



Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

All Is Gift

A couple of weeks ago, a wise woman reminded me that autumn is the season for letting go and encouraged me to connect to the "autumn-ness" of the season in my own life.

As I sit in my writing chair in my home study, looking out the window upon leaves of gold and red, I am reminded of the beauty that is at the heart of letting go — whether in nature or in our lives.

Part of the process of letting go is a turning toward something new — a new season of creation or a new season of our lives. While letting go can be difficult, the vibrant colors of autumn leaves help us perceive this shift as so beautiful that no artist other than God could have dreamed it up.

When I imagine our connecting to this part of the earth's rhythm, this letting-go part, I am reminded of the following words...

"We cannot really reverence anything when we're clutching at it...Only when we can stand back and let the other — even my own life — present itself just as it is can we see the real thing, reverence and appreciate it as it is, not as I'd like it to be, not for what it does for me, not for how much money it's worth. The capacity for reverence comes in proportion as I know where my true security lies, in proportion as I become aware that my life is grounded in God, that my own life comes fresh and newly given at each moment from the hand of God.

"When I live in that awareness I know it of all other created reality as well. None of it is mine; none of it can be possessed, least of all my own life; it is all of it given. Daniel Berrigan has written somewhere, 'All, all is gift. Give it away. Give it away.' That is the basis of simplicity, and the basis of reverence: the realization — the real awareness — that what is is by the gift of God. It is enough, and it is good. The way to simplicity is the purifying way of love."*

As this autumn season of transformation and release turns to winter, I pray that we will resist the temptation to be distracted by the demands of the holiday season, but rather take time to recognize the gift of it all, perceive the promise and beauty in letting go, welcome the move into a new season, and open our hands and hearts in generosity, simplicity, and ever greater love.

Blessings on the journey,

ginger+



**from Reflections on Simplicity by Elaine M. Prevallet, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 244, 1982, p.2*

A Not-So-Silent Night

SHELLEY AND NICK JESSEE

Last year, we got a new perspective on Christmas. Our twins, Quinn and Kate, were 1.5 years old, and we were attending the Christmas Eve family service for the first time.

We were accustomed to the reflective, peaceful, quiet candlelight service, but reflective, peaceful, and quiet the Family Service is not. Kids crowd the narthex as volunteers help them select a traditional shepherd, animal, wise person, or angel costume. The unexpected lobster, superhero, or Pokémon also makes an appearance.

Then, through some carols and reading of the Christmas story, an instant Christmas pageant is formed. Chaotic, noisy, and full of surprises, you end the service feeling a bit frazzled but filled with the Christmas spirit.

We feel blessed that Foundry is a community that allows us to evolve and adapt as our life changes and grows. Over the years, we have been able to engage in Advent at Foundry in a number of ways: decorating the sanctuary, putting together gingerbread houses at the community Christmas festival, and enjoying a late-night Christmas Eve meal with Foundry friends after the candlelight service. Having toddlers in our life now allows us to have yet another experience of the holidays at Foundry.

Advent and Christmas at Foundry provide an invitation to find humor in the hallowed, to seek joy in the communal, and to remember that sometimes the holiest moments are the ones filled with the laughter of children and the warmth of community. It's a time to find your place in the Foundry community and if you'd like that to include some adorable barnyard animals, we'd love to see you at the 10 a.m. service on Christmas Eve.

ABOUT US:

Nick and Shelley are both from Johnson City, TN. They moved to DC in 2007 and have been members of Foundry since 2009. Shelley has served as a Sunday School teacher, stewardship campaign chair, and other roles at Foundry over the years. Nick currently serves as a member of the Foundry Board.



L-R: Kate, Nick, Shelley, Quinn

Foundry Forward

DECEMBER ACTION ITEMS

Sunday, December 3

The Perfect Gift

On this first Sunday in Advent, we begin our new sermon series, **The Perfect Gift**, pondering the many gifts we receive from God, including those which are "silently given" amid the noise of the season. The texts for today's sermon are Isaiah 64:1-9 and Mark 13:24-37.

Between services, from 10:10-11 am, there are classes for children, ages 3 to sixth grade in Rooms 204, 205, 206 and 208. Also during this time, we invite interested adults to join us in Room 203 to continue our exploration of "**Mary in the New Testament.**" Go to <https://www.foundryumc.org/events/mary-in-the-new-testament> to learn more.

Equal Exchange gift buying ends next week! Don't miss your chance to buy fair trade chocolate, tea, coffee, dried fruit, and olive oil during the coffee hour today. Your gifts support farmers in developing countries, help eliminate child labor and foster sustainable farming and community development.

Saturday, December 9

Interlocking Justice

Everyone at Foundry is invited to come to this workshop and learn about how a Foundry team is working to build an inclusive intersectional justice movement. We will meet in Community Commons from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The session will include a light breakfast, opportunities for group discussions, interactive exercises and practical tips. Email Social Justice Program Manager Jackie Wright with questions or for more information at Jackie@foundryumc.org. Please register at foundryumc.org/intersectional_justice.

Saturday, December 16

Community Christmas Festival

Foundry's Family Ministry invites us all to come to Foundry from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. today for this festive time we host in partnership with the Friends of Stead Park. You can have your photo taken with Santa, make crafts, and pre-purchase a gingerbread house to decorate.

Sunday, December 17

Christmas Community Potluck

Today begins a special Christmas service schedule. Today and next Sunday - Christmas Eve, and the following Sunday - New Year's Eve, we will have one morning worship service at 10 a.m. Today's service will feature special music, **Hodie** (This

Day) by Ralph Vaughan Williams, sung by the Chancel Choir, the Congregational Choir and the Children's Choir.

And after the service we will have a Christmas Community Potluck. Sign up at foundryumc.org/christmaspotluck potluck to let us know what dish you will bring to share.

Tuesday, December 19

Foundry Board Meeting

Foundry's Board convenes its monthly meeting at 7 pm. If you are interested in attending, use [this Zoom link](#)

Thursday, December 21

The Longest Night

Tonight is the winter solstice, the first day of winter, the day that has the fewest hours of sunlight all year. We will gather in the Foundry sanctuary at 7 p.m. for a special worship service together

Sunday, December 24

Christmas Eve

Our worship service at 10 a.m. will include the children's Instant Christmas Pageant. We will gather at 8 p.m. for our traditional candlelight worship service.

Monday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

Sunday, December 31

New Year's Eve

Today's 10 a.m. worship service begins the season of Christmastide - and features congregational hymns. It's a wonderful way to ring the old year out and the new year in - with song.

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.

It's not too late to pledge your support for Foundry in 2023! Visit foundryumc.org/estimate to submit your estimate of giving now.