

# Foundry Forge

## Christ-Centered Care: The Mission of a Stephen Minister

As Foundry takes steps to develop a **Stephen Ministry**, I'd like to share my experience. Years ago, when I moved to Washington and settled into National Presbyterian Church, I learned about Stephen Ministers. They are trained laypersons who provide one-on-one care to hurting individuals going through a difficult life experience -- loss of a loved one, illness, job difficulty, divorce, or incarceration. Its motto is "Christ caring for people through people."

For 20 weeks, I and a group of other church members met every Tuesday night for training. Experienced Stephen Ministers in our congregation equipped us with relational and caring skills to provide high-quality, Christ-centered emotional and spiritual care to others. As a recent arrival in the city and the church, the training itself was an opportunity for me to build a special bond with those in the class and experience real Christian community.

After training, the leaders paired me with the adult incarcerated son of a member. For several months I drove



**STEPHEN  
MINISTRY**

on Saturday to Hagerstown to meet with him, listen to him, and offer the simple encouragement of my presence. The visits were a tangible, meaningful way to serve him and to partner with his parents in caring for their son. Later, as I moved on to serve in other ministries, I found I could apply the insights I had gained about the thoughts, feelings, and actions of people who are hurting to other relationships and in other ministry contexts.

Today, my experience as a Stephen Minister shapes and inspires my vision for our community. I've seen the particular power of human relationships grounded in dignity and spirit, especially important in

a city -- and an era -- where traditional social connections are diminished, and interpersonal engagement is often marked by dynamics of competition, power, and status.

Through Stephen Ministry we at Foundry can deepen relationships within the congregation and realize our vision to be a place where people are known and loved as whole persons. I will be excited to see a Stephen Ministry take root again at Foundry.



*Doug Steele and his daughters, Abby and Ella, joined Foundry in 2012 and live in Mclean VA. He currently serves on the Foundry Management Board.*



## Just Keep Stepping!

My Dad was born and raised in the Ozark hills of Northwest Arkansas, the son of generations reared in that beautiful place. There's a peculiar way of speaking that's native to that land. I remember Grandma saying, "No flies on sister!" when I couldn't keep still; and her describing a place as "so small you couldn't cuss a cat without gettin' hair in your mouth!"

Today I realize how deeply embedded in my own speech are the idioms of Dad's people. When we sneezed, Daddy would say, "Scat there!" I have no idea what that means. But I often find myself blurting out that "blessing" when someone sneezes! When I was anxious about an assignment, Dad would say, "[That's] No step for a stepper!" and I would know that Dad believed in me and my abilities. Those words were deep encouragement.

In January 2019 I began a new morning prayer practice of being available to Christ, listening, and writing down what I receive for

future reflection. This practice has been a grounding force as so many things swirl in my life and in the church. Here is some of what I have heard:

***Know that the future is held in God's keeping.***

***Be patient.***

***The way will make itself. Just keep stepping.***

***Be free of worry. There is no point. Be in today and love. Be in today and serve. Be in today and play. Laugh at the tempter. There is no power greater than love. And love holds you.***

As we move into this moment following the United Methodist General Conference with all the uncertainty it brings; as we continue to engage the positive shifts and unexpected challenges within our congregation; as we care for our families, our communities, and ourselves, we may feel anxious or exhausted or confused.

I hear my Daddy's voice saying, "No step for a stepper!" I hear the voice of Christ saying, "Just keep stepping." In other words, trust that God is giving you what you need. Just step into this day to love and serve and play. When you are tempted to be discouraged, "laugh at the tempter!" God's love is holding you. God's love is holding US. That is more than enough to see us through.

Let's step out together.

*Ginger E. Gaines-Cirelli,  
Senior Pastor*

# Foundry Forward: March Action Items

## Sunday, March 3

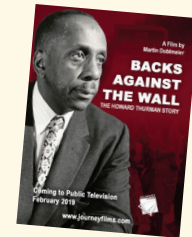
### Daily Inspiration – Your Lenten Devotional

Pick up your free copy of Foundry's 2019 Lenten Devotional in Community Commons today! With it you can each day share the personal reflection of a Foundry friend. (Donations to cover printing costs are welcome.)



### Backs Against the Wall: The Howard Thurman Story

Join members of John Wesley AME Zion and Asbury UMC at John Wesley AME Zion (1615 14th Street NW) to view the new documentary about this influential mystic. Come to either of two screenings - **1:45 or 4:15 pm** - and plan to participate in a conversation about the film from **3:10 – 4:10 pm**. To register: <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/185070>.



## Wednesday, March 6 – Ash Wednesday – The Season of Lent Begins

Come to Foundry at **8 am or 7 pm** on this first day of Lent for prayer, reflection, and an intentional start to this season of reflection and discernment.



## Saturday, March 9 – Men's Discussion Group

Check out this first of six weekly discussion sessions for men who wish to explore the intersection of faith, life and gender. Come to one or more at Java House (1645 Q Street NW) from **9 – 10 am**. For more information go to <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/185639>.



## Sunday, March 10

### Special Lenten Music

Don't miss this special music Sunday when both worship services will feature the ethereal music of the *Faure Requiem*, presented by the Chancel Choir.



### Racial Justice

Join members of our racial justice ministries team at **10:10 am** for a discussion of the intersections of worship, current events and the battle for racial justice. For more information, email [racialjustice@foundryumc.org](mailto:racialjustice@foundryumc.org).



### Report from St. Louis

Come at **10:10 am** and share the experiences of members of Foundry's LGBTQ+ advocacy team and other participants at the recent special general conference.



For more information on these events, go to <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations>.



# Foundry Forward: March Action Items

## **Sunday, March 10 – New Classes**

### **Reading Romans**

Alicia Grey, our pastoral intern, will lead this **six-week immersion study** of a fresh translation of the Book of Romans, a major influence on church doctrine even today. Class meets from **10:10 – 11:05 a.m.** in BI. To register: <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/185589>.



### **A Lenten Journey with Dante and Eliot**

Uncover the Lenten themes in the works of two great poets, Dante and T.S. Eliot. Foundry member **Deryl Davis** will lead six weekly sessions meeting in Davenport Center from **10:10 – 11:05 a.m.** To register: <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/185572>.

## **Wednesdays, March 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 17 – Lenten Evensong**

You are invited every Wednesday night of Lent from **6:30 – 7** for a time of song, silence, and reflection in Foundry's sanctuary. This welcome midweek holy time provides both inspiration and comfort during the Lenten season.



## **Sunday, March 17 – Gender Equality**

Honor **Women's History Month** by joining our sacred resistance ministry team at **12:30 pm** to learn effective ways to resist our culture's persistent misogyny.



## **Wednesday, March 20 – Sacred Resistance**

What, in practical terms, can Christians do to express their opposition to policies and other actions contrary to Jesus' teachings? Join **Pastor Ginger** from **6:30 – 8 pm** in Community Commons to explore the meaning of sacred resistance in your life. This class will meet each Wednesday until Easter. To register: <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/155990>.



## **Tuesday, March 26 – Management Board Meeting**

Foundry's Management Board will meet at **7:00 pm** in Room 101. All members of Foundry are welcome to attend. This is a public meeting.



## **Saturday, March 30 – Exploring Lent with Theological Imagination**

Take a daylong journey through Lenten themes and texts engaging your body, your heart and your head. Using improvisational techniques under the direction of Foundry member **Deryl Davis**, we will travel with Christ and his disciples from Galilee to Jerusalem. We'll gather at Foundry from **8:30 am until 3 pm**. No previous dramatic experience needed! Register before **March 27** at <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/202481>.



For more information on these events, go to <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations>.