

MAY 2023



Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

Change The World Together - Right Here!

JACKIE WRIGHT

When, after being a Foundry member for five years, I began working at Foundry, I heard Pastor Ben mention "WIN" and the "Washington Interfaith Network" many times but didn't really understand what they did or what Foundry's relationship was with them. Now, almost six years later, I have come to understand their work and see them as a vital partner in Foundry's work towards a more just and equitable city.

The Washington Interfaith Network founded in 1996, is a multi-racial, multi-faith, District-wide citizen-powered organization rooted in local congregations and associations. WIN is committed to training and developing neighborhood leaders, addressing community issues, and holding elected and corporate officials accountable. WIN seeks to create lasting change by harnessing the power of faith groups through community organizing focused on issues such as housing, public safety, climate, and immigrant rights. But they need help.

This is where we come in.

At six o'clock on the evening of Tuesday, May 2, at Metropolitan AME Church* WIN is holding a public meeting with Ward 2 (Foundry's Ward) Councilmember Brooke Pinto. She is chair of the Judiciary Committee which handles public safety, a major focus of WIN's actions this year. **We need you to come join us there.**

We know that kids – usually boys 13 to 16 years old – more than any other age group – are responsible for the too-often fatal shootings that are our city's major public safety problem.



WIN is urging the city to address this problem through providing far more mental health support in our schools. It is a sad fact that 80% of the social work positions in DC public schools are vacant. We are asking Councilmember Pinto to support a proposal by Councilmember Robert White to make social work degrees from the University of the District of Columbia free for District residents. We are also asking Pinto to fully fund the violence interruption programs that the data shows to effectively address this problem. Councilmembers are consistently asked by citizens for increased police presence. But police arrive too often after shots have been fired. **We need to fund programs that help prevent those situations from arising in the first place.**

At Foundry we say that we are committed to love God, love each other, and change the world. We need you to show up on May 2 – let's put love in action and begin changing the world right here in D.C. Register for the May action by visiting our website: foundryumc.org/may2. Reach out to me with any questions at jackie@foundryumc.org.

Let's go change the world together now!

***located at 1518 M Street NW.**

Jackie Wright is a Foundry member, mother to Josie, Foundry's Social Justice Program Manager, and a section leader in the choir.

The Power Of Story

"I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY, T'WILL BE MY THEME IN GLORY, TO TELL THE OLD, OLD STORY OF JESUS AND HIS LOVE."

KATHERINE HANKEY

What is religion? This question haunted me for years. It was presented to me on the first day of college in World Religion class.

As a cocky nineteen-year-old I figured I could tackle it easily. However, that was not the case. Was religion a code of ethics? a belief in a god or gods? something that movements aged into? All I could come up with was that religion needed a community of participants.

This rocked my world. I was a preacher's kid. Religion dominated my life. It put food on our table. It was why my family moved around and I had to switch schools. Youth group was a central part of my socialization. Most of my teen angst was around how much I accepted or rejected what the church taught. Yet, I could not define what religion was.

I started school as a music major with hopes of becoming a record producer. But the only time I was happy in my class work was when I was engaged in world religions. As time went on I realized that religion wasn't dying but evolving. My senior thesis explored how the band Phish's followers displayed the religious characteristics defined by Emile Durkheim.



Finally seven years into my quest, I had my epiphany. Sitting in my pickup truck reading the comic book *Promethea* by Alan Moore, I realized that religion was a communal response to story. In every group I could think of labeled religion, story played a defining role. Even if it was organized around rejecting stories passed down to them, it was still a group responding to story.

In that moment my heart was strangely warmed.

I gained a deeper appreciation of my own traditions, and how I had been called to respond to the story of Jesus, as we are called not only to tell it but to respond by living it. In our stories, both fiction and non-fiction, I believe the Divine is offering revelation. As Christians we see how the Holy Spirit is speaking to us in stories.

In May we will be offering a class entitled *Drawn on Religion*. We will look at how God has spoken in stories presented in the medium of comics and how people have responded. Consider taking this journey with us and thinking about how God is speaking to you in story.

Foundry Forward

MAY ACTION ITEMS

Tuesday, May 2

Raise Your Voice for A Safer City

Whether you live in DC, Maryland or Virginia, we need you to join other Foundry members and the Washington Interfaith Network (WIN) to urge the D.C. Council to act to reduce violence and make our city safer for everyone. We're gathering at 6 p.m. at the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1518 M Street NW. Register to join us at foundryumc.org/may2 or email sacredresistance@foundryumc.org with any questions.

Sunday, May 7

A Great Day of Service... and more!

Today is an especially busy and important day at Foundry.

It's our **Spring Great Day of Service**, and everyone is invited – and needed – to help us pack meals for Rise Against Hunger. These meals are sent to our sisters and brothers in areas affected by disasters, as well as to feed children in schools and people in communities around the globe. Sign up or volunteer today at foundryumc.org/gdos – and bring a friend!

You can come help us set up from 8–9 a.m., pack meals from 10–11 a.m., or again from 12:45–1:45. Any of these choices make it possible to attend worship – at 9 or 11:15 – and hear our former **Bishop John Schol** preach, continuing our "Day by Day" Easter season sermon series.

And today, you can start a new class with Pastor Jonathan Brown, exploring how morality and faith are presented in various works of comic art. The class is called "Drawn on Religion," and we will study the book by that title by Ken Koltun-From. For more information go to foundryumc.org/drawn.

Sunday, May 14

Mother's Day

Rev. Dr. Cynthia Weems, senior pastor of First United Methodist Church, Miami, Florida is our guest preacher today. Join us as we continue to listen and learn how the Spirit teaches us to live day by day.

Sunday, May 21

Welcome Bishop Easterling!

Today we are honored to welcome our very own Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling as our guest preacher.

Tuesday, May 23

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, May 28

Welcome, Dr. Thomas!

Rev. Dr. Byron Thomas, joining us from the Atlanta area, is our guest preacher today. He is currently serving as the District Superintendent of the Central South District, North Georgia Conference, the home conference of our own Pastor Jonathan Brown and his wife, Rev. Dr. Katy Hinman. Dr. Thomas will preach at both services.

And after worship, Foundry's Discipleship think tank — and anyone else who is interested — will meet today at 1 p.m. for lunch and exploration of ideas for discipleship programs which were developed at our earlier meeting this year. We will begin to fill in more details, including the date when each event should occur.

Wednesday, May 31

Foundry Scholarships Deadline

Today is the deadline to apply for the two Foundry scholarships awarded each year. The Alida Smith Memorial Scholarship helps support undergraduate or graduate students in all areas of higher education. The Edward W. Bauman Scholarship is for students attending seminary who plan to enter Christian ministry upon graduation. Learn more at foundryumc.org/scholarships.

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.