

FEBRUARY 2026



Foundry Forge

Inspiration and Information for the Weeks Ahead

Pieced Together by Grace

In a world that often feels as though it is fraying at the seams, it's easy to assume that division is simply the way things are. Polarization is normalized. Identity is flattened into labels. Faith is reduced to sentiment or abstraction.

Against all of this, the Church is called to witness to another way of being human.

In this season after Christmas, we proclaim that God has already chosen to dwell with us in Christ. The Word became flesh and moved into our world — not to float above our brokenness, but to enter it.

In Christ, God is patiently piecing together what has been torn apart. As the pieces come together, they reveal a humanity made whole. This is not wishful thinking. It is the heart of the gospel.

Our current sermon and worship series explores the “pieces” that shape our shared life: our theology and history, our commitment to justice, our values, and our vision for the future. These are not scattered fragments we must scramble to assemble on our own. They are elements of a Spirit-woven identity — gifts we receive, remember, and live into together. When we reclaim them, we offer a counter-testimony to a world shaped by thin platitudes, shallow spirituality, and systems that divide.



As a tangible expression of this shared identity, you'll find puzzle pieces available in the Community Commons throughout the season. You are invited to write your name, respond to a simple prompt, or decorate a piece in whatever way feels authentic to you. Each piece on its own is incomplete. Together, they will form a visible sign of how God's love and life are at work among us — holding us, shaping us, and piecing us together into a beloved community.

This is not about manufacturing unity. It is about acknowledging who we already are in Christ and allowing the Spirit to keep doing the slow, holy work of mending what is broken — for the healing of the world.

Giving thanks for God's grace,
Ginger+

Our Lenten Gift Exchange

JOANNE STELLER

The daily Lenten reflections that will be available to you* soon reflect a theme — **Ignite the Light: Radiate Love** — that sprang to life last month among Foundry writers, poets and artists. I've had the privilege of witnessing that ignition of thought every year for the past decade. It's a favorite part of being a co-leader of Foundry's Lenten Devotional Ministry.

This ignition often happens at the creative workshop held early each new year. Ideas also lift off later as the chosen theme floats around in contributors' imaginations.

What happens next is a wonderful gift exchange in our church community.

Writers and artists give expression to something that lives in their hearts — short essays, poetry, photography and artwork that they dare to share. It takes courage to go public with such personal thoughts.

Invariably, individual expressions land on a day when a devotional reader truly needs to receive that message — as a gift created just for them. When message giver and receiver connect, new and deeper relationships are possible — with each other, within oneself, and with God.

Weaving the individual reflections into a flow of daily devotionals is also a special joy for me. A variety of perspectives on the theme become linked, forming a daily spiritual companion for our communal journey through Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

My co-leaders and I hope this year's collection of gifts resonates as much with you as it did for us.

And whenever a devotional moves you, please share your response with the author or with someone who comes to mind. Keep the gift exchange going. You can do that by sending an email to lentendevotional@foundryumc.org and we will send it along to the writer.



The Lenten Devotional Ministry Team: (Clockwise from left): Anne Hardin, Joanne Steller, Lynn Smarte, Elder Wellborn, David Rice.

Joanne Steller has actively served in numerous Foundry ministries since 1983. She and husband Joe worship on Sundays upstairs among fellow "Balconians," where the Word and music are nearer heaven. Joanne is a retired arts management professional.

- *in print on Sunday, February 15, online beginning Ash Wednesday, February 18th, To receive the devotional, please register [HERE](#) to let us know whether you wish to have a paper copy and/or a daily email.*

Foundry Forward

FEBRUARY 2026 ACTION ITEMS

Sunday, February 1

The Shape of a Just Community

Bishop Julius Trimble is our guest preacher today as we begin Black History Month. One of his texts is from Micah, the prophet's answer to the always-relevant question – "What does the Lord require of you?" Now, as in Micah's age, the answer is "Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God."

Wednesday, February 4

Register Today to Get Your Lenten Devotional!

Today is the deadline to register to get your Lenten Devotional in print on Sunday, February 15 or delivered to you via email each day during Lent. REGISTER here: <https://foundryumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3367839>

Friday, February 6

Valentine Cookies: Sign Up Today!

It's time for Valentine's Cookie Boxes! Parents and family members, help us make sure your current Foundry student or service member gets a Valentine's Cookie Box. All current names & mailing addresses of your young adults MUST be submitted by TODAY, February 6th, 2026.

Yes, please resubmit names from last year if eligible. Email their name and address to foundryumc.org/cookies.

Sunday, February 8

Piecing Together Our Future

Pastor Ginger preaches on how we, as a community, can build a future worth having. It takes more than a goal, a plan or a few leaders. To realize that future requires us to work together, discovering how each person's gifts matter and contribute to the common good.

Bring and Help Pack Valentine Cookies! We need your help! Bring cookies and treats to Community Commons TODAY! Candy and postage donations are also appreciated. Questions? Contact Shelley Jessee at valentinecookies@foundryumc.org

Thursday, February 12

Join the Sacred Resistance Team

Our team educates, organizes and empowers the Foundry community to use advocacy and public witness to address the many social justice issues we face locally and nationally. Our work is very important today! Join our meeting tonight at 7 p.m. For more information, email sacredresistance@foundryumc.org

Sunday, February 15

Transfiguration Sunday

Today, we focus on the disciples' mountaintop experience, as they glimpse the fullness of who Jesus is – who they are becoming, witnesses to God's reconciling love, pieced together in Christ. Can we become the witnesses our world needs now?

....and it's another busy Sunday at Foundry

- **If you ordered print copies of the 2026 Lenten Devotional, pick them up in Community Commons today** before or after either worship service. There is a \$5 charge for each copy.
- **Our Chili Cookoff** is today after worship! Bring your best pot of chili and register at foundryumc.org/chilicookoff if you wish to compete. You can also just come and eat!
- **Baptism Orientation.** If you are interested in learning more about adult or child baptism, join us today online at 12:30 to discuss the specifics of baptism within the United Methodist Church. Contact our Director of Family Ministries, Natalie Harvey at nharvey@foundryumc.org with any questions. To register for this session, do so [here](#).

Wednesday, February 18 Ash Wednesday

Lent begins today, forty days until Easter Sunday. Foundry will have services at 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. as we worship together and explore the text from Ephesians 5:8-9: *Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light...for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.*

Our Lenten theme, *Ignite the Light, Radiate Love* invites us into a season of spiritual practices that illuminate our inner lives and propel us toward courageous action, exploring how small faithful choices can spark positive change. Together we will tend the flame God has placed within each of us – and kindle light for one another and for the world God so loves.

Friday-Sunday, February 20-22 Women's Retreat

The annual Foundry Women's Retreat is this weekend at Pecometh – Riverview Retreat Center, Centreville, MD. Many of Foundry's women, as well as from our sister churches, John Wesley AME, and Asbury UMC are gathering for a weekend of rejuvenation, relaxation and reconnection.

Sunday, February 22 An Anointed Body

The church, as the Body of Christ, is anointed to preach good news to the poor, recovery of sight, freedom and justice for captives and others in need. We are not without power.

Tuesday, February 24 Foundry Board Meeting

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

Saturday, February 28 Ten Minutes of Life

This new monthly writing group begins at Foundry today at 10:30 a.m. in Room 203. Come write with us — no experience necessary and no preparation required. What is written in this group stays in this group. Honesty, honor, and respect are mandatory. Bring a pad of paper, a pen, and your thoughts — anything else is optional. We'll do three rounds of ten-minute writing, with an invitation to share after each round and offer nonjudgmental, positive, supportive feedback. Register at foundryumc.org/ten-minutes