



Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

CRAFTING A STRATEGIC VISION

Where Do We Go From Here?

ALLISON KRAMER

I am writing to update you on Foundry's current work to develop a strategic vision for the next three to five years. This process is helping us decide where we go from where we are now over that period by discerning where God is leading us.

And that process began with many of you. Last September Pastor Ginger invited us all to participate in strategic vision gatherings. In September, October, and November, nearly 100 of us gathered in these small groups to share our most memorable moments and best experiences as part of Foundry.

In December, volunteers led by Foundry Board member Clareice Chaney collected the stories we shared and recorded them into a database. Another team then reviewed those stories, identifying the themes they brought forward. It is those stories – your stories – that are providing insights into where we put our energy in the next years.

At the January meeting of the Foundry Board, the team that had reviewed our stories presented the major themes that emerged from them:

- creating a life-giving online community,
- thriving as a big church made up of small communities,
- fully living out our baptismal promise to children and families,
- providing ways to be the change we want to see,



- inviting others to experience the good news of God's love and justice, and
- extending radical hospitality and intentional companionship.

Pastor Ginger and Foundry Board President Guy Cecil developed a process and timeline for the next phase of our visioning, which the Board approved at its March meeting.

Now, six teams are being formed, one for each identified theme. After a short orientation/training, those teams will use your stories to create proposals and strategies to help Foundry – all of us – make those themes even more real at Foundry. The proposed strategies would be presented to the Board for approval at the June meeting.

The Board looks forward to those next steps, excited to follow Spirit's lead as we create a bold new vision to guide Foundry in the next three to five years.

Allison Kramer, an attorney and seminarian, is a member of the Foundry Board. She lives in Brookland with her wife Emily and fuzzy cat Zoe.

Books: The Great Escape

JANE NORTHERN

Have you ever passed the book-filled room, B1, in Foundry's basement, and wondered "What's this?"

It's the DC Books to Prisons room where we and other volunteers read thousands of letters from inmates with requests we can fulfill from our donated book collection. It's important work, as you will see from a few of these grateful responses:

"The sheer joy of receiving a package from you guys is the closest thing we get to unwrapping a present behind bars. These books ... are ... enjoyed by so many others before they are eventually donated to the unit library. Thank you so much for giving a damn about our sanity. I can't tell you how much it is appreciated."
Ronald, Texas

*"Your books bring joy into my heart
They allow me to escape and live within my heart...
And I feel like giving up
And I feel like I cannot face another day
I will open up my book and realize you'll always have
an escape for me!"* Thomas, North Carolina

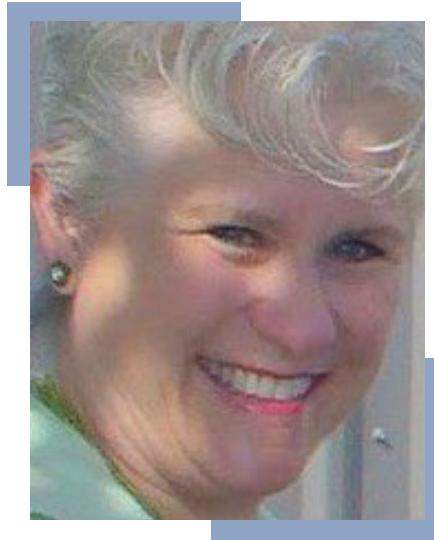
"First of all, thanks for the books you have sent, it has helped tremendously in trying to change my way of thinking..." Curtis, Texas

"Thank y'all for helping get out of here even if it is just in my mind." James, Texas

In 2023, we sent more than 6,000 packages to individuals, usually 3-4 books and a personal note. Seventy more boxes of books went to prison libraries, 97 books (7 titles) to prison book clubs and 65 new volunteers were trained.

Many prisons have no libraries. During the pandemic, many prison libraries were closed. In addition, more prisoners experienced lengthy solitary confinement.

We welcome donations — books, time and money! We are volunteer-run. To volunteer, contact btopdc@gmail.com and ask to be put on the list for an orientation. Volunteers match prisoners' requests with books from our collection, connect with local book sales, verify prisoner locations, wrap and mail packages. We also need help identifying sources for grants, with accounting, and with tracking hard-to-find materials.



Very importantly, we need your books! They must be paperbacks in good condition. No hardbacks! See (<http://dcbookstoprisoners.org>) for books we particularly need. Drop 1 or 2 bags of books in or outside the door of B1. More than 2 boxes? Contact btopdc@gmail.com

We are grateful that Foundry provides DC Books to Prisons with free space. And yes, monetary donations help us pay for postage and more books.

For more information about DC Books to Prisons in addition to our email and website above: go to Twitter: @B2Pdc or Facebook: @DCBooksToPrisons

Jane came to Foundry 30+ years ago and as she says, Foundry is "where my heart found its home." She has served Foundry as Stewardship Chair, worked with the ID Ministry and now volunteers with Books to Prison.



Creating Community by Caring

Did you know that there is a ministry team at Foundry that reaches out to members of the congregation facing health or other personal challenges?

There certainly is such a team: the **Foundry Care Ministry**. The Foundry folk who volunteer to be part of this team invest time and energy in making sure members of the Foundry family know that they are cared for and loved, especially in difficult times.

The ministry provides care on many levels. Volunteers visit individuals in the hospital, the assisted living center or at home. Members provide meals to a family going through an unexpected crisis. The prayer team prays for individuals who have requested intercessory prayers to help them weather a storm. Care members will continue to look after a person when they return home from the hospital or after a crisis is over.

The ministry's greeting card team sends birthday wishes to seniors and messages of support to those who need one. A *Loss and Transition* support group helps those experiencing loss, whether the loss of a family member or friend, loss of a job or a profession, loss of health, loss of purpose...anything that causes grief. There are other more targeted support groups as well.

Soon, the Care Ministry will re-launch a Stephen Ministry team, one of which existed at Foundry a number of years ago. Its purpose is to train, equip, and support a team of congregation members — Stephen Ministers — to provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to people in the congregation and the community who are experiencing life's difficulties.

Foundry's Care team includes all these ministries, each carried out by volunteers from our congregation committed to living out Foundry's mission of creating engaged community through inclusiveness and caring.



Those who serve in this ministry experience the reward of deeper connection with the congregation they serve. Please contact Leigh Carter (leighcarter@gmail.com), Sam Kilpatrick (samkilpatrick90@gmail.com) or Rev. Ben Roberts (broberts@foundryumc.org) if you feel called to join the work of the Care Ministry.

Michael Tyler, a member of the Care Ministry, has been attending Foundry UMC for more than 20 years. Before joining the Care Ministry, Michael taught third and fourth grade Sunday school for a number of years and was also a greeter and usher at the 9:00 am service for several years. He lives in northern Virginia and works as an Intelligence Officer within the Department of Defense.

Foundry Scholarships

Foundry offers two types of one-year scholarships to any student who is a member of, or closely associated with, Foundry UMC.

The Alida Smith Memorial Scholarship is for undergraduate or graduate study at any community college, four-year institutions or graduate institutions.

The Edward W. Bauman Scholarship is for a student attending seminary and planning to enter Christian ministry upon graduation.

The application deadline is May 31, 2024. For more information, go to <https://foundrumc.org/scholarships>

Foundry Forward

MAY ACTION ITEMS

Wednesdays May 1, 8, 15

Sermon Discussion Group

Tonight to the next two Wednesday evenings from 8 to 9 p.m. we come together with other Foundry folk on Zoom to talk about Sunday's sermon. The sessions are led by experienced facilitators who offer brief excerpts from the sermon and relevant scriptures, and some discussion prompts, after which, discussion begins. Sign up to join us at foundryumc.org/sermon-discussion

Thursday, May 2

Climate and Healthy Housing

Join the Washington Interfaith Network and learn the connection between climate and healthy homes. We will explore the historical context of unjust systems, and discover tools for collective positive change. We will meet from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 222 M Street S.W. Secure your spot: register at foundryumc.org/win-training.

Saturday, May 4

Stead Park Reopens!

Celebrate the reopening of Stead Park with an intergalactic celebration from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Star Wars day! There will be food from local restaurants, live music, galaxy games with out-of-this-world prizes, space crafts, face painting, balloon twist artists and a DJ spinning tunes from across the universe! Admission is free. We're seeking Church Volunteers to help with the Craft table. If you're ready to help make this event truly stellar, email Ms. Natalie at nharvey@foundryumc.org

Sunday, May 5

The Power of So That

We continue our exploration of the motivations that drive our actions during this Easter season in our sermon series **The Power of So That**

Sunday, May 12

Star Wars and Theology

Today, between Foundry's Mother's Day worship services, you can start a new class on the provocative subject of "Star Wars and Theology." Here is your chance to dive into the intersection of faith, philosophy and the Force in the Star Wars universe and to discover deeper meaning behind the saga's themes. We'll meet at 10:10 a.m. today and for the next two Sundays, May 19 and May 26 in room B2. Register at foundryumc.org/starwars

Sunday, May 19

Pentecost Sunday

Join us at one special 10 a.m. worship service, where we will enjoy special music from our Foundry Choirs and Musicians – and afterwards, come together for lunch and fellowship. There will be a games arcade for our youth to enjoy! Bring your own lunch or purchase a lunch box at and lunch boxes will be available for purchase at foundryumc.org/arcade-fellowship

Tuesday, May 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.

Friday, May 31

Deadline - Foundry Scholarship Applications

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.