



# Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

## The Practice of Perspective

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In the years since I wrote *Sacred Resistance: A Practical Guide to Christian Witness and Dissent*, one aspect of that work I've relied on most heavily is "keeping crisis in perspective."

It became clear as I presented the book that this critical part of our spiritual practice can be easily overlooked. Throughout these long years of pandemic, this practice has been my constant companion. Questions driving my reflections include: "How do we hold what is happening in a way we can get our heads and hearts around?" "What are the resources from our faith that help us?"

As I wrote in the book:

*"Perspective is how we 'hold' reality, how we frame it and understand it. If our framework is God's saving love always at work for the healing and wholeness of the world, we hold moments of crisis differently than we might within another frame... We are reminded that whatever is happening is not 'all about me' but is rather part of a much larger experience.*

*"We are given the gift of knowing that we are not alone, that God is with us and that there are other people with whom to share the struggle and the work of mending.*

*"We will have the benefit of memory — the awareness that the work of cultivating God's Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven has been ongoing*



*from the very beginning. We will have at least a vague sense of where our energies should be directed...*

*"This practice is only possible insofar as we stay connected to larger, holistic vision. Staying connected requires the help of others who share the vision (community!), regular engagement with the rituals and narratives of our faith (worship and study!), and close contact with the God whose grace beckons us toward the vision in the first place (prayer!)."*

Our **"Shine On!"** series continues through this month, providing grounding in the spiritual resources of our faith that strengthen our capacity to keep crisis in perspective. I hope you will remember you don't have to hold anything alone and will see yourself always in within the frame of God's steadfast love.

On the Way with you,  
gingert+

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# Finding Hope in This Bleak Midwinter

**BECKY BALLARD**

Winter is always my hardest season – it's cold, dark, and Christmas celebrations are over. And then...it's Lent. Perhaps this is a hard time for you as well. And now we have another COVID winter!

In December our highly anticipated holiday plans vanished when our four-year-old son brought COVID home from school. The same day, his two-year-old sister tested positive for the flu but negative for COVID. My husband and I did what we could to help each child not contract the other's illness. We spent Christmas week apart (one of us in a hotel, with our then COVID-negative daughter).

We all did contract COVID, but we spared the kids from having both illnesses at once. Protecting them by being apart at Christmas was one of those awful yet right things to do! But parenting means protecting your children, and parenting is HARD.

The pandemic has illuminated and often amplified the sacrifices parents make, from the millions of mothers who left the U.S. workforce to the many fathers I know who wonder if they can keep their marriage, careers, and sanity intact. Today we can see refugees, migrant workers, domestic violence survivors, those living in lands of war, and many others who have lives with far greater uncertainty and must make much harder and riskier choices to protect their children.

In the last two years I have experienced many, many losses, both pandemic-related and otherwise. My faith has been tossed, turned, and ripped apart. But Mary and her Magnificat gave me the strength to weather this December storm. The Magnificat speaks of obedience as well as agency, and Mary's story is one of living according to God's will when life is very different from what is expected. The strength I drew from her courage sustained me.



Think of the choices Mary made to protect baby Jesus, and how painful it must have been to see him then betrayed, rejected, taunted, and brutally killed. Think of the impossible choices made by Moses' mother Jochebed and countless other men and women throughout history.

Love is often messy and painful. Love was messy for Mary from the very beginning, as that's just the way pregnancy and childbirth is (let alone childbirth in a stable or perhaps even a cave, wow!). However, as she did, we can draw hope and strength from our faith, even in the mess.

If your life feels like a mess, that's OK. Look to our saints, and you will find examples that help you make some sense of your situation. I take comfort in believing that living out God's plan may often look and feel like one giant mess!

*Becky first moved to Dupont Circle in 2007, and after a few stints abroad now lives in the neighborhood with her husband John and kids Nathan and Lily. Raised primarily in North Carolina, she majored in religion at Duke University and went to law school at a school of another shade of blue (because life is complicated, right?). Proud to come from a family of progressive United Methodist pastors. Becky first joined Foundry in 2007 as a single gal, enjoying the friendship of her women's small group, and returned with her family in 2019 for their Godly Play-based children's programming.*

# Foundry Forward

## FEBRUARY ACTION ITEMS

Friday, February 4

### Valentine Cookie Recipient DEADLINE!

Carrying on the Foundry tradition, now in tribute to our beloved Dr. Gail Jackson, Foundry is asking everyone – by this date! – to send in names and addresses of Foundry's college students and active-duty military who would like to receive a box of Valentine cookies. **Submit the names and addresses of your cookie recipients by using this link NO LATER THAN TODAY, Feb. 4.**

You are invited to **bring cookies or candy to Foundry THIS SUNDAY** beginning at 8:45 a.m. If you can **help us pack the cookies during the 10-11 a.m. hour THIS SUNDAY**, please [register to do so here](#).

Saturday, February 5

### Chocolate City Master Class

Today from 9 a.m. to noon is the long-awaited master class led by the authors of **Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in Our Nation's Capital**, Dr. George Derek Musgrove and Dr. Chris Myers Asch. Registered participants may attend in person at Foundry or through a private livestreaming option. The class will explore the impact of our view of our history on our ability to create lasting social change. [More information can be found here.](#)

Sunday, February 6

### Evangelism and Witness

Today we continue our sermon series **"Shine On!"** and explore the calling to witness to our faith. Pastor Ginger preaches on texts from 1 Corinthians (15: 1-11) and Luke (5: 1-11). Join us in-person or online through Facebook, YouTube or Foundryumc.org at 9 or 11:15 a.m. for worship and communion.

Sunday, February 13

### "Rooted in God"

Prayer and the study of scripture are the spiritual practices we explore today, drawing on texts from Jeremiah (17:5-10) and Luke (6:17-26). Join us online or in person at 9 or 11:15 a.m.

Sunday, February 20

### "Kin-dom Economy"

The often counter-cultural spiritual practice of giving is the focus of today's sermon by Pastor Ginger, using as our texts Psalm 37 (1-11, 39-40,) and Luke (6:27-38). Join us in person or online at 9 a.m. or 11:15 a.m.

Sunday, February 20

### Pastor's Coffee

If you wish to begin the journey toward official membership at Foundry UMC, join Pastor Kelly and other staff members in person or online at 10 a.m. to learn more about our church and move to the next steps in **A Disciple's Path**. [Learn more and register for Pastor's Coffee here.](#)

Tuesday, February 22

### Foundry Board Meeting

Foundry's Board convenes its monthly meeting at 7 p.m. If you are interested in attending, email [amandabeadle1@gmail.com](mailto:amandabeadle1@gmail.com) for the link.

Sunday, February 27

### Transfiguration Sunday

"Conspiracy Theory" is the provocative title of Pastor Ginger's final sermon in our **"Shine On!"** series, drawing on passages from Exodus (34:29-35) and Luke (9:28-43).

Sunday, February 27

## Walking Together: A Disciple's Path

**All Foundry folk — members and not-yet-members — are invited** to participate in this six-week class exploring a variety of spiritual topics. The one that begins today is led by Associate Pastor/Director of Hospitality and Congregational Care Rev. Dr. Kelly L. Grimes. It will meet at 10 a.m. both in person and virtually. After you **register**, you will receive more information via email. **Learn more about the Sunday class here**, and email [kelly@foundryumc.org](mailto:kelly@foundryumc.org) with any questions.

**And if Thursday evenings work better for you...** This course is also offered **virtually only** on Thursday evenings **beginning March 3**. It will be led by Associate Pastor/Director of Family Ministries Rev. K.C. Van Atta-Casebier, and Associate Pastor/Director of Discipleship Ministries Rev. Will Green. The class will meet at 6:45 p.m. **Learn more and register for the Thursday evening Disciple's Path class here.**

To print a copy of this issue of the Forge, go to [foundryumc.org/forge](http://foundryumc.org/forge).

Share your thoughts and ideas by emailing [ForgeNewsletter@foundryumc.org](mailto:ForgeNewsletter@foundryumc.org).

It's not too late to pledge your support for Foundry in 2022!  
Visit [foundryumc.org/estimate](http://foundryumc.org/estimate) to submit your estimate of giving now.

## STAYING SAFE

Foundry's Reentry Task Force remains alert to assess any new variant-related threats to the health and well-being of our community. Safety protocols remain in effect throughout the building to maintain extra cleaning routines, enforce the registration of vaccinations for all worship and hospitality leaders, and the wearing of masks for attendees in worship.

Learn more about our safety protocols and plans for gathering by reading **our January 13 reentry update**. To contact the Reentry Task Force, email [reentry@foundryumc.org](mailto:reentry@foundryumc.org).