



Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

A Long, Uncertain Race

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...

Hebrews 12:1-2a

Anyone else feel like we're in a time warp? I've felt that way since early 2020. Considering that you are reading these words in SEPTEMBER of 2021 I also realize how long we've been "running the race set before us," as we live out our collective experience of this pandemic.

In a [recent midweek message from my purple parlor](#), I describe this race as an endurance course whose route keeps changing. It's a long race where unforeseen obstacles appear and must be navigated, a race requiring constant vigilance to keep moving in the right direction. And the endpoint is wholly unknown.

In such challenging circumstances, we grow weary. Yet the race continues. Hebrews 12 reminds us to look for inspiration from all those who have gone before and overcome difficulties — the great cloud of witnesses. It reminds us to look to Jesus who has run the race and endured the hardest things any of us will ever endure. He is our guide, encourager, and source of renewed



energy. He is the one who shows us how to persevere with faith, hope, and love.

When we're depleted or discouraged, we can fall into damaging behavior — toward self or others. As our bodies need the proper fuel to run a race, our spirits and lives need fuel to endure. What refuels your heart, your body, your mind, your faith? What helps you stay the course in gentle, healthy, and loving ways?

As we continue in these challenging circumstances, we at Foundry look forward to celebrating "homecoming" as we step back into in-person/online Sunday worship together. The course can change at any moment, and we'll be ready to pivot as needed. But we have our eyes fixed on Jesus who guides us as we keep going, one step at a time. And we trust that He is with us no matter what we may face around the next corner.

In faith, hope, and love,

ginger+

Swimming Toward Myself

PASTOR K.C. VAN ATTA-CASEBIER

Life, for each human being, is an ongoing discovery of identity — of who we are, of who we have become. In this reflection, our Director of Family Ministries Pastor K.C. shares some of their recent discoveries.



For the last month, I have been swimming laps each morning to treat my body well. Those thirty minutes embraced by water have become a powerful reminder of God's inescapable love.

Treating my body well is a new thing for me and a welcome change, catalyzed by a ball of conflicting emotions: pain, fear, courage, and hope. Pain comes in the form of anxiety, depression, and insomnia, only sometimes addressed by the tools (medication, therapy etc.) in my mental health toolbox.

Often when we experience pain, it is coupled with fear. Listening to ourselves can brew powerful fear. What if we're wrong? What if what we're realizing means we're not good? What if we're not strong enough?

But because I have now learned to trust the created goodness inside me (yes, even when I question it) listening to myself, and to those who know me well, can also instill great courage. That's what happened here.

"Can you make one thing easier?" my therapist had recently asked. This question gave me the courage to take the next step in coming to terms with my identity. Like many of us on the brink of a big leap, I felt both brave and terrified.

Then, for the first time, I said the words, "I identify as a non-binary human."

After I said them, I felt at home in myself. The homing device in my brain was blinking: something very important had clicked into place.

I feel hope – the hope that if us queer folk who are safe and privileged can give ourselves and others the gift of the freedom to be who we authentically are, it just might create more space for every one of us to live into the fullness of our created wholeness.

And those thirty minutes in the water each morning now seem an invitation to understand my baptized identity more deeply as a non-binary child of God.

I can't speak for all non-binary persons or provide a perfect definition of non-binary identity. I can't share more than I'm fully ready to, but I can show up and live as authentically as I know how, asking for and spreading grace as widely as I can. I'm grateful to be supported, encouraged, and loved on this journey with you.

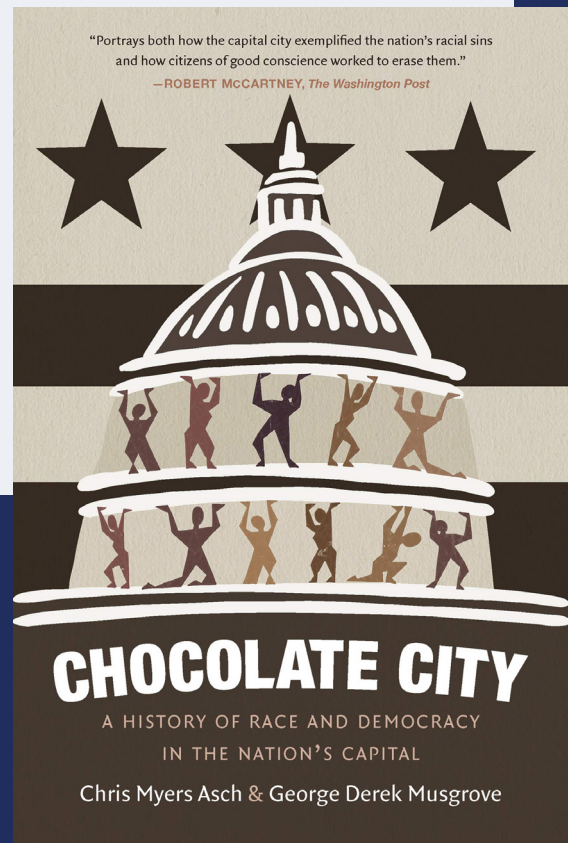


Mark Your Calendars Now!

Chocolate City Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital

The William Astor and Vivian T. Kirk Symposium on Thursday, November 11 will feature Dr. Chris Meyers Asch and Dr. George Derek Musgrove, authors of **Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital**.

This landmark history of our city, published in 2017, is the most comprehensive account to date of the role that race and wealth have played in shaping our home community. You can order your own copy of the book at **Mahogany Books** and join an every-other-week reading group organized by Foundry and the DC Jewish Community Center that begins September 23.



Foundry Forward

SEPTEMBER ACTION ITEMS

Wednesday, September 1

Let Us Pray

Today at 8:30 a.m., everyone is invited to [gather online with Pastor Kelly](#) to pray for our congregation, clergy and staff as we prepare to resume worship in person this coming Sunday, September 5. Remember that you can also send prayer requests to foundryumc.org/prayer and email Pastor Kelly at kelly@foundryumc.org if you wish to join our prayer team.

Wednesdays, September 1, 8, 15

Bible Study with Pastor K.C.

Join Pastor K.C. in Room 203 or by Zoom for these last three sessions of their four-week study on the book of Mark. Classes will meet from 6:30–7:30 p.m. [Register here](#). You are welcome to attend, whether or not you have participated in the first session.

Sunday, September 5

Homecoming!

Foundry is celebrating Homecoming! After many months of physical distance from one another and absence from our sanctuary, we are returning to in-person Sunday worship at 9 and 11:15 a.m. in the sanctuary. We will also continue to live-stream worship services. Pastor Ginger will preach, beginning our Homecoming series with a sermon titled "Come Home To Love." Please wear your mask to all in-person events at Foundry.

Sunday, September 12

Come Home to Blessing

Our Homecoming sermon series continues as we celebrate being together again — whether in person or online with Pastor Ginger's sermon on this topic.

Sunday, September 19

Come Home to Peace

Today we celebrate the anniversary of Foundry's decision to become a reconciling congregation more than 25 years ago. We focus on peace and reconciliation with Pastor Ginger's sermon on that subject.

After the 11:15 service, all who are interested in learning more about baptism — for infants or adults — in the United Methodist Church are invited to attend this session from 12:30 until 1:30 p.m. [Register here](#).

Thursday, September 23

Chocolate City Reading Groups

Prepare for November's Kirk Symposium with the authors of this iconic account of DC history, by joining an every-other-week reading group with other Foundry community members. Each group is limited to 12 people and there will be a variety of meeting options, and a facilitator for each group. At this meeting from 8–9 p.m. details about subsequent meetings will be determined. [Get more information and register here](#).

Tuesday, September 28

Foundry Board Meeting

Foundry's Board convenes its monthly meeting at 7 p.m. via Zoom. All Foundry members are welcome to attend. Email amandabeadle1@gmail.com for the link.

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.