



Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

The End?

Mark's Gospel ends in a way that still startles readers. In the oldest complete Greek manuscripts we have, the Gospel stops at Mark 16:8, with the women fleeing the empty tomb in fear and saying nothing to anyone.*

Later manuscripts – and most versions of the Bible today -- include other endings, but scholars generally note two main possibilities to explain the difference between the older and later manuscripts: either Mark once had another ending that was lost, or Mark intended to end the story right there.

For years, I loved the romantic idea of a lost ending. As someone who grew up loving Indiana Jones, the thought that an archaeological expedition might one day uncover Mark's missing final lines sparked my imagination.

But as I have gotten older, I have found more comfort in the possibility that Mark meant to end this way.

That is because this ending fits the whole Gospel. Mark is full of irony, and irony is one of the ways the author acknowledges the reader. Again and again, Mark tells the story in a way that draws the audience in and gives them a place within the unfolding drama. The disciples repeatedly misunderstand Jesus. At the cross, Jesus is mocked as "King of the Jews," and the mockery reveals more truth than the speakers realize. These moments do not simply separate the reader from the characters; they prepare the reader to become part of the Gospel's movement.



That pattern reaches its climax at the empty tomb. The women hear the announcement that Jesus has been raised, but they flee in fear and say nothing. And yet the Gospel has reached us.

As New Testament scholar Morna Hooker wrote, "This is the end of Mark's story, because it is the beginning of discipleship." The story stops on the page so it can continue in the life of the church.

When we reach the empty tomb, the story has made room for us. We now have a role in what happens next.

** Eugene H. Peterson in *The Message* points out that verses 9-20 of the sixteenth chapter of Mark are contained only in later manuscripts.*

This reflection is an excerpt of the final sermon at Foundry by Associate Pastor Jonathan Brown who is now the pastor of Inman Park UMC in Atlanta, Georgia.

What Camp Foundry Means to Me

Heather Bateman

Every year over Labor Day weekend, many of us in our Foundry church family pack up bags, load cars, and make the hour-long drive from DC down to the Chesapeake Bay for Camp Foundry — and every year, I'm reminded of why Camp Foundry has become one of the anchors of my family's life at Foundry.

Camp Foundry is Foundry's community-wide retreat, held at the West River United Methodist Center in West River, Maryland, and it's open to everyone — young, young at heart, and everywhere in between.

The weekend gets going Friday evening with a cookout on the grounds, followed by stories, songs, and s'mores around the campfire. Highlights of past Camp Foundry gatherings have included kayaking and canoeing out on the river, a dip in the pool, crabbing at the dock, nature walks, quiet time to read on the lawn, swinging in the Giant Swing, feeding the turtles, eating meals together in West River's dining hall, and faith-based morning reflections and activities tailored to different age groups — adults, youth, and kids. For the past few years, Saturday evenings have also brought the whole community together for contra dancing with live music — truly one of the most joyful things to be a part of, no matter your age, ability, or dance experience.

If I'm being honest, though, my favorite part of Camp Foundry isn't any particular activity. It's the time I get to spend across generations — talking with Foundry members young and young at heart alike in an unhurried way that ordinary Sundays don't always allow. It's the conversation with a longtime member whose faith has weathered decades, and the one with a kid who's just beginning to find their footing in it. Camp Foundry creates the space for both. There's also the chance



to gather to read Scripture and worship together, under the trees, away from the pull of ordinary life — something that always leaves me fuller than when I arrived.

We hope you'll join us this year. Camp Foundry 2026 will be held the Friday through Sunday of Labor Day weekend, September 4–6, 2026. Registration opens July 1st through the Church Center app. We'd love to see you there!

Heather Bateman is originally from Northern Virginia and is proud to have always called the DC area her home. She and her husband, Joe, have been members of Foundry since 2016, were married at Foundry in 2017, and have been raising their two daughters in the Foundry community since 2021. Heather grew up in the Lutheran Church (ELCA) and has fond memories of many church-affiliated camps and retreats from her youth, and loves cultivating community with Camp Foundry.

Welcome our New Associate Pastor, Yongchi Rhie



Yongchi Rhie, our new Associate Pastor and Director of Discipleship Ministries, comes to us as a native of South Korea, educated in the United Kingdom and called to pastoral leadership here in the United States.

She describes the impact of that global journey as teaching her to be a bridge-builder with a yearning to cultivate spaces of true, radical kinship: "My heart is anchored in two things: faithfully teaching the Word of God, and intentionally building sacred, diverse communities where people don't just feel welcomed, but truly belong."

Congratulate our New Director of Compassion and Caring



Ed Crump, formerly our ministry intern from Wesley Seminar, from which he received his Master of Divinity in May, is joining our staff to lead our efforts to welcome, connect, and care for people at every stage of their faith journey.

Ed will work with clergy, staff and lay leaders to equip volunteers, care for member in times of need and strengthen pathways into deeper participation in the life and ministry of the church.

Foundry Forward

July - August 2026 Action Items

This month and next our worship services continue to remind us who we as Methodists are, what we believe, and how we live out our faith.

As Pastor Ginger Gaines-Cirelli explained as we began this sermon series in May:

"While some insist they alone understand and represent the values and identity both of Christianity and our nation, we know who we are — as United Methodist Christians and as the Foundry community. We are clear about our values and beliefs....We know how we engage scripture and life — thoughtfully, humbly, and faithfully."

In July and August, we complete the series, exploring Christian beliefs, the United Methodist tradition, and Foundry's calling at this time. As Pastor Ginger says:

"our faith...is anything but vague....We are rooted in grace, committed to justice, formed by mercy, and called to the transformation of the world. Each week includes invitations to concrete practices — spiritual, communal, and public — demonstrating that our faith is not only something we believe, but something we live."

Wednesday, July 1

Registration Opens for Foundry Camp 2026!

Join us for a weekend of community, connection, and fun at our all-church retreat! Register now for Labor Day Weekend – September 4-6! You don't want to miss it! Registration ends August 2. Don't wait!

It's not too late to join Project Transformation!

Foundry volunteers are reading with elementary-aged students each Thursday morning from June 25, the first session, until Thursday, August 6 --- July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30. We can use more volunteers at any time because summer schedules vary. You will help students with a critical learning skill at a critical age.

Register here now:

foundryumc.org/project-transformation

Email projecttransformation@foundryumc.org with questions.

Sunday, July 5

Holiness is Public

On this Fourth of July weekend, we begin our summer schedule of one Sunday worship service at 10 a.m. It's a good day to be reminded by Pastor Ginger that our faith directs us to advocate publicly and privately for justice for all. We demonstrate our faith by how we treat other people and what we do to shape society. Our texts are found in the second chapter of James, which includes verse 14: "what use is it for a man to say he has faith when he does nothing to show it?" and the familiar passage from Micah 6:8 "what is it that the Lord asks of you? Only to act justly, to love loyalty and to walk wisely before your God."

Sunday, July 12

A Rule for Life

Today we welcome our newly-arrived Associate Pastor and Director of Discipleship Ministries Yongchi Rhie to the Foundry pulpit. She will preach on the importance of living out our faith in our actions, public and private. Her sermon draws upon texts including Psalm 119, verse 105: "Thy word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light on my path...."

Sunday, July 19

A Story Bigger Than Ourselves

Now we begin the final phase in this sermon series, exploring our Methodist faith, *We Know What We're About*. Pastor Ginger draws upon Hebrews, chapter 12, emphasizing that our identity is based on a faith which is in turn rooted in a story of courage and conviction.

Sunday, July 26

Let Justice Roll

Our faith is not neutral: we know what we stand for -- justice. Our faith's Social Principles articulate this moral vision. Pastor Ginger explains, drawing on Amos, chapter 5, verse 24: "Let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."

Tuesday, July 28

Foundry Board Meeting

Foundry's Board will hold its regular monthly meeting at 7 p.m. Interested Foundry members may attend via Zoom, following this link:
foundryumc.org/board-meeting

Sunday, August 2

No Outsiders Here

Pastor Ginger reminds us to extend a radical welcome to everyone. God's table is wide, and there is always enough for all. Invite others and include them. Notice who is missing from our gathering. Her text is Galatians, chapter 3, verse 28. "There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female; for you are all one person in Jesus Christ."

Last Day to Register for Foundry Camp!

Register before 5 o'clock this afternoon. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Sunday, August 9

Faith is Public

Pastor Ginger reminds us that ours is an active, public faith, demonstrated in seeking the good of our city and our communities. We do not believe in withdrawing from our responsibility to seek justice or being captured by partisan principles. Our allegiance is to God's reign, guided by scripture and our Methodist creeds and social principles. The text (Jeremiah 29:7) is clear: "Seek the welfare of any city to which I have carried you off, and pray to the Lord for it; on its welfare, your welfare will depend."

Sunday, August 16

Now, Let's Go!

"We Are the Church: Now, Let's Go" is Pastor Ginger's sermon topic, emphasizing the message of Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 11-13: "And these were his gifts: some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip God's people for work in his service to the building up of the body of Christ."

We are not called to be passive observers. Each one of us has a role in God's work – whether as a member of an active group, in service to others, providing financial support, advocating change and continuing to practice spiritual discipline.

As of the date we produced this issue of the Foundry Forge, information about services on August 23 and 30 was not yet available. Watch each week's Worship Guide for more information.

And now for September...

FOUNDRY CAMP! We start off September with Camp Foundry! Join the Foundry Family at beautiful West River United Methodist Camp on Labor Day Weekend, September 4-6, for rest, retreat, recreation, and fun for all ages.

All are invited --- singles, couples, families, kids, youth, parents, non-parents, grandparents or friends! Accommodations are in lodges with air conditioning and bathrooms. Camp Foundry runs from a cookout dinner on Friday through lunch on Sunday, and Saturday-only registration options are available.

Registration is open from July 1 through August 2: [Register here!](#) For more information, check out this link to the Church Center app for FAQs, packing lists, etc

The Universal Christ

Beginning September 13 at 10:10 a.m. in Room 203, Chris Van Arsdale will lead a six-week course on Richard Rohr's *The Universal Christ*. Together, we will explore Rohr's vision of Christ as present in all creation and consider how this expansive understanding of Christ can deepen our faith, reshape our discipleship, and open us to God's presence in the world around us. To register, go to: foundryumc.org/universal-christ

This Month in Foundry's History

July 4, 1897

Sermon Championing Cuban Independence

Following a tradition of preaching patriotic sermons on major national holidays, Pastor Lucien Clark's July 4th sermon is a vigorous championing of Cuba's cause in seeking independence from Spain. His sermon concludes, "Church and State are, and of right ought to be, separate, but Christianity and patriotism are inseparable."