



## Dive Into GMU!

### GMU Graduation Ceremony Online Is Huge Success



On June 6<sup>th</sup> of this year Global Ministries University conducted its first graduation ceremony via a video conference and the event was both inspirational and meaningful. Instructors of graduates and members of our Staff were invited to attend and the keynote speaker, Dr. Michael Tompkins, D.Min., a GMU graduate, gave a compelling talk entitled 'Closing Circles.' He shared how throughout his life he would continue to close open circles, goals that were interrupted by 'life.' In the relatively recent future, he had the opportunity to close a circle that had been open since he was a little boy. He had experienced a call to the ministry but gave up on that calling long ago. But at this time in his life he heard the calling loud and clear and in preparation for ordination earned a Doctor of Ministry degree through Global Ministries University. *"I joyfully pursued both preparation and studies. It was an incredible two years of light."* He suggested that *"we all attend to the circles that remain open in our lives and allow them to be closed as we are able and willing. Furthermore, just because a circle seems to close, it actually opens us to new opportunities for growth and fulfillment. Paradoxes abound in the human experience."*

The GMU Staff has decided to conduct its graduation ceremony online annually, giving graduates the opportunity to participate in the ceremony from anywhere in the world and without the cost and time of traveling. In fact, one of the graduates joined us from Ireland!

### GMU Registrar Wears Many Hats



Registrar Gail Schultz first connected with the Global Ministries University Staff at a conference about 15 years ago. GMU had an exhibit to promote the University and Gail won a GMU course of her choice. After

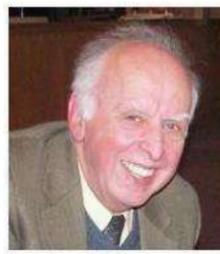
completing the course, she decided to enroll in the GMU Bachelor of Religious Studies degree program. Three years later, in 2007, she held a bachelor degree. However, Gail did not stop there... she went on to acquire certification to become a Spiritual Director. After becoming a Spiritual Director, in 2012, she enrolled in the GMU Master of Theology degree program, which she completed in 2016.

While earning her bachelor and master degrees, Gail also served GMU, first as our Enrollment Specialist, later Orientation Associate, and in 2016 she was promoted to Registrar. Upon acquiring her Spiritual Director certification and Master of Theology degree, she also began teaching spiritual direction courses for GMU.

Her ministry continued to grow, taking on clients as a Spiritual Director and conducting retreats and services. In 2017 Gail was commissioned by the Federation of Christian Ministries to officially function as a minister and to legally conduct wedding ceremonies. When asked to conduct a funeral service, she decided that role was a good fit for her and her ministry and, as a result, enrolled in yet another GMU program. Gail went on to earn a Funerals Certificate through the GMU Celebrant Training Program in order to get the proper training to conduct funerals and other rites of passage.

Global Ministries University has assisted Gail in achieving her ministerial goals throughout the past fifteen years but, at the same time, Gail has contributed a great deal to the success of GMU.

### President's Message



We will return to Kenya on August 1 for our eighth annual week-long interfaith training program for 26 Principals and Head Teachers from the coastal region of Kenya. The GMU program has received the endorsement of the Director of Education in the Coastal Region of Kenya, Mr. Hassan Duale. This endorsement represents a milestone for the international, interfaith mission of Global Ministries University. Our Registrar for this program, Ms. Doris Minyao, sent us this report just a few days ago. Doris is a graduate of our original training course several years ago and has now joined us as the Registrar for this program. Here is her report in preparation for it.

*We are praying this 8th Annual GMU Training will be the best since we started. Global Ministries will enhance more of its objectives: Peacebuilding, Cohesion, Respect for Diversity and co-existence. The repercussions will be great. Principals will spread Peacebuilding, Cohesion, and respect for diversity and co-existence in their schools and Global Ministry University will have played a very fundamental role in the Country of Kenya.*

Another example of GMU's role in interfaith understanding has come from the study and writing of GMU graduate students. Here is a brief summary of a paper on Islam written by one of our doctoral candidates, Anthony Pino, who is a senior lecturer at San Jose City College.

*Islam is a great religion. Its founder rejected intolerance and placed social justice at a high level of importance. Further, its discourse has reached into the highest levels of western philosophic and theological discussion. Following the Arab trade routes, Islam's influence has reached over a billion members throughout the Middle East and Asia. These facts have been distorted by the American perception that anomalous, errant, fringe activities of militant minorities within the Faith represent all its members, when, in fact they do not. The reach of productive, clear-thinking, upright Muslim citizens can be found in nearly all American cities and regions. It is the hope of this writer that American citizens will educate themselves on these matters....*

GMU is one of the few interfaith institutions of higher theological education engaged in training a future generation of interfaith leaders here in the USA and globally. We are grateful to all who have supported us in this mission.

### Celebrant Training Program Is Unique and User-Friendly



The Celebrant Training Program was founded and first offered in 2011 by Jean Conley. She was serving as Vice-President for Operations and Development and, at the same time, she and her husband were serving as Development Directors of the

Federation of Christian Ministries. It was while holding the position of Development Director that the need for celebrant training was brought to her attention. The FCM Circle of Directors were aware of her role as VP for Operations and Development of GMU, they would share with her the need for some kind of training for weddings and funerals that could be offered to FCM members. It took a few years of experimentation but Jean eventually put together a program that consisted of two tracks: Weddings and Other Ceremonies and Funerals and Other Rites of Passage. This program is conducted completely online, which makes it more affordable than a school that requires the need to travel and maintain a classroom and the program also gives students a great deal of flexibility. Students can begin the program at their convenience; there are no specific registration dates. Neither are there assignment due dates; the program is self-directive, which means students can work at their own pace. For more information about this flexible and affordable program, submit an [inquiry form](#) to the GMU Central Office or email Jean Conley at [gmu5053@aol.com](mailto:gmu5053@aol.com).