeast member **Jacqueline Cook** who is now a board-certified chaplain with the Association of Professional Chaplains.

Congratulations and welcome to **James FitzGerald and Brian Kelley** who were granted FCM Commissioning at our last Circle of Director's meeting. Here are James and Brian in their own words:



"Baptisms, weddings, anointing the sick, funerals, and being with people during their most joyful or challenging life moments -whether one refers to these events as sacramental moments or life's milestones, they are powerful spiritual vignettes that transcend time and space. It is a privilege to officiate or witness all of these occasions. I sought commissioning from Federation of Christian Ministries because I have a calling to support people during these life-changing events. It is important to me to be credentialed in a professional manner to carry out this ministry. Equally important to me is to be in community with other FCM members for mutual support, professional and spiritual development. My current ministry includes spending time with people who are preparing for life-changing events and creating spiritually meaningful ceremonies to mark such occasions. The goal of each ceremony is to create a sacred space so that all involved feel God's loving presence. I feel very blessed to be connected with a beautiful community like FCM, and to journey with people to experience God's unconditional and all-inclusive love."

**(James FitzGerald)**



"For the last five years I've had the blessing of serving as a Chaplain in the Spiritual Care Service of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. My ministry is located at one of MSKCC's largest outpatient facilities, the David H. Koch Center for Cancer Care on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Working with outpatients and their caregivers has allowed me the gift of building relationships while providing spiritual care over the lengthy arc of complex cancer treatments. I was introduced to FCM by my colleague Chaplain Ingmar Ludwig of New York Presbyterian Hospital, who recounted his positive experience and urged me to join him as a member of this strong Christian faith community. While I initially joined FCM in hopes of seeking its endorsement for my APC board certification, the generosity of spirit I've found in the Thursday Prayer Gatherings and other members' contacts have helped me to feel welcomed and very much a member, even if a new one, of a true community. I look forward to the support and guidance of many FCM colleagues as I continue to learn in my ministry." **(Brian Kelly)**

**There will be no Northeast FCM Group Zoom gathering in May. The next regional Zoom gathering will be June 11th at 9 AM.**

### DEEPEST SYMPATHY



Longtime FCM Northeast member,  
Roddy O'Neil Cleary

died on June 27, 2021 surrounded by family and friends.

She and her husband Bill Cleary (deceased) were both members of FCM. Roddy wrote the following about herself, in which she begins by quoting priest and author Henri Nouwen: "Roddy believed that 'Death is the event that gives ultimate meaning to life.'





**BETH KNIGHT, FCM  
SOUTHERN REGION**

# Federation of Christian Ministries

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## News from the Southern Region

Greetings everyone! The Southern Region has been experiencing winds of change as we have acclimated to new leadership. Our transition consists of outgoing Vice President, Diane Dougherty (we are very grateful for her dedication and service) and incoming Co-Vice Presidents: H. Don Morris and Linda VanPutte.

Changes of leadership can often present: 1) new lenses to look through; 2) learning curves; and 3) new ways of being a continued fellowship. We have experienced all three of these. We also took a pause from being present to you via our page in the FCM newsletter. As we re-group from this break, we look forward to sharing regular updates with you all.

As of April 2022, our newsletter writer is **Beth Knight** of Clermont, Florida. And as the first quarter ends, the wind brings another change - our Co-VP **Linda VanPutte** will step down effective May 1. We are thankful for Linda's service and that she will remain an FCM member. We are also thankful that **H. Don Morris** will remain as our region's Vice President.

Going forward, wherever you live within the Southern Region, we want to remind you of options for connection and choices in reaching out to us in the Southern Region:

1. **H. Don Morris, Vice-President Southern Region**; Email: [southernvp@FCMmail.org](mailto:southernvp@FCMmail.org) or text #864-526-9878
2. **Beth Knight, Florida Area Liaison**, Southern Region Newsletter writer, and Commission Service Support by Zoom or in Person. Connect with Beth at ph: 352-978-8180 OR Email: [dbethknight@hotmail.com](mailto:dbethknight@hotmail.com)
3. **Diane Dougherty, Georgia Area**; Information, resource for small faith communities and social justice. Connect with Diane at ph. 678-918-1945 OR Email: [doughertyadd@gmail.com](mailto:doughertyadd@gmail.com)



*In case you have not met our Region's Vice President, Don Morris, we share this brief thumbnail: Don is a former Pentecostal pastor of 25 years, now serving as a palliative care chaplain. He is married 25 years with 7 children, and is studying for a MDIV Degree.*

*So, after our pause and re-grouping time, together we lean forward in fellowship embracing what Quaker singer/songwriter Carrie Newcomer recently said at her Substack blog: "... after a pause... Proceed as Way Opens"...*

### A REFLECTION ON COVID-19 by Linda VanPutte, Outgoing Co-Vice President

*"Only when it is dark enough can you see the stars" ~ Martin Luther King Jr.*



As we move forward out of the darkness and uncertainty of COVID-19, let us pause and reflect on our ministry. My prayer for each of us is as we pause, we can re-energize and heal. May we take time to pause and permit ourselves to rest and be present in the moment. May each of us reflect on those who were guiding stars when we were in darkness, and may each of us discover the times we were and are "stars" in the darkness.

Sadly, as we in the USA are beginning to see light, it is not the case across the planet. Let us not forget the darkness in the world as the war rages in Ukraine. Let us as a community pray for those in harm's way and peace in the world. May we each be the "stars" in a world that can seem so dark.  
Blessings, Linda VanPutte





## Heartfelt Welcome! To Our Growing Region

Since the summer of 2021, the following persons have either joined FCM and/or become commissioned. We honor and celebrate their ministry. Our region continues to reflect diversity and inclusion.

### ELEVEN NEW MEMBERS:

**FLORIDA** - Gerald Estel, Linda Jarvis, Sergio Pino, Dennise Bonnet

**GEORGIA** - Donald Retemiah, Julia Styles, Vanessa Fletcher

**NORTH & SOUTH CAROLINA** - Mia Hutchins-Cabibi, Roger Bush, Zephora Benson

**VIRGINIA** - Theresa Szkromiuk

### Eight New Commissioned Ministers



**Andy Ross, MA** Contemporary Spirituality, wrote his Master's Thesis on: God is Laughing: Religion, Humor and the Path of the Mystic. He recently completed a CPE Residency through Wakemed Health and Hospitals. He plans to continue chaplaincy and pursue Board Certification.



**Zephora C. Benson, MDIV**, serves as a chaplain/spiritual care minister in Seneca, SC. She has previous pastoral and congregational care experience and is known for her gifts of empowering those she meets, to help the person stand tall in the power of the Spirit in her/his own way.



**Ashley Acken, MDIV**, is currently serving as a chaplain at Duke University Hospital, while also simultaneously studying for a MA in Health Administration. She has a special calling to care for those with mental illness or those in acute and end of life situations.



**Vanessa Fletcher, MDIV**, currently is a Chaplain Resident at Emory University Hospital Atlanta, GA. She previously served for seven-plus years in the United Methodist Church with Discipleship, Youth Ministry, Outreach and Students. Public speaking, gender and race matters are some of her passions.



**Donald A. Retemiah, MA** Theology, serves as a chaplain in Lithonia, GA. He has been bi-vocational for many years serving in customer service and sales while also serving in numerous roles with his church denomination. Among the many things he does for his church is a daily co-writing of a morning devotional.



**Mary Pretorius Murphy, MDIV**, currently is a Chaplain Resident at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN. She previously served as Director of Social Justice Initiatives and Volunteer Coordinator at St. Augustine Episcopal Chapel as well as organized the Walk of Love, an event honoring Civil Rights' Veterans. Mary has a rich writing life and holds a MA in Creative Writing with emphasis in poetry.



**James (Jim) Hyatt, MA** Pastoral Counseling & Spiritual Formation, is currently serving as a Chaplain. He has ministry experience as a Pastor, Elder, United States Navy Reserve Hospital Corpsman, Paramedic, and in Law Enforcement.



**Lord Tirtowa Kodjo Lembo (aka David Lewbo), MDIV** is a French speaking associate pastor, and is currently in a CPE program at International Frederick Health Hospital, Frederick, Maryland. His previous ministry service and experience includes: missionary mobilizer for 8 countries in S. Africa, field coordinator-water sanitization and hygiene education in 50 countries. He has a fierce sense of advocacy and passion for inclusive ministry.







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**GREAT LAKES REGION**  
**SHANNON QUEENAN V.P.**

## *A View from the Great Lakes Region*

### **National Assembly, July 15-18, 2022 in Chicago!** **I HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!**

Because of on-going COVID concerns, the Circle decided to offer a hybrid gathering where people can attend in person OR via Zoom! Check the FCM website and this newsletter for additional details.

**Connect and Reflect** is what we call our regional Zoom meetings. We met in April and shared some reflections about the challenges our world is facing!! There are several more Connect and Reflect meetings scheduled for the rest of the year: Wednesday June 15, Wednesday, September 28, and Tuesday November 15. We meet at 7:30 for ONE hour. We share prayer and reflect on our lives. Please put the dates on your calendar and join us. 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!

**Grant AND Endowment Committees** have joined together offering some grants for members and member churches to gain funding for inclusive ministry! Watch for the awards for our first grant season! We are so excited to be able to offer this kind of nurturance to our members and your work!

**Endowment Fund** This helps us to secure the future for inclusive ministry that transforms society. If you'd like to make a donation, please do so on Realm. \$5/monthly donation is about the same as a cup of coffee at a coffee shop and will make a big difference.

**Final Thoughts** As we move to the hope of Spring, even in the midst of war, I leave you with this:







**PACIFIC REGION  
DAN WINDHAM, V.P.**

## Rebirth

At the time of this writing, my family and I were looking toward a new start and a new opportunity to settle ourselves after "wandering" in the Arizona desert for the past two years. We recently bought a townhome in Mesa with the intention to plant our family and to grow roots.

After moving to Arizona during the initial stage of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, living with in-laws for several months, then moving into rental that would take us on a roller coaster ride through a booming housing/rental marketplace in 2021, we were optimistic to have found our home and a chance to settle down.

### Community

We came to Arizona to create community for our daughter, to give her a place to grow up. We have family here, and we hoped to develop friendships akin to the wonderful friendships we left in Chicago. With the ebb and flow the pandemic brought over the past two years, making new friends was a challenge.

Our jobs were a stabilizing force as Erin and I realized that the Spirit guided us to our ideal vocational experiences. Though some parts of life were incredibly disorienting and destabilizing, other parts of life offered solid footing as we took each faithful step toward the unknown, toward God's promises to prosper and not to harm.

We could see God's abiding presence through the dust and debris swirling around us as we navigated these changes. It was not inconsequential to us that, during this Lenten season, we experienced a climax of emotions and tensions as we stood in the space between the already and the not yet.

When we read this newsletter together in May, our present tension will have resolved. We will be in our new home. Easter Sunday will have come and gone. We will be in the Easter Season - the season of ascension and of rebirth.

Challenges will still arise. Remembering Jesus' resurrection and ascension helps us to renew our strength to engage life with openness. Bearing witness to the victories and to the defeats in our lives offers us an ongoing opportunity to strengthen our spiritual connection to the source of life and to life itself.

As we look forward to the National gathering in Chicago this summer, let us remember the community we have in FCM and within the Pacific region. My hope, going forward, is that we will continue to gather as a region and to engage our community in new and helpful ways to grow together.

As you read this newsletter, as you reconcile your Lenten practice with your spiritual aspirations for rebirth and rededication to sanctification, may the Spirit lead you onward. May you find the swiftness in your steps to continue on, through the challenges you didn't create or expect. May you overcome and be reborn.



*Email me with your thoughts on a good time to gather via Zoom between now and our National Assembly in July. I look forward to connecting with you all.*

*Peace,*

*Dan  
pacificvp@fcmmail.org*



## Mountains & Plains Region Vice President Election Results

### CONGRATULATIONS MARY VIDAS



We are pleased to announce that **Mary Vidas** has been elected to serve her first term as the Mts. & Plains Vice President.

Mary's new term will begin after the July 2022 Circle meeting and continue until July 2025. Congratulations Mary!

Mary can be reached at [mts\\_plainsvp@FCMmail.org](mailto:mts_plainsvp@FCMmail.org)

Election Committee  
Marybeth McBryan, Committee Chairperson  
Erlinda Perlado-Mertens  
Richard Hadley

### MARY'S ACCEPTANCE STATEMENT

I am pleased and honored to accept the position of Vice President of the Mountains and Plains Region. I look forward to our working together as we build community, affirm our call to ministry, learn from one another and grow our souls.

May we continue to embody the Spirit of love and compassion, equity, justice and inclusivity through the diverse and many ways in which we care for one another, those we serve and the beautiful Earth we call home! There is much to celebrate! Blessings and then some,  
Mary





# Federation of Christian Ministries

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Greetings from the FCM Mountains and Plains Region!

**MTS & PLAINS REGION**  
**MARY VIDAS V.P.**



**Vice President Message:** Thank you! I am pleased and honored to accept the elected position of Vice President of the Mountains and Plains Region. I look forward to working together as we build community, affirm our call to ministry, learn from one another and grow our souls. May we continue to embody the Spirit of love and compassion, equity, justice, and inclusivity through the diverse ways we care for one another, those we serve, and the beautiful Earth we call home! There is much to celebrate! Peace & Light, Mary

**Welcome, New Member! Shane Ward,** PICU Chaplain, Children's Medical Center, Dallas, Texas.

**The Gift of Gathering Regional Zoom Meeting**  
**May 11th, 2022, 7:00 pm (Central Time) featuring**  
**special guest, Kathleen McCauley, FCM**  
MA Theology/Pastoral Ministry, MA Pastoral Counseling.  
Chaplain, Renewal Specialist & Recovery Coach at  
Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation  
Zoom Link:  
[Mts Plains Regional Zoom May 11th, 2022, 7 pm central](#)



**See You in Chicago! 2022 FCM ASSEMBLY**  
**Friday – Sunday, July 15-17**  
**Holiday Inn O'Hare in Chicago, IL.**



**About Our Speaker:** Join us as **Kathleen McCauley**, Chaplain, Spiritual Director, Counselor, and Certified Recovery Specialist with specific training in substance use disorder, shares her ministry specific to those seeking and in recovery.

This year, the Mountains and Plains region will be hosting our 2022 National Assembly to be held in Chicago. Both in-person and virtual options will be included. Mountains and Plains regional members attending the conference (in-person and online) will also be given an opportunity to meet and visit with one another during the conference.

A big thank you to Peter Strening and the FCM Assembly Planning Committee for all their hard work on what promises to be a meaningful and exciting event. We look forward to gathering and sharing our stories!

Kathleen's experience in ministry, prayer, and spiritual direction, her knowledge of varied spiritual practices, combined with extensive knowledge of Twelve Step Applications has assisted clients, retreat participants, recovery groups, and individuals toward a more happy, joyous, and meaningful life.

### Area News and Upcoming Meetings

During May and June, various zoom meetings will be scheduled to allow members to connect with one another within their geographic area. Reminder, regional and area members can also connect via REALM. To see which group, you may be a member of, check "Groups" at the top of your REALM profile.

With over 25 years as a retreat leader, writer, and homilist, Kathleen will share significant insights related to her personal recovery and commitment to prayer, journaling, and meditation, while trying daily to live "both/and" balancing the domestic and spiritual demands of her life. I hope you can join us for this special ministerial visit with Kathleen! RSVP to [mts\\_plainsVP@fcmmail.org](mailto:mts_plainsVP@fcmmail.org) All are welcome!

**St. Louis Area:** Members continue to meet online and invite others to join them. To receive information on upcoming gatherings and future meetings, Contact: Marybeth McBryan, coordinator: 314-277-3212 or Paul Reithmaier at [p.reithmaier@att.net](mailto:p.reithmaier@att.net)

### Update REALM Profile

Have you moved, started a new job, or changed your email? Please help us keep our records current by checking your REALM profile and updating any information needed. Doing so ensures that you will receive FCM emails and communication notices from FCM. If you have any questions regarding REALM, please send an email to Bill Appleton, FCM Administrator at [connect@fcmmail.org](mailto:connect@fcmmail.org). Thank you!

"May the many threads of your life be woven in a happy, healthy, and holy way that brings you joy and adds to the greater good.  
"Threads of Spirituality"  
Kathleen McCauley, FCM





**NEWSLETTER EDITORS**  
Carole duBois  
Sandy Tracy

**Newsletter** 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 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



**COORDINATOR**  
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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

**REALM ADMINISTRATOR & MEMBERSHIP**  
Emails: [connect@FCMmail.org](mailto:connect@FCMmail.org) - [membership@FCMmail.org](mailto: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](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) Email: [info@globalministriesuniversity.org](mailto:info@globalministriesuniversity.org)

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