



Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

The Promise of a New Year

Once a year the church is a step ahead of secular culture: for Christians the first Sunday of the Advent Season is New Year's Day, a full month before we turn our physical calendar.

The Christian new year provides rituals to help us prepare for the birth of Jesus Christ. Just as society at large emphasizes a fresh start at the turn of the year, so our spiritual tradition encourages us to spend time in personal reflection, to recognize our need for a new beginning, a new birth of peace, joy, and love in our lives and the world.

This year, I am more aware than ever of the need for renewal. Perhaps you join me in hoping that the next year will feel like a new year and not just more of the same. Advent is filled with sung prayers of our longing and anticipation. We pray, "O come, O come Emmanuel...." We sing the poetic prayer of Charles Wesley:

Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

These words capture a deep human desire for all we are promised as we enter a new year—liberation, consolation, and joy, gifts needed more than ever in a world so bruised and weary and depleted of hope. The promise of those gifts does not depend on our feeling their presence in the



weeks to come. The Christ draws near to us, invites us tenderly to hold the promise, to hold on to the One whose love never lets us go, to hold on until we are able to receive what is offered.

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given;
so God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of God's heaven.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee...

Thanks be to God.

Happy New Year!

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Kirk Symposium 2021

CHOCOLATE CITY AUTHORS INFORM AND INSPIRE

On November 11, the Foundry Sanctuary was the place to be. A fully masked and socially distanced group of participants, and more attendees watched online as Dr. Chris Myers Asch and Dr. George Derek Musgrove, co-authors of *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital*, shared stories from DC history, their experiences writing the book and their views on DC past and present.

[The event was recorded, and you can watch it on YouTube.](#)

Here's what Foundry members are saying about the event:

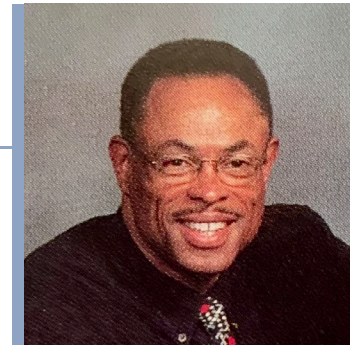
Hopeful

It has been difficult and somewhat depressing to read the story of the removal of native peoples and the long history of slavery and racial oppression of African Americans as recounted in this history of Washington, DC, *Chocolate City*. I did, however, find the presentation by the two authors at the Kirk Symposium hopeful, especially in this time of retrenchment from racial equality and the continuing disenfranchisement of citizens living in the District.

There were two aspects of the Symposium that contributed to my hopefulness. First, the authors' stories about how they came to write the book; that story is itself an insightful anecdote about DC's history. The other hopeful message was their focus on the long view and trajectory of social change. They emphasized that social change is not a straight line heading upward; the cycle moves upward and downward over time.

Instead of leaving the Symposium feeling down about the past or current challenges, I left thinking about how I might contribute to the continuing work of social change as the authors certainly have in crafting and presenting this compelling history of Washington, DC.

RALPH WILLIAMS



Entertained and Informed

This year's Kirk Symposium was both entertaining and informative. I was a little apprehensive about attending—which I did online—as I had only just begun to read the book and wondered if I would feel a bit left out of the discussion since I had not gotten too far into the very detailed material, most of which was very new information for me.

I need not have worried! The presentation both answered several basic questions and gave a tantalizing amount of detail that inspires me to keep reading. Authors Asch and Musgrove were very personable, and it was quite interesting to hear how they had come to know each other and to collaborate on the book which is of special historical and present-day interest to those of us who live in or around Washington.

MARGARET MCKELVEY



Missing the Role of Churches

I expected that the seminar would at least touch on the role of churches in the racial history of DC. For instance, what part did the White churches play in the surrendering of voting rights in the 1870s to ensure that the Black citizens wouldn't dominate local politics? Or how did the ante-bellum Black churches mitigate the differences between enslaved and free Black people?

I enjoy listening to Asch and Musgrove. I just wish that they would have spent 30 minutes on the book's origins and 60 minutes on religion and race over DC's history.

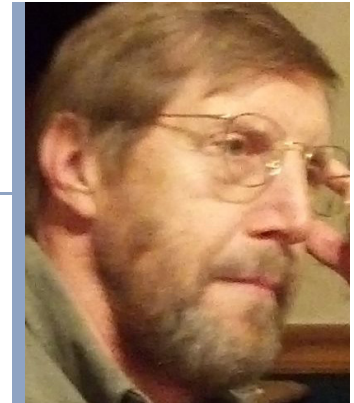
Inspired

The two authors, Chris Asch and George Derek Musgrove, personify the depth, insight and energy of this book *Chocolate City*—as collaboratively produced by a non-white and a white man with historical ties to Washington, DC. While the book is crammed with interesting facts and details over centuries of racial turmoil, white superiority, African American grievances and disadvantage, deepening divide on the national political scene, these two authors regaled us on Thursday night with more interesting stories within their presentation.

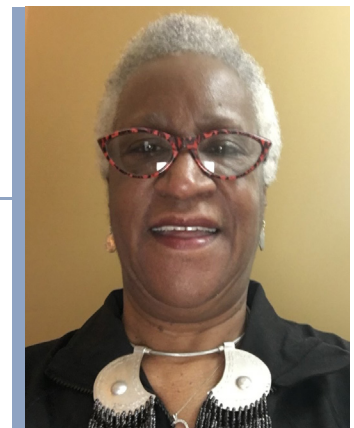
As I walk through neighborhoods and view historic sites, I am inspired to think of these sites differently based on the historical perspective provided by the lecture. The District of Columbia seemed important to me before reading the book, but I now hold this place in greater esteem as a beacon in setting the national agenda for racial justice, portraying the ills of economic injustice, and inspiring citizenship and social consciousness on so many levels...among so many races and economic classes of people.

I honor the indigenous people who lost this land centuries ago due to the aspirations of white people to profit from the soil. The lecture inspired me much more to ponder regarding our future as a nation that feels more divided than ever within my lifetime.

KEN NESPER



PAULA BLAIR



Foundry Forward

DECEMBER ACTION ITEMS

Saturday, December 4

Come to the Holiday Café!

Foundry and Stead Park are hosting the Stead Park Holiday Cafe today from 1-4 p.m. Kids and families are welcome to stop by and enjoy some coffee or hot chocolate, do a holiday craft, and pick up a felt Advent Wreath (while supplies last)!

Sunday, December 5

New Opportunities and Good Tidings

We enter further into this time of expectation, coming together in person or online at 9 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. to light our second Advent candle, share the music of the season and ponder the meaning and implications of **Good Tidings!**

All Foundry youngsters are invited to participate this Sunday and next at 9 a.m. in a Christmas singing and story practice and recording on Zoom with Mr. Allen.

Also starting this Sunday, Foundry kids, ages 5 to 11, and their families are invited to come to Foundry from 10:30-11a.m. to take part in an outdoors Christian Education opportunity. Kids will share a craft or activity and a Bible story and parents will have time to share and support each other. For more information on both these opportunities to continue your Advent preparation, email Pastor K.C. at kc@foundryumc.org.

Sunday, December 12

A Day of Special Advent Music

Both of today's worship services feature special music of the season sung by Foundry's choirs with the returning Foundry Orchestra for Special Music. Selections will include "O Holy Night," refreshing and worshipful Christmas arrangements by Causey, Hooks, Kaiser and Miller, and excerpts from Bach Cantata No. 140.

Today is also the last day to order poinsettias or make your contribution to the worship visuals that adorn our sanctuary. You can order and contribute online by visiting foundryumc.org/poinsettias or bring a check to Phil Carney at Foundry's front desk.

Tuesday, December 14

Foundry Board Meeting

Tonight, the Foundry Board holds its final meeting of 2021 at 7 p.m. in person and via Zoom. A major item on the agenda is Foundry's 2022 Budget. All Foundry members are welcome to attend via Zoom. Email amandabeadle1@gmail.com for the link.

Tuesday, December 21

The Longest Night

The winter solstice brings the year's shortest day—and its longest night. Acknowledging that many of us may encounter darker feelings at times during this season, we gather at 7 p.m. online and in person to support each other through our hopes and fears.

Friday, December 24

Christmas Eve

This year, we will come together the night before Christmas for a traditional worship service at 8 p.m. Join us in person or via live stream for prayers and carols, lessons, and candles.

Sunday, December 26

Christmas Sunday

Continue to celebrate and share the joy of Christ's birth at this Christmas Sunday service at 11:15. There will be no 9 a.m. service today.

Friday, December 31

Watch Night on New Year's Eve

This is your invitation to join our siblings at Asbury UMC for a worship service as we bid goodbye to 2021 and welcome the new calendar year. To view their worship service, please visit bit.ly/asburyumc-youtube.

To print a copy of this issue of the Forge, go to foundryumc.org/forge.

Share your thoughts and ideas by emailing ForgeNewsletter@foundryumc.org.