

MARCH 2025



# Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

## BREATHE, LIVE, LOVE

As we move together into the season of Lent, guided by our theme, "Grounded in Grace," I think about what helps me get grounded.

When I start to feel spiritually or emotionally off-balance because of the news or other concerns, my go-to practice is to turn attention to my breath. Over the years, I've learned a variety of breathing practices through yoga training, reading, spiritual retreats, and more.

But you don't really need any formal training.

The late Vietnamese Buddhist monk and spiritual teacher Thich Nhat Hanh says that the beginner's exercise is simply this: "Breathing in, am breathing in. Breathing out, I am breathing out."



This simple practice changes how we feel in our bodies — there's science to prove it! Breath prayers and practices relax our nervous systems and allow us to settle into our bodies in a way that "gathers us in" from all distractions and concerns.

Foundry has been practicing "Breath Prayer" in worship recently as a way to ground ourselves in our breath and the values that guide our shared life. The litanies and breath prayers may be accessed [here](#).

To focus on our breath aligns with the Judeo-Christian understanding of Holy Spirit. The Hebrew word for "spirit" is *ruach*, also translated as "breath" and "wind." Remember the creation stories in scripture: the *ruach* (Spirit/wind) moved across the waters at the beginning of creation (Gen 1:2) and God breathed life into the first human (Gen.2:7).

When we focus on our breath, we consciously acknowledge God's life-creating, life-sustaining presence.

*"Breathing in, I know I am loved. Breathing out, I am loved. Breathing in, I know I am held. Breathing out, I am held. Breathing in, I know I am protected. Breathing out, I am safe. Breathing in love and grace. Breathing out gratitude..."*

God's presence is grace. Every breath is grace. We are held in grace. We are grounded in grace.

Thanks be to God.

Peace and power,  
ginger+

# ASP - A Life-Shaping Trip

EFAYOMI CARR

Twenty years ago, I sat in Foundry's pews, and listened to a call for high schoolers to sign up for ASP. Going to ASP my freshman year was a no-brainer — not because I was eager to spend a week of my summer building houses in the heat, but because the group of friends I'd grown up with at Foundry would finally be making the trip together.

I had no idea how that trip would affect me. I still remember:

- Driving down I-81 in a 15-passenger van with only an ASP-approved mixtape to listen to.
- Long days in the sun, digging holes for the foundations of a new section of a house.
- Scrambling to put together a devotional service for evening gathering.
- Counting down the days until I got home — and then feeling a deep loss when ASP was over.
- Sitting in a Cracker Barrel with the group, asking, "Will you be back next summer?" I was exhausted and, given varsity soccer looming on the horizon, I was frankly uncertain.

Little did I know I'd still be going on ASP 20 years later.

Each year I return, I experience a mix of accomplishment, privilege, and restlessness. For the sake of brevity, let's call it "accomprivlessness." Accomplishment comes from recalling the hard work, fellowship, and the deep community and faith connections formed. Privilege arises as I confront the contrast between the comforts of home and the struggles of the families we work with. And restlessness stems from the yearning to do more, recognizing that there is still so much left to be done.

I find comfort in Isaiah 6, where Isaiah experiences his own moment of "accomprivlessness" and channels it into action and service. Sometimes I envy that Isaiah receives a direct call from God, a clear sense of purpose and mission, while my own call often seems less certain.



Yet, in my own way I am trying to answer that call — dedicating my life and career to a mission I feel most compelled to serve. I am writing this reflection from Nairobi, where I've spent the last five years working with entrepreneurs and communities in need of support. While this kind of work seems to be under attack in 2025, I believe it is as important now as it has ever been.

I think we all experience some form of "accomprivlessness," and are all called by that feeling to do God's work. Whether that means donating time, resources, or energy isn't the point. The point is to create space for reflection, to let those emotions rise up, and to allow our inner calling to guide us forward. In times like these, that calling may be harder than ever to hear — but it's also when the need, and our potential to make an impact, are greatest.

What better time than now to lean in?

*Efayomi Carr was born and raised in DC and has been a lifelong Foundry attendee, baptized at Foundry in 1990. He attended his first ASP in 2005 and returned for his eighth trip this past summer. Efayomi spends most of his time in Nairobi, where he works as an investor supporting early-stage entrepreneurs across Africa.*

# Foundry Forward

## MARCH 2025 ACTION ITEMS

Sunday, March 2

### Transfiguration Sunday

Pastor Jonathan Brown preaches on "Royal Rumbling" today, drawing upon Psalm 99 and the Gospel of Luke, chapter 9, verses 28-36 and 37-43a.

### Pick Up Your Lenten Devotional!

Today is the day to pick up the print copies of the Lenten Devotional you ordered. Come to Community Commons between 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Free will donations to cover printing costs are gratefully accepted. Bulk orders cannot be mailed so you or someone you designate must pick up yours today. Individual copies registered for but not claimed today will be mailed to the registrant's address.

### Two New Classes!

**REST IS RESISTANCE** - Can rest, daydreaming and naps help us resist capitalism and white supremacy? Tricia Hersey's book suggests the answer is YES. MJ Jean is leading this drop-in friendly, six-week class this morning from 10:10 - 11:00 on Zoom and in Room 203. Register [here](#) and join us - whether you know the book or are new to the subject.

**WRESTLING WITH DOUBT** - Joanne Garlow leads this class which begins today and meets weekly for the next five weeks. Gather in Room B2 from 10:10 to 11:00 to explore your questions about faith, using Adam Hamilton's book with that title. Sign up [here](#) or just show up in B2!

Ash Wednesday, March 5

### A Sacred Pause

As we observe Ash Wednesday, the day on which the Lenten Season begins, you are invited to join Jackie Wright in a 15-minute virtual meditation each day, starting at 8 a.m. today. No prior experience necessary. Register [here](#) to be part of this grounding in sacred community.

And this evening at 7 p.m. there will be a worship service at Foundry as we begin our Lenten season during which we will reflect, individually and in community, upon the gift of being grounded in grace, encouraged and inspired to move ever closely to the light of Christ.

Sunday, March 9

### Refuge in the Wilderness

Pastor Ginger Gaines-Cirelli's sermon with that title will explore the question of how we get through difficult times. The answer is God. We will encounter temptation; we will find ourselves and those we love in danger; we will face death. But we are not alone in facing those difficulties: God is with us, our refuge in the wilderness.

Sunday, March 16

### Sheltering in Grace

Drawing on Psalm 27 and Luke 13:31-35, Pastor Ginger preaches today on the shelter God provides, a place of safety in which we can grow, take risks, love, and learn to dwell together in a diverse and beloved community.

Sunday, March 23

### Fasting and Feasting

Pastor Ginger's sermon with that title encourages us to look at what aspects of our lives destabilize us, un-ground us. When you identify those elements, consider fasting from them. OR Focus on the elements that do ground you, and feast on those. Her texts are Isaiah 55:1-9 and Psalm 63:1-8.

And speaking of food, don't miss the opportunity to contribute to, compete in, or just enjoy some chili after church. **It's Foundry's Chili Championship Cook-off** in Fellowship Hall, starting at 12:15. You'll find details [here](#).

Tuesday, March 25

### Foundry Board Meeting

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

Sunday, March 30

### A New Sound

Using as her texts Psalm 32 and 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 - Pastor Ginger explores the power of repentance and reconciliation, which cleanse and renew "a right spirit" within us.

### How the DC Budget Affects Foundry's Advocacy

Join Foundry Members Kate Coventry and Mike Lawson today at 12:30 in Room 203 to learn how the DC budget impacts Foundry's advocacy work. Kate is with the nonprofit DC Fiscal Policy Institute, and Mike spent his professional career working on state and local tax policy. Register [here](#) for more information and to attend.

### And April brings Easter!

- Palm Sunday, April 13
- Maundy Thursday, April 17
- Good Friday, April 18
- Easter Sunday, April 20

## CIVIL RIGHTS PILGRIMAGE REMINDER:

# Join, Learn, Support!

**JOIN:** [Register](#) soon for the June 16–21 Civil Rights Pilgrimage to Alabama (and Atlanta). Seats are filling quickly.

*"This is such a compelling time for us to look back and be re-inspired and reinvigorated in order to move forward. The multi-racial allyship of Asbury, Foundry and John Wesley is the kind of community that is needed for us to upend the terrors of this administration and to focus the nation on building a diverse and equitable society." – [Kumea Shorter-Gooden](#), Member, John Wesley AME Zion Church*

**LEARN:** Everyone is invited to the monthly Saturday [civil rights learning sessions](#) from 2–4 pm on Saturdays March 15, April 5, and May 17. We will view and discuss film and book excerpts with congregants from all three churches. Topics include: the Freedom Riders, the Selma Marches, and the March on Washington. The March 15 session will be hosted at Asbury (926 11th Street NW).

**SUPPORT:** Donations for those who need scholarships, especially for teens on this intergenerational trip, may be made through the [racial justice giving portal](#) or by designating "JAF Pilgrimage" on a check. Donations of frequent flyer miles to support travel can be made by contacting [paulabblair@comcast.net](mailto:paulabblair@comcast.net).

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).