

Foundry Forge

The Power of A Warm Welcome

December brings new people to worship at Foundry. Some come to church only during Advent. This is our chance to live out our promise of radical hospitality. If we can make each of our holiday visitors feel truly welcome, they will leave glad they came – and with a sense of community that might well draw them back again.

One way we practice radical hospitality is by greeting each person as they enter. To be sure, hospitality is more than a handshake, a smile, and saying “good morning” – but it starts with those simple acts. Greeters and ushers are the “front face” of Foundry. For most of my time at Foundry, I have served as a greeter at the second service. For me, it is a meaningful way to share the overwhelming blessing of – and my gratitude for – Foundry’s loving and inclusive community.

We have an incredible team of dedicated greeters. But we are always looking for others who

feel called to serve in this way. For the 11:15 service, greeters begin their welcoming duties a few minutes before 11:00, ideally one Sunday each month. We share information about the congregation and the building – most frequently, the location of restrooms or classrooms. It’s low-impact, but very fulfilling.

If you are interested in greeting, let me know. When I’m at church, I’ll be in the narthex, wearing my name tag. And just to remind everyone – wearing your Foundry name tag is a great way to show hospitality to everyone.

But you don’t have to be a greeter to welcome people. Every one of us sitting in the pews can make a difference. Talk to your pew neighbor – especially someone you do not know – or know well. Introduce yourself – even if it is someone you think you should know. (More reason to wear your name tags!) Ask how they are. If they are a visitor, encourage them to return. This can be tricky

– you want to be welcoming, not intrusive. But such direct contact can make all the difference.

When I was church shopping, I snuck into the balcony, kept my head down, and left immediately after the service. But then the late great Esther Persigehl engaged me, introducing me to others, making me feel welcome. Before long, I felt home.

That’s what it’s all about, folks. Especially at Christmas, people need to feel welcome. These simple touches can make all the difference. Be radical in your hospitality this Advent season!



John Branscome grew up a United Methodist in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

He has been an active member of Foundry since 1998.

The Advent of Our Hope



*Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.*

– Charles Wesley, UMH #196

Each year as we enter into the season of Advent I look forward to singing “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus.” The hope, desire, and longing of the human heart are so powerfully captured in Charles Wesley’s lyrics.

God knows what we need and desire and how we struggle, suffer, and get so lost. As much as we don’t want to admit it, we can’t save ourselves or anyone else on our own. We need God. And because God so loves the world, God gives us what we need. Because God so loves YOU, Jesus was born, holding within his very human body, the very heart of almighty God.

In Jesus, we see who God is and how God acts: God is humble — not born into wealth or privilege, but in a borrowed barn. God favors people like Mary and Joseph, the little ones seemingly of no account. God calls upon common folks to be witnesses to glory. God chooses to be vulnerable, as we are.

In Jesus we see what it looks like to be truly human, what life looks like lived fully in God’s love and mercy. In Jesus we experience a God who dwells with us in the messiness, confusion, and brokenness of human life so that we might share in the peace and purpose of God’s kin-dom.

God’s best hope is for us to receive the Christ we long for, to make God’s love manifest in our day-to-day lives despite our worries and flaws, to live as people of hope, remembering that there is more to life than meets the eye, more love in the world than hate, more good than evil and that the Light will never be overcome by the darkness.

Thankful that we are invited to share in God’s life of love, generosity, and joy, may we once again welcome Advent — the arrival of hope into the world.

Blessed Advent and Merry Christmas,

Ginger E. Gaines-Cirelli, Senior Pastor



Foundry Forward: December Action Items

Hanging of the Greens... and Ordering Poinsettias

Saturday, December 1

Help the Altar Guild and Creative Worship Team prepare the sanctuary for Advent. We'll work from **9:00 AM to noon**.

This is also the last day to order poinsettias to make Foundry even more beautiful this Christmas season.



Update: Special General Conference

Sunday, December 2

Come to Fellowship Hall at **10:10 AM** to hear our LGBTQ Inclusion Advocacy team discuss the outlook for moving The United Methodist Church to a more loving stance on the issue of full inclusion of our LGBTQ+ siblings. You'll also learn how you can participate in our advocacy effort before and during the special general conference in February.



Advent Evensong

Wednesdays, December 5, 12, and 19

Gather with us from **6:30 to 7:00 PM** for a brief service of communion, candle lighting, and song. More information, email wgreen@foundryumc.org.



Annual Christmas Festival

Saturday, December 8

Foundry's Family Ministry invites all Foundry folk to celebrate the season in partnership with the Friends of Stead Park. From **10:30 AM until noon**, we'll create Christmas crafts, take photos with Santa and enjoy the fellowship of our neighbors.



December Action Items continued on other side.



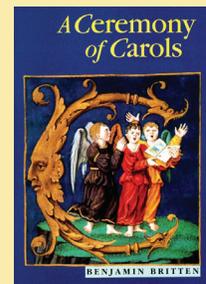
Foundry Forward: December Action Items

Christmas Carols... and Fair Trade Gifts

Sunday, December 9

Enjoy Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* presented by Foundry's new Women's Choir at both services.

And today is your last day to buy fair trade gifts -- coffee, tea, chocolate, nuts and olive oil -- in Community Commons.



Management Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 12

Foundry's Management Board will approve the General Operating Budget for 2019 at its November-December meeting at **7:00 PM** in Room 101. All members of Foundry are welcome to attend. This is a public meeting.



Longest Night Service

Friday, December 21

Come to Foundry on this, the longest night of the year, for a worship service affirming those of us for whom this season is not particularly happy. The service, which begins at 7:00 PM and lasts about an hour, will include silence, prayer, candle lighting and communion.



Christmas Eve Services

Monday, December 24

Everyone is welcome!

There's no better place to be on this holiest night of the year than Foundry, whether you choose the family and child-focused service at **6:30 PM** or the traditional service of carols and candlelight at **8:00 PM**.



FOUNDRY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Foundry is a historic, progressive United Methodist Church that welcomes all, worships passionately, challenges the status quo, and seeks to transform the world.