

MARCH 2023



# Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

## It's A New Day

As I take on paternity leave this Lent, becoming the at-home parent for our second child, I find myself oddly thankful that Foundry is returning to a busier schedule.

These last "pandemic years" have been busy, but they haven't felt particularly productive. Time and again, we thought people would be coming back to church in person. We prepared the building and planned programs for return of a robust congregation after Christmas 2021, then after Easter 2022, and then definitely after Summer 2022.

But it does feel different now. Our Sunday attendance is not back to 2019 levels and the pace of activity is different.

But it feels right. It's a new day and whoever can be present, physically or virtually, is exactly who needs to be there.

There is a new momentum. I'm especially grateful for both new and experienced leaders for Foundry's Sacred Resistance team. Our agenda is full: work with Washington Interfaith Network, The Way Home DC, and Congregation Action Network heading into the 2023 DC budget season.

It's always a joy to see Foundry members engaging in new ways, particularly with action that is justice-oriented, systemically focused, and taken on behalf of hurting and vulnerable neighbors. It's only one of many Foundry missions, but social justice action truly feeds my spirit.



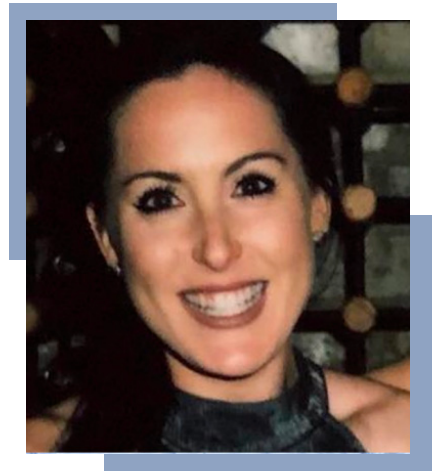
In January we conducted the annual point-in-time count, the census of unhoused neighbors. For the last few years Foundry has led the effort for the areas around the church and Dupont Circle. And this year, for the first time, we had an all-Foundry team caring for our neighborhood. I'm proud of that. I'm deeply appreciative to those who put themselves out to connect with neighbors this way, to those who take on this work, knowing we are playing a long game where wins may be far into the future.

The course ahead may be difficult. The pandemic lingers. But I am grateful for Foundry's renewed energy, and I encourage you each, this Lent, to find new ways to engage and to connect with Foundry friends new and old.

**Ben Roberts**

*Associate Pastor, Executive Director  
of Programs and Justice Ministries*

# Putting Our Gifts to Work



When I joined the Foundry staff in April 2021, we were in the “unprecedented times” — still mostly working from home, limiting interaction, and generally afraid of doing just about anything that involved encountering each other.

At the time, my colleagues kept saying how much they wished I could see what Foundry really was — who Foundry normally was: a bustling place, full of friends getting things done. Loving God. Loving each other. Changing the world. I couldn’t wait to see the church in full swing again.

Of course, this would not happen instantly, or without some work. After so much time away, we were all a little rusty. Foundry needed to find a way to help us lay people reengage.

And so, our Nominating Committee,\* led by Ann Brown Birkel, developed a **Congregational Engagement Survey**. This online survey gives Foundry members and friends the opportunity to explore all the ways that their skills, gifts, and interests can support our church community, this city and region, and the world.

From singing in the choir, to cooking, to writing and photography — there are so many ways that our gifts can fuel the mission and ministries of this great church. This tool helps us gather all of those in one place.

Over 100 of you have now completed this survey. The result? We have more people singing in the choir, new voices reading scripture to us on Sunday, and higher levels of involvement all around.

If you haven’t already, I hope you will take some time to complete this survey. By doing so, you will be joining a group (or groups) of people with whom you can share, gather, and have fun.

Check it out today. You can complete it from your computer or mobile device at [foundryumc.org/survey](https://foundryumc.org/survey).

Thank you for doing this – and all the ways you each faithfully serve Foundry.

**Kaylon Kirk Rutledge**  
*Director of Digital Engagement*

*\*Other members of the Nominating Committee Engagement Survey project included Tracy Collins, Joanne Garlow, Suzanne Anthony, Brian Castro, Preston Taylor, and Parker Low, Cathy O’Sullivan, Mark Abe, and Guy Cecil.*

# Foundry and Our Family

HELENE TERRY

What does being part of Foundry mean to our family?

It means that my family has a community who truly love and support us as children of God. When Finn, 6, and Mackenzie, 4, were baptized, the congregation vowed to surround us with a community of love and forgiveness so that we may grow in our trust of God and be found faithful in our service to others. The Foundry community lives out this promise every week.

This commitment is why my family makes it a priority to be at Foundry. We see value in setting aside time to be with others as we together grow in our faith and trust in God. Our lives get busy, and we don't always set aside time for faith-growing conversations.

Such conversations present themselves unexpectedly. And just as suddenly, they are over. Last week on the way home from school, Finn told me about a back-and-forth fight he was having with a friend. In our brief talk we recalled a recent Children's Message to help us reflect on his experience and plan to move forward. In this way the time we spend at Foundry builds a foundation we can build on throughout the week.

*Helene Terry grew up attending First United Methodist Church in Hershey, PA. After graduating from Penn State University, she moved to the DC area in 2009. She currently lives in Park View DC and is a math instructional coach in the DC Public Schools.*



In addition to building my children's faith foundation, being part of Foundry is a way for me to invest in myself and my own faith. Taking time to sit in the pew or in a small group to learn and reflect regenerates me, building my capacity to take on the challenges of parenting and life.

I am deeply grateful to be part of the Foundry family and truly feel that we as a community are living up to the vows that we make to families at baptism. I am grateful that my family and others like ours have a strong community around us. Thank you for your love and care. We are forever changed because of it!

# Welcome

## Dr. Lydia Esther Munoz!



Foundry's Guest Preacher for Lent is Rev. Dr. Lydia Esther Muñoz. She will preach on February 26, each Sunday in March, and Palm Sunday, April 2. Her sermon series is "Holy Darkness", based on Barbara Brown Taylor's book, **Learning to Walk in the Dark**.

Here's how Dr. Munoz describes the series:

*I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.*

**Isaiah 45:3**

Most of us have learned to be afraid of the dark. To fear the things we cannot see or the lesslit road. Without realizing it, we have become victims of what some environmentalists term "light pollution." From the streetlamp to the light of our computers, we are inundated with light.

What is it about the darkness that turns us away? What metaphors have we used to describe the dark as a sinister place of evil and danger? These and other questions will be explored in our Lenten sermon series. Our biggest fears may lie in the dark, but it can also be a place of sacred discovery if we are willing to learn to embrace it as holy.

Dr. Munoz is an ordained Elder in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church and currently serves as executive director of the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry, one of six ethnic minority plans of the United Methodist Church.

A graduate of Wesley Theological Seminary, she holds a Doctor of Ministry in Public Theology from Drew Theological School. Dr. Muñoz has long experience developing ministries of justice among marginalized and multicultural communities. Her passion is leading worship that is incarnational so that we may embody the work we engage in throughout our worship experience and transform into disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.

Prior to fulltime ministry, Dr. Muñoz worked as a mental health therapist, primarily with adjudicated young people dealing with trauma. During that time, she began her work as a strong activist for social justice on issues as varied as gun reform, LGBTQ rights, racial justice and immigration rights. She lives in Hanover, Maryland with her 20-year-old trans daughter Willow and her dog, Max.

# Foundry Forward

## MARCH ACTION ITEMS

Sunday, March 5

### Communion in Community

As we move into this full month of observing Lent, Rev. Dr. Lydia Munoz will preach the second sermon exploring the topic, "Holy Darkness". We will celebrate communion at both services and hope you will participate in one or both of the informational planning sessions described below, one between the services and the other after the 11:15 service.

### Antiracism and Justice

Between our two services, from 10:10 to 11:10 a.m. this morning, you are invited to come to the sanctuary and learn about the next phase of Foundry's journey to racial justice. Pastor Ben will lead the discussion of the work to be led by AnaYelsi Velasco-Sanchez, educator and coach.

### Shaping Discipleship Programs

All small group leaders, class leaders and anyone interested in discipleship programs are invited to join us today at 1 p.m. in Room 203. We'll share lunch (provided) and think through what themes might shape this year's programs, as well as what new groups and experiences we might propose. Register [here](#) so we will know to provide your lunch. Questions? Contact Pastor Jonathan at [jbrown@foundryumc.org](mailto:jbrown@foundryumc.org)

Sunday, March 19

### Be Our Guest

Today, we will begin this new six-week course based on the book by this title, subtitled Perfecting the Art of Consumer Service, and produced by the Disney Institute. Pastor Jonathan will lead us in learning how Disney makes guests feel welcome and considering what lessons the church can learn. We'll meet at 10:15 a.m. in Room 202. You can register and learn more at <https://www.foundryumc.org/events/be-our-guest-disney-hospitality-and-the-church>.

Sunday, March 19

### Baptism Orientation

Anyone interested in learning more about baptism in the United Methodist Church is invited to join us at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom. To receive the link to join, go here [foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/882751](https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/882751)

Tuesday, March 28

### Foundry Board Meeting

Foundry's Board convenes its monthly meeting at 7 pm. Interested Foundry members can attend, using [this Zoom link](#).

## THESE FOUNDRY MISSIONS NEED YOUR HELP

### Foundry's Sustainable Coffee Hour

As part of Foundry's commitment to sustainability and caring for God's creation, Foundry has begun using ceramic / stoneware plates and mugs. We need volunteers to take these items to the dishwasher at the end of each coffee hour. Please contact Jackie at [jwright@foundryumc.org](mailto:jwright@foundryumc.org) if you are interested!

### Cooks at Christ House

Join fellow Foundry members the first Saturday of every month at Christ House Located at 1717 Columbia Road NW, Christ House is a 24-hour residential medical facility for unhoused men and women. Foundry cooks lunch at Christ House each first Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon. If you are interested, contact [christhouse@foundryumc.org](mailto:christhouse@foundryumc.org).

**And looking ahead, youth and adult leaders can register now for this years Appalachian Service Project, which will take place June 25 – July 1, 2023. Register now at [foundryumc.org/asp](https://foundryumc.org/asp)**

To print a copy of this issue of the Forge, go to [foundryumc.org/forge](https://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 2023! Visit [foundryumc.org/estimate](https://foundryumc.org/estimate) to submit your estimate of giving now.