

*What does God require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. — Micah 6:8*

## A Most Important Invitation this Year

*A rabbi, an imam, and a Baptist preacher walk into a bar.* The bartender says, *“What is this, a joke?”*

I'm sure there are lots of jokes about rabbis, imams, and preachers walking into bars but I don't know them. What I do know is that the relationship I have with Rabbi Lucy Dinner and Imam Abdullah Antepli and the work we do together is no joke. It is one of the most beautiful blessing of my life. They are not only my ministry colleagues, they are my friends and trusted advisors. They are the people with whom I often laugh the hardest and cry out my deepest tears of distress. They are, as the young people say, “my people.”

Some months ago, on a day trip to Washington, DC with Lucy and Abdullah, we dreamed of what we might do together to create unity among our three faith traditions. If I am honest, I think part of our desire was to simply figure out how to spend more time together. AND, we wanted to create space for people in our various faith traditions to come together—not just to learn *about* Judaism, Christianity, and Islam but rather to *experience* and *engage* and *draw wisdom* from our varied spiritual practices. As Rabbi Dinner said at our first worship service together last month (in which there was standing room only in Pullen's chapel): *“We realized we couldn't just keep the relationship we had formed to ourselves. We needed to share the beauty of it with others and expand it among the people we love and care about.”* And so, we dreamed of a once-a-month worship experience where we each offer a piece of wisdom from our three faith traditions while engaging in prayers from our individual spiritual practices. It is not our desire to create a watered-down worship experience where our individual faiths blend into one. Rather just the opposite. It is our hope that through these worship experiences those who participate will go deeper into their own religious and faith expressions therefore deepening their spiritual lives within their specific faith traditions.

As a minister pastoring a church in 2018, I can't think of a more important task to be engaged in than this one. And as a progressive Christian church trying to be faithful in 2018 to the gospel of Jesus, I can't think of a more important task for the church to be engaged in than this one. And so, I am asking you, the Pullen family, to join me at Temple Beth Or on December 16 at 5:00 p.m. for the second *Praying in Unity* worship service. In the midst of Christmas preparations, I am asking that you set aside two hours (one for worship and one for breaking bread) on December 16 to spend time with our Jewish and Muslim sisters and brothers. In those two hours, you will find rich blessings.

I am reminded of the mantra that we often recite at Pullen—one that Mahan Siler introduced years ago. It goes like this: *Show up. Pay attention. Speak your truth in love. And don't be attached to the outcomes.* The first step is *showing up*. I hope, as the Pullen community, we will “show up” at Temple Beth Or on December 16 at 5:00 p.m. I can almost assure you that if you do, you will find the time to be a wonderful, beautiful Christmas blessing.

By the way, it is true what the Imam said at our first worship. The three of us have walked into a bar together. And as the saying goes, “What happened at the bar stays at the bar.” See you this Sunday at worship for the first Sunday in Advent.

Shalom, Peace, As-salamu alaykum,

*Nancy*

**PRAYING IN UNITY**

December 16, 2018

Rabbi Lucy Dinner

Reverend Nancy Petty

Imam Abdullah Antepli

**EXPLORING OUR VARIOUS PRAYER TRADITIONS**

It has been said, “We don't think our way into a new way of living. We act our way into a new way of being.”

Service and Supper  
December 16, 2018  
5:00 pm Multifaith Worship  
6:00 pm Sharing Our Bread

Bring:

- \* An open mind and heart
- \* Friends from all backgrounds
- \* Hope for a new way of being.

With the wisdom of acting our way into a new way of being we will nurture our souls and nourish our bodies.

Imam Abdullah Antepli, Pastor Nancy Petty, and Rabbi Lucy Dinner will lead us in offering and receiving prayers, and teach us wisdom from their three faith perspectives.

at Temple Beth Or  
5315 Creedmoor Road  
Raleigh, NC 27612

Service in Temple Beth Or Sanctuary  
Dinner in Temple Beth Or Satisky Hall

RSVP for dinner appreciated : [executivedirector@boraaleigh.org](mailto:executivedirector@boraaleigh.org)

# Opportunities to Connect, Serve, Learn and Grow at Pullen

## Advent Schedule

**Sunday, December 2, 11:00 a.m.**

First Sunday in Advent: Waiting in Hope  
*Sanctuary*

**Wednesday, December 5, 6:30 p.m.**

Advent Candlelight Service  
*Potest Chapel*

**Sunday, December 9, 11:00 a.m.**

- Second Sunday in Advent: Preparing for Peace // *Sanctuary*
- Last Sunday Group for 2018

**Sunday, December 9, 6:00 p.m.**

LGBTQIA+ Christmas Potluck  
*Home of Brooks Wicker and Pat Heilscher  
1333 Diehl Street, Raleigh*

**Wednesday, December 12, 5:15 p.m.**

Wednesday Night Dinner and Program

**Sunday, December 16, 9:00 a.m.**

Christmas Breakfast + Children's Play  
*Finlator Hall*

**Sunday, December 16, 11:00 a.m.**

Third Sunday In Advent: Celebrating with Joy, featuring Chancel Choir and Pullen Orchestra  
*Sanctuary*

**Sunday, December 16, 5:00 p.m.**

Community Interfaith Prayer Service and Catered Dinner  
*Temple Beth Or*

**Wednesday, December 19, 6:30 p.m.**

LoveFeast  
*Sanctuary*

**Sunday, December 23, 11:00 a.m.**

Fourth Sunday in Advent: Proclaiming Extravagant Love  
*Sanctuary*

**Monday, December 24, 7:00 p.m.**

Christmas Eve Service  
*Sanctuary*

**Monday, December 24, 11:00 p.m.**

Youth Christmas Service  
*Sanctuary*

**Tuesday, December 25**

Christmas Day

**Sunday, December 30, 11:00 a.m.**

Worship  
*Sanctuary*

**Wednesday, January 2**

No Wednesday Night Activities

**Sunday, January 6, 9:30 a.m.**

Sunday Groups Resume

**Wednesday, January 9, 5:15 p.m.**

Wednesday Night Activities Resume

## Want to Know More About Pullen?

Pullen 101, the eight-week introduction to our church, will begin again on Sunday, January 6 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 203 next to the sanctuary. All are welcome to join us during the Sunday Group hour for this orientation to the life and ministries of Pullen. For more information or to let us know you plan to attend, contact Chalice Overy at [covevery@pullen.org](mailto:covevery@pullen.org) or 919-828-0897x214.

—Chalice Overy

## December 9 LGBTQIA+ Christmas Potluck Party

Get to know more Pullenites at the LGBTQ Christmas Potluck on December 9 at 6 p.m. Pat Hielscher and Brooks Wicker invite you to their home at 1333 Diehl Street in Raleigh. Bring a dish or two to share. Children are welcome. 919-833-4950 or mobile 919-418-0924. This is a great way to celebrate the holiday season and spend quality time with Pullen people. Merry Christmas!

—Pat, Brooks & the LGBTQIA+ Committee

## Hope Center Angel Tree

The Hope Center at Pullen has approximately 25 Angel Tree Families who will need to be adopted for the holidays. A notebook in the church library contains information on Angel Tree Families with a description of desired holiday gifts, current sizes, and a brief portrait of the recipients.

Angel Tree Gifts should be returned to the Hope Center at Pullen by December 3 to prepare for the December 13 holiday party.

For more information contact me at [bcrisp@pullen.org](mailto:bcrisp@pullen.org) or Kelliann at [kmiranda@hopecenteratpullen.org](mailto:kmiranda@hopecenteratpullen.org).

—Brian Crisp

## 2019 Budget Pledging

2019 Budget:	\$	1,117,901
Pledged to Date:	\$	623,341
Percent Pledged:		55.76%

## A Gift that Matters

I am always amazed at the generosity of the Pullen community. With your time and your resources, you support countless efforts to make our world a more just and loving place. And as the year comes to a close, these cries for help become more insistent. With all the emails and Facebook fundraisers, it's hard to figure out where to give. What matters most? What do I believe in?

It is this last question that guides me. While I have plenty of doubts about religion, my faith in the Pullen community is rock solid. I believe in the power of coming together to create a safe space where all are welcome. I believe in the people who have created the Hope Center, the Round Table Ministry and other outreach efforts. I have faith in the staff who lead us in joyful music, teach our children and inspire our daily journey.

If you believe that the Pullen community matters in your life, I ask you to make a financial commitment to support this church, its staff and its mission in the coming year. Your pledge is vital to the success of this faithful community.

For information on how to submit a pledge, please visit [pullen.org/pledge](http://pullen.org/pledge) or email Brooks Wicker at [bwicker@pullen.org](mailto:bwicker@pullen.org).

—Amber Keister,  
Stewardship Committee

## Year-End Giving at Pullen

Pullen's fiscal year ends on December 31 so any contributions for 2018 or prepayments for 2019 must be dated on or before 12/31/2018, and be received or post-marked by that day to be credited to the 2018 fiscal year. Questions about year-end contributions, stock gifts or electronic giving can be directed to Brooks Wicker.

—Finance Committee

## Church Financials

Gifts to Date:	\$	878,579.79
Expenses:	\$	951,841.22
Difference:	(\$	73,261.43)
<b>As of 11/30/2018</b>		

# Pullen People

## We Grieve With:

- ☞ Hilda Highfill in the death of her husband, Larry. Larry died at home Wednesday night. We remember Hilda, Nancy, Mary and David during this time of grief and loss. A memorial service celebrating Larry's life will be held on December 8 at 11 a.m.
- ☞ Edie Morse in the death of her friend, Brad Shue who died unexpectedly at the age of 50.
- ☞ Ann Framer in the death of her father, Delmar Hamilton. A service celebrating his life was held at Calvary Baptist Church in Durham on November 6.

## Chapel Advent Meditation

During Advent, the Chapel will be open for prayer and meditation. On the table you will find different color strips of cloth. We encourage you to write a prayer or thought and pin the cloth to the canvases. During this time, please pray and meditate about the thoughts that are pinned to the canvasses. We hope this becomes a meaningful experience and assist in your own faith journey during the Season of Advent.

—Brian Crisp

## Christmas Greetings from the Staff

We who have the good fortune to serve as Pullen staff members want to express our gratitude to the Pullen community for your love, generosity and support during this year. As always, it has been a time of exciting opportunities and interesting challenges that have inspired and stretched us all. We watch with eyes and hearts filled with appreciation as you continue to minister to each other and the world beyond Pullen with faithfulness and grace. We wish each of you the best gifts of this holy season. May hope, peace, joy and love be yours in these days and in the challenging year to come as we work together to build a more just world.

*Nancy Peters*  
*Bryon Lee*  
*Brian D. Crisp*  
*W. W. Anderson*  
*Chadwick*  
*Brook Vick*  
*Larry Schultz*  
*Tommy Cook*

December 2, 2018

# Harvest Season

## Bring Fabric Scrap With Your Pledge

Your time, talents and money are what make Pullen the beautiful place that it is. The Stewardship Committee invites you to help us create a quilt to symbolize the diverse gifts that you bring to our church community. When you offer your pledge for the coming year, we ask you to bring a 2 1/2-inch wide strip of fabric, of any length, to turn in with your pledge card. These pieces will come together throughout the pledging season to create a beautiful representation of our love and support of this church.

—Stewardship Committee

## How Do Pullen Members Pledge?

There are many ways to consider how our community members pledge to support the ministry and work of our church. The chart below is one breakdown of the 277 pledges given to support our 2018 budget. This is offered as a guide for you to consider as you reflect on giving in the coming year and making a pledge for 2019.

Pledge Range	Pledges Made	Total Pledged
\$ .01 - 499.99	26	\$ 5,895
\$500 - 999.99	33	\$ 21,635
\$1,000 - 2,499.99	90	\$ 142,548
\$2,500 - 4,999.99	60	\$ 202,713
\$5,000 - 7,999.99	35	\$ 206,226
\$8,000 - 11,999.99	16	\$ 153,180
\$12,000 - 15,999.99	10	\$ 132,000
\$16,000 +	7	\$ 133,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>\$ 997,397</b>

## Pat Long Presented Human Rights Award



Patricia Long has been presented the Human Rights Award by Church Women United.

This award recognizes her leadership service as a mentor and a social activist in human rights and human development, an

advocate for peace and justice with no boundaries of political system, country, cultural background or religion.

Pat has supported LGBT issues, has served with Campaign Nonviolence NC, worked with Triangle Interfaith Alliance and marched with groups supporting women's rights and for the ERA and against the death penalty. She has served the church and the community through offering her gifts in music and text and in many other ways.

We are proud to honor Patricia as a woman who has shown a strong concern for human rights for all in our church and in our communities.

—Pullen Mission Women



## Wednesday Nights in Advent

Wednesday nights at Pullen offer something for everyone! As always, we begin with a community meal in Finlator from 5:15-6:00 p.m. Dinner is \$6 for youth and adults, \$3 for children with a maximum of \$20 per family. If this is a hardship, please contact one of the ministers. After dinner, we share announcements, joys and concerns. Next we offer programming for all ages. Here's a peek at what's ahead!

### Adults' Wednesday Night Series

Our Wednesday Night programming offers some great opportunity to add meaning to this season. Please join us as we eat, fellowship and learn together during this Holy Season.

#### December 5—*Advent Candlelight Service*

In the midst of the busy holiday season, we'll gather in the chapel by candlelight for prayers, music, poetry and quiet reflection time. These days of Advent invite us to a slower pace in quiet anticipation of the coming of the Christ child.

#### December 12—*Illuminating Darkness at the Border*

Attorneys Ann Rodriguez and Allison Lukanich, and Pastor Melissa Florer-Bixler will share their experiences from their work with those seeking asylum at the US-Mexico border.

#### December 19—*Lovefeast*

The entire Pullen family will join in our annual Pullen version of the historic Moravian Lovefeast. Carols, bread and chocolate milk are components of this meaningful celebration of the Christmas season.

#### December 26 and January 2

NO Wednesday dinner or program on these dates.

### Wednesday Nights for Children

Childcare is always available for our youngest children. School-age children (grades K-5) are invited to develop their musical skills through Music Discovery or the Children's Choir. This time is followed by Micah Kids, where children learn to live out the message of Micah 6:8. Activities are designed to help each child deepen their relationship with God and understand how they can make a difference in their family, community, and world—right now.

- ♥ Childcare (preschool) 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- ♥ Music 5:45-6:15 p.m.
- ♥ Micah Kids 6:15-7:30 p.m.

### Programs for Youth (Grades 6-12)

#### Wednesday Night Live 6:00-7:30 p.m.

This is a space for teens to be in community with one another, have fun together, and engage topics about everyday life.

## Music Ministry at Pullen

### The Music of Advent and Christmas

Lift your voices and hear the music of Pullen's Music Ministry Groups during the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

#### Third Sunday of Advent with the Chancel Choir & Pullen Orchestra

##### A Service of Music and a Ministry Opportunity Sunday, December 16, 11:00AM

Expressing the Advent theme, "Celebrating with Joy," worship on the Third Sunday of Advent will be led by the Pullen Orchestra & Chancel Choir as they enliven congregational singing and present seasonal music. Included will be orchestral carols arranged by Douglas Smith and Jeff Cranfill, "A Carol Suite," for orchestra and choir by Hal H. Hopson, Handel's "For Unto Us a Child is Born," Rosephanye Powell's "He Is Marvelous," and the traditional singing of Glenn Rudolph's "The Dream Isaiah Saw." Inspired by the lectionary's gospel reading for the day, the Worship Council invites worshippers to bring a pair of socks as an offering to be given to our Round Table friends.

#### Christmas LoveFeast with the Pullen Orchestra, Children's Choir & Music Discovery Groups

##### Wednesday, December 19, 6:30PM

Pullen's version of the Moravian LoveFeast is enhanced with instrumental selections and accompaniments of the Pullen Orchestra, and the joyful song of children in Music Discovery and Children's Choir.

#### Pullen Orchestra at the CV Holiday Open House

In November, the Pullen Orchestra once again represented our church by playing for the local community at the annual Cameron Village Holiday Open House. Friends from Pullen and the event attendees were delighted with the holiday cheer expressed in the music of the orchestra as (due to rain) it played from the second floor of Chic-fil-A. Imagine the surprise of customers when the restaurant's elevator doors opened to reveal an orchestra!

—Larry Schultz



December 2, 2018

# Activities Abound As We Approach the Advent Season

## December 16 is Socks Sunday



Inspired by the Advent lectionary readings from Luke 3 where John the Baptist paraphrases Isaiah and tells the crowds to share their coats and food with those who have none, the Worship Council and Round Table encourages everyone coming to worship to bring a pair of socks. Socks are one of the most critical clothing items needed for people experiencing homelessness. Fresh socks

help keep the body warm, the feet comfortable, and they defend from health-related problems. The socks can be new or gently used. The socks will be distributed at Round Table on December 18 and 20. Thank you for helping our Round Table guests during the holiday season.

—Brian Crisp, Round Table, and the Worship Council

## Youth Lead 11 PM Christmas Eve Service

If you have never taken the opportunity to be at Pullen's 11 p.m. Christmas Eve service, this is your year! The youth are busy planning a night of song and thought-provoking engagement with the Christmas story. After the service, current and former youth, with their families, are invited to join us in the youth space for refreshments and fellowship.

—Bryan Lee

## Gratitude for Outreach Giving

Pullen people have always been generous and you have continued to embody this tradition in 2018. So in this last *PullenNews* of the year, we want to thank you for the many ways you have supported ministry beyond our walls. In funding community ministry where the needs are great and close to home and in supporting our five international partners who address concerns close to them, your contributions help us meet significantly more needs than our current budget would allow. Because of your open hearts, we are able to respond. This means people here and across the globe are housed, kept warm and dry, provided with food and water, assisted in obtaining employment or education, and kept healthier because of your donations. It is a gift to be a part of your generous work. Thank you, Pullen, for your unfailing generosity year after year.

—Brian Crisp and the Missions & Outreach Council

December 2, 2018

## Christmas Eve Offering for Rise Against Hunger

Each Christmas Eve we take a special offering for a ministry that addresses poverty either in our community or beyond.

Together we



This year our

offering will again go to Rise Against Hunger (formerly known as Stop Hunger Now). RAG is an international hunger relief organization that coordinates the distribution of food and other life-saving aid around the world. The organization is driven by a vision to end world hunger in our lifetime. Its mission is to provide food and life-saving aid to the world's most destitute and hungry in the most sustainable, efficient and effective manner. Its office is located a few blocks east on Hillsborough Street. Rise Against Hunger raises funds for the packaging of meals by requesting donations from the volunteers who do the packaging. For the last four summers, RAG has brought their mobile meal packaging unit to Pullen for our July Second Wednesday program. Each time about 75 Pullen children, youth and adults had a great time packaging meals. The required donation for this project is a minimum of \$2,900 and the funds come primarily from the previous Christmas Eve offering. This event is a wonderful intergenerational activity since people of all ages can do one or more of the required tasks. This means all generous donations on December 24 will have a double benefit: hungry people in a developing country get the nutritious meals their bodies need and Pullen people here in Raleigh experience the joy of working together to provide them.

—Missions and Outreach Council

## Meditation Group Schedule for 2019

As we begin 2019, let us renew our commitment to allowing time in our busy lives for silence. To help you in that effort, Pullen continues its meditation in the Chapel on the first and third Sundays of each month. After a few months of trying our meeting time at 1:30, we are moving it back to 2:00–3:00. Here are the dates beginning in January:

- ♥ January 6
- ♥ January 20
- ♥ February 3
- ♥ February 17
- ♥ March 3
- ♥ March 17
- ♥ April 7

Our remaining meditations for 2018 are December 2 and 16, both at 1:30. We hope to see you there. Blessings.

—Karla Oakley and Ann Eller

# Activities Abound As We Approach the Advent Season

## Children's Christmas Play Information

Pullen's Children's Christmas play will be performed by our children during the Annual Christmas Breakfast on Sunday, December 16. Rehearsals for this play will begin on Sunday, December 2. All children are welcome to join the play, even up to the day of the play, however, speaking parts and main characters will be selected at our first practice. Please notice the schedule below and make this a part of your family's seasonal experience.



## Children's Christmas Play

### Sunday, December 2

Our first Christmas Play rehearsal will be held after worship, from 12:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Finlator Hall. All children up through fifth grade are invited to join us. For children under 6 years old, parents will need to attend rehearsals. Pizza lunch will be provided.

### Sunday, December 9

The second Christmas Play rehearsal will be held after worship, from 12:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Finlator Hall. All children up through fifth grade are invited to join us. For children under 6 years old, parents will need to attend rehearsals. Chicken nugget and veggie nugget lunch will be provided.

### Saturday, December 15

The final practice and dress rehearsal for our Christmas Play will be held from 10 a.m. to noon in Finlator Hall. Last minute participants welcome!

Also, cookie decorating after play practice. Children not participating in the play should arrive around 11:00 a.m. Wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty (colored icing can stain). Join us for a great time decorating and eating Christmas cookies.

### Sunday, December 16 - Christmas Breakfast and Play begins in Finlator Hall at 9:45 a.m.

Children should assemble in Room 122 to prepare for play. Last minute participants STILL welcome!

—Tommy Cook

## Parent and Children's Night at Pullen

Friday, January 11 @ 6:30 p.m..

## Winter Family Night

Parents of preschoolers and children up to 5th Grade, make plans to join us in Finlator Hall. We will share family-fun time! We will share Pullen's love for children! Preschoolers & children will be dismissed for supervised fun while par-

ents and caregivers will be lead in a discussion about helping children with disability awareness, compassion and making friends in the classroom. The discussion will be led by Vickie Leigh.

—Tommy Cook



## Children and Youth Volunteer Lunch

### Sunday, January 6 after Worship

This lunch will be for all Pullen volunteers who serve our younger Pullenites, from infants to high school graduates. ALSO, if you are interested in being a part of the Children or Youth Ministry volunteers, please join us and find out where you can fit in!

Please make reservations by Sunday, December 23 by contacting Tommy Cook at [tcCook@pullen.org](mailto:tcCook@pullen.org) or Bryan Lee at [blee@pullen.org](mailto:blee@pullen.org).

—Tommy Cook



# Activities Abound As We Approach the Advent Season

## Advent Gift Cards Support Our International Mission Partners

As you make plans for Christmas gift-giving, please remember our Advent Mission Offering. Once again our offering will go to places around the world where your contributions can make a big difference. Simple gift cards are available to use in notifying loved ones of gifts to our partners in their honor. The cards are available on the tables next to the entrances to Room 203 and in the Information Room. Our partners and friends will be grateful for your help in supporting their important ministries. The offering will be received each Sunday in Advent. Offering envelopes can be found in the pew racks. Receipts not otherwise designated on the offering envelope will be divided equally among the following recipients:

### First Baptist Church, Matanzas, Cuba

For nearly 30 years, we have deepened our relationships with our partner congregation in Cuba as Pullen adults and youth travel to Matanzas several times a year. This share of the Advent offering will support the many efforts of our Cuban friends at First Baptist, Matanzas, to meet the basic needs of their neighbors.

### Peace Cathedral, Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia

Our friends in the Republic of Georgia will benefit from your contributions as they try to minister to the needs of the people in Tbilisi. In the face of political challenges and great human need, Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili and members of Peace Cathedral persevere to offer vital ministry in challenging times.

### AMOS Health and Hope, Managua, Nicaragua

ABC medical missionaries Laura and David Parajon oversee this creative indigenous health delivery system in rural villages of Nicaragua by training local health promoters to provide basic screenings, services, and education for their neighbors. AMOS celebrates its 10th anniversary this month.

### Community of the Cross of Nails, Coventry, England

The Community of the Cross of Nails is Pullen's oldest international partner. This reconciliation network grew from the rubble left when Coventry Cathedral was bombed during World War II and the Cathedral community responded with a spirit of reconciliation. Peace-making partners all over the world benefit from gifts to this important ministry.

### The Zimbabwe Theological Seminary, Gueru, Zimbabwe

Our gifts to the Zimbabwe Theological Seminary will help this new institution meet its basic needs for faculty and facilities to train men and women who sense a call to ministry in their troubled country.

—Brian Crisp

## Join us on January 5 to Reimagine Our PULLEN OUTDOOR WEEKEND!

- **Planning Meeting January 5**
- **POW May 24-27, Memorial Day Weekend**

Let's try something new! For over 30 years, Pullenites have been gathering in the mountains of North Carolina on Memorial Day weekend to camp, canoe, hike, bike and fellowship. Several years ago, our tried and true campground, Raccoon Holler, sold and now we campers have ended up in a not-very-tent-friendly area. We have talked frequently around the nightly campfire about moving to a new area hopefully bringing fresh activities, people and excitement to our annual outdoor event that has brought Pullenites together for over 30 years!

After careful consideration, we have decided this year to move our camping to Hanging Rock State Park. We are going to have a pot luck planning meeting at the Neiley's home on January 5 (more details to follow) to decide on a loose itinerary for the weekend. Please come, offer feedback and get excited for our gathering!

RSVP to me at [kneiley1@gmail.com](mailto:kneiley1@gmail.com), or 919-622-4315 by January 3.

—Kevin Neiley

## Progress Report on Building Repairs

We are all happy to have our front door free of scaffolding! Yes, we've moved on to the final phase – the south side of our 1922 building. There is still a bit of work on the lower elevation of the east side but the weather has helped us recently and the pace has picked up. Thank you for continuing to endure the dust!

In taking advantage of the scaffolding we've been able to more easily modify the access to the roof via the interior of the west tower. This modification is a significant safety enhancement. Also, the chimney has been inspected and though we need a new cap, the lining is in excellent shape, mostly due to construction standards of the 1920s.

To date, the following PUR (Pullen Urgent Repair) funds have been spent:

1. Replacement of sanctuary air conditioner (\$55,000)
2. Upgrades to the children's classrooms (\$42,586)
3. Continued work on gutter repair (\$31,534)
4. Replacement of roof safety anchors (\$30,450)
5. Mortar repointing & other exterior repairs (\$203,150)

Total PUR funds spent to date: **\$362,720**

Please let me or Warren Chesson know if you have any questions.

—Brooks Wicker

# Care of Creation Monthly Challenge

Two things Jesus never said: “Are you done with your Christmas shopping?” and “Did you have a big Christmas?”

Advent, the four weeks preceding Christmas, is a time of preparation for the coming of Christ. We wait in growing darkness for the birth of the light of the world. Yet the modern American Christmas has more to do with preparing for the arrival of family members in our homes than with Jesus coming into our hearts.

Gift giving often feels compulsory and the shopping process is stressful, even frantic, powered by fear of not giving enough, choosing the “right” gifts, or running out of time. In my family for years, I saw small children with eyes glazed after hours of gift opening, overwhelmed by piles of gifts from relatives who seemed locked in an unconscious competition to show generosity.

Please consider that each gift has an environmental impact. I’m not suggesting avoiding gifts altogether. But consider how much joy and love each gift really will bring. Can you find another way of showing love to Dad besides buying him that Christmas sweater?

Clothes and toys are produced in factories and are usually shipped around the world, carrying a hefty carbon footprint. Toxic byproducts of manufacturing pollute the air and water, I try to remember this when debating whether to buy my niece that second gift.

## How can you be part of the solution?

For many of us, Christmas is our favorite time of year! We gather with friends and family to celebrate the birth of Christ. The excited anticipation of children is everywhere, as we decorate trees, bake cookies, shop and attend Christmas performances. Please consider these suggestions this Christmas season to ensure that your traditions, gift giving and celebrations consider and protect God’s Creation, our majestic planet Earth.

This holiday, season focus on the true meaning of Christmas. Focus on prayer, family and community. Teach your children to focus on giving rather than receiving.

### Gifts for Children

Research shows experiences bring people more happiness than possessions.

1. Give experiences: vacations, extracur-

ricular activities, museum memberships, and tickets to events.

2. Give the gift of family time: a tent and camping gear, board games, kids printed coupons “A night to stay up extra late,” “A trip to the ice cream shop,” etc.
3. Give the gift of education: a subscription to educational or craft subscription boxes, gardening kits, science kits, cooking classes, magazines, or bookstore gift cards.

### Teaching Children to Give

Be a good holiday role model for your children: Make homemade gifts together. Instead of giving commercial gifts, teach kids to give gifts of time.

1. Give the Gift of Charity: Give your children money to donate to projects of their choice at organizations such as: Global Giving, Heifer International and Food for the Poor.
2. Give the Gift of Charitable Loans: Give your older children money to fund global microloans of their choice with organizations such as Kiva and Pro Mujer - microloans for women in Latin America.
3. Give the Gift of Community Service: Sponsor a family in need or purchase presents for less fortunate children. If your kids love animals, talk to your local animal shelter. Give back to the elderly. Volunteer your family’s time.

### Gift Ideas for Adults

Consider the environmental impact of what you buy including excess packaging, usefulness of the gift and waste. Research the impact of your gift ideas before purchasing. Consider Fair Trade gifts to enhance the livelihood of individuals around the world who are striving to build a better life for themselves. Eat and shop locally. Avoid disposable goods. Choose natural rather than synthetic goods. Use your purchasing power to create change.

Look for consumable, durable, reusable gifts such as: a refillable thermos, a canvas tote, solar chargers, gifts made from recycled materials, home baked goods, tickets to a movie, ball game or concert, gift cards to a bookstore, restaurant, spa, theatre, favorite store or movie rental. Give Fair Trade gifts. Agree to make donations to favorite charities instead of exchanging gifts. Make a book of favorite family recipes or ornaments from family photos. Give

certificates for a promise to babysit, wash the dishes, or clean the house or car.

### Gift Wrapping and Cards

Gift wrap may be festive but it also is destructive to the environment. Each year, Americans throw away 25 percent more trash between Thanksgiving and New Years! That is an additional one million tons per week! If every family wrapped just three gifts in reused materials, It would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields. The 2.65 billion Christmas cards sold each year fill a football field 10 stories high. If we each send one less card this year, we will save 50,000 cubic yards of paper. (Stanford University)

Use reusable fabric or paper gift bags. Wrap gifts in pages from magazines, the Sunday comics or maps. Use cloth ribbon so it can be reused. Save and reuse wrapping paper and ribbon. Buy wrapping paper and cards made from recycled paper. Send fewer cards. Send electronic cards or make a holiday phone call instead. Make gift labels from used cards.

### Decorating

Purchase durable, reusable, decorations rather than flimsy disposable ones.

Use LED lights. Set them on a timer so they are only on a few hours each evening. Buy a live tree that can be planted after Christmas. If you purchase a live cut tree, be sure it is composted and not placed in the trash. Artificial trees may be a good long term investment as an alternative to a live cut tree. Compost poinsettias after the holidays. Avoid excessive wasteful decorating.

### Entertaining

Avoid use of disposable paper and plastic plates, cups, silverware, tablecloths and napkins. Use washable cloth napkins and tablecloths. Instead of serving bottled water, offer pitchers of chilled ice water and glasses. If you must use paper products compost them. Compost food and paper waste. Clearly label and display recycling, compost and trash containers.

We wish all of you a joyous, blessed, Christ centered Christmas and New Year!

—Sheila Read, Gail Powell and the  
Care of Creation Advocacy Group



# The Hope Center at Pullen



We hope you all had wonderful Thanksgiving celebrations! We can't believe November has come and gone. It was a busy month at The Hope Center, which started when Peg O'Connell took over as Interim Executive Director. Peg has been nothing short of amazing! Her leadership has allowed operations to continue to run smoothly. We are so grateful to the Board and to Peg for ensuring that our young people continue to have the full attention of our program staff while the search for a new Executive Director continues. Finalists for the permanent Executive Director position have been identified and we anticipate that the role will be filled in the coming weeks. We will update you as soon as we know more!

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## Merry Christmas!

We hope that Christmas is merry and bright for each and every one of you. It is only the end of November and you have already begun to shower our young people with gifts from the Angel Tree! Thank you!

We continue to be encouraged by you and the example you set in advocating for the vulnerable among us. Thank you for leading with love.

## We need your help to fill up the grocery cart

We are so fortunate to receive a generous grant that allows us to help our young people with children stock their refrigerators and pantries for the holiday season. We don't, however, have a grant dedicated to helping our young people without children stock their pantries. We would love to overwhelm them with generosity this Christmas season. Please consider picking up a gift card the next time you are in line at a local grocery store. These gift cards allow our Transition Specialists to take our young people shopping for nutritious foods. A donation in any

amount would be greatly appreciated and smaller denominations work best (up to \$20 to \$25 per card), since our Transition Specialists usually shop with one young person at a time.

## LINKS Etiquette Night

We are really enjoying hosting the LINKS youth in Finlator Hall on Tuesday evenings. Thank you again for allowing us to use this space. Right before Thanksgiving, we hosted our Etiquette night for our young people. The evening was catered by the Inter-Faith Food Shuttle and young people got to experience fine dining, while learning all of the hidden etiquette rules associated with the experience. It was a really fun night for staff and the young people and a perfect safe space to try to figure out which fork to use for dessert!

## 2018 Annual Appeal is Off and Running

The Hope Center at Pullen's Annual Appeal is underway! As of 11/26, we are already 40% of the way to our goal! If you've already given, THANK YOU!!! Your support is so vital to the success of our young people. The time you give as a volunteer means that our young people have nutritious meals for Life Skills group, tutors to help them overcome obstacles to obtaining a high school diploma and transportation to and from transformative internships. Your generous donations mean that we can continue to provide these services that our youth have come to rely on.

If you haven't already given, we'd love for you to join with us as we work to help former foster youth transition to adulthood. Thank you again!

—Erin K. Witcher,

*Development & Communications Coordinator  
The Hope Center at Pullen*



## Juice & Sausages are always needed!

A group of dedicated volunteers recently packed over 1100 lunches for the Round Table Ministry. We are now collecting items for the next packing and need cans of Vienna sausages and individual-sized juice pouches or boxes. Any items you can contribute will enable us to pack more lunches for our Round Table guests. Please place your contributions in the blue wagon outside the church office or drop them off with back door volunteers on Sunday mornings. Thank you for your generosity.

—Nancy Bradley



# Pullen Memorial Baptist Church

## Christmas Greenery and Poinsettias



The sanctuary will be decorated with greenery and poinsettias for Advent and Christmas. You may make a donation of \$11.00 to request a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one. Your donation will be recognized in a December worship guide. If you would like to make a donation in remembrance or honor of someone dear to you, please complete this form and return it with your check or cash to the church office by **Wednesday, December 5** (place in basket marked *poinsettias*).

Your name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
In  honor or  memory of (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
In  honor or  memory of (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \_\_\_\_\_

## Pullen Orchestra Entertains Guests at the Cameron Village Holiday Open House

