

Foundry Forge

The Miracle of Foundry's Family Ministry

MARY SMALL AND BRANDON WU

Ever since we joined Foundry in 2015, we have been grateful to have it our spiritual home. But our appreciation took on new texture when we became parents — to our first daughter in 2016 and our second in 2018.

Like many parents, we have jobs that tug on us, are far from family, and sometimes feel we're teetering on the edge of how much we can handle. In that swirl, Foundry's children's ministry has been, quite literally, a godsend.

To be honest, the first miracle of Foundry as new parents was the sheer relief of dropping off our infant in the nursery and having an hour to just be, to sink into a song or be nudged by a sermon.

Next was the gift of community, building relationships around our kids. From folks in the pews, to caregivers in the nursery, to other parents trying to corral runaway grapes in Community Commons, the web of connections is wide and beautiful.

More than anything, we've been amazed by how early our children sense the fabric of community being woven around them. Last year, our oldest started asking what would happen to her if something happened to us.

As that conversation evolved, she named the people that she could turn to for help, and folks from Foundry were on her list. She doesn't remember being baptized or the vows this congregation made to her that day, but she already feels the comfort and freedom granted by those promises.

This fall, she was old enough to go to children's worship and Sunday School, and now she begins her own faith journey. According to her, Sunday School is "mostly about making art, but also sharing and learning about God" and the service includes the children's message "because it's on the way to Sunday School." Fascinated by the candles, she insisted we get an Advent wreath and so we spent December lighting each week's candle every night and talking about hope, love, joy and peace.

All that together is the most we could possibly ask for: a church that holds space for us to journey in our own faiths, that loves our kids in ways they can feel, and that pushes them to think new thoughts —about God and love and joy and, apparently, the logistics of Sunday morning worship.



Brandon and Mary came to DC for their jobs over a decade ago. They both do federal policy work for progressive non-profits—Brandon on climate change and Mary primarily on immigration. Outside of work, they're both into local organizing, cooking tasty food, and playing with their sweet kiddos.

Pondering the Protocol

REV. GINGER E. GAINES-CIRELLI



Our new year began with the announcement of a document titled The Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation. It is the outcome of a months-long mediated conversation among persons representing the broad diversity of our global United Methodist Church. Reaction to its content ranges from grief and regret to relief and hope – as well as many questions.

I am still distilling its core elements. It does call for a moratorium on all LGBTQ-related charges and trials, a move which our Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling has publicly affirmed. Here are some other important things to keep in mind about the Protocol:

- It supports the continuation of The UMC. Unless a congregation (or annual conference) desires to separate from The UMC, nothing has to change or be voted upon. We literally can all continue to live, worship, and serve together as we have been. To remain United Methodist is the default.
- There is NO VOTING REQUIREMENT for any congregation or annual conference not called by conscience to leave The UMC.
- The UMC will:
 - repeal the Traditionalist Plan and remove the current discriminatory language from The Book of Discipline. In the best-case scenario, this may be accomplished at May's General Conference. If the legislative work to accomplish this key goal is not finished in time for action in May, there is a good chance that the moratorium on charges may be extended until that work is completed.
 - continue as a “big tent” denomination including persons with different theological and social perspectives on the journey together toward more perfect love.
 - work to reform policies and structures that are unjust and/or untenable for the church we are called to become.
- Work from now until May will focus on 1) clear legislative goals and strategy for passage and implementation of the Protocol and 2) good communication, education, and mobilization with both GC delegates and the broader UMC.

At Foundry, our Board and LGBTQ Advocacy Ministry Team are staying abreast of developments and actively strategizing our congregation's engagement. My roles as a GC delegate and co-convener of UMCNext (umcnext.com), a global coalition committed to accomplishing our goals through passage of the Protocol, place me at the center of this work.

Watch for ways to learn about and support this work and pray for Spirit to move in ways that lead us to justice, peace, and freedom.

With you in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ginger E. Gaines-Cirelli". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "G" at the beginning.

Ginger E. Gaines-Cirelli
Senior Pastor

FOUNDRY FORWARD

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE MONTH AHEAD

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Ethical Dating in the Digital Age

Beginning today and each Saturday through April 4, come to Foundry from 10 to 11:30 AM for a conversation-style seminar exploring the questions that emerge at the intersection of our faith and romantic relationships in an era of online dating.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Registration Deadline for Women's Retreat

Today at noon, registration closes for Foundry's annual women's retreat which will take place February 14-16 at Priest Field Retreat Center, Kearneysville, WV. Pastor and author MaryAnn McKibben Dana will be our keynote speaker.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Bring Your Valentine Cookies!

Today is the day to bring in your goodies, home-baked or candy, individually wrapped to be lovingly packaged and sent to our young people away at school or serving in the armed forces. Bring them to Community Commons. Postage donations also welcome. Questions? Email valentinecookies@foundryumc.org

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Faithful and Inclusive: The Bible, Sexuality, and The UMC

Join us at 7 tonight and each Wednesday evening through March 25 for video- and conversation-based sessions designed to help us discern how to be both obedient to God's Word and fully welcoming to LGBTQ persons in the church.

FOUNDRY FORWARD

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE MONTH AHEAD

IMPORTANT 2020 DATES

FEBRUARY 14-16

Women's Retreat

FEBRUARY 26

Ash Wednesday

MARCH 21

Howard Thurman Retreat

APRIL 5

Palm Sunday

APRIL 12

Easter Sunday

APRIL 14-17

Staff Retreat

APRIL 24-26

LGBTQ+ Retreat

MAY 5-15

General Conference

MAY 24

Pentecost/Confirmation Sunday

NOVEMBER 29

First Sunday in Advent

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Foundry Board Meeting

Foundry's Board convenes its monthly meeting at 7 PM in Room 101. One portion of this meeting will be a strategic discussion of how Foundry identifies and puts to use the talents of its members. All Foundry folk are welcome to attend.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Ash Wednesday

Join us at Foundry from 7 until 8 PM to enter into the season of Lent with worship and song.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26-29

Connection 2020

Even as The UMC wrestles with its future, the Reconciling Ministries Network's commitment to LGBTQ+ justice remains the same. You are invited to come to Nashville, TN to bless one another's liberative work and to strategize for the 2020 General Conference and equip us all to resist oppression and affirm LGBTQ people in our local context. For more information, visit: <https://rmnetwork.org/connection2020>

To register or find more information on these events, go to <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations>.

Share your thoughts about the Foundry Forge with ForgeNewsletter@foundryumc.org.