



Pullen News

FEBRUARY 2, 2020

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

The Things That Are God's

Jesus was a master of the one-liner. Take *"go and sin no more."* What? Never again? "Oh right," we say. Or *"let she/he who is without sin cast the first stone."* "Hmm. Well, I . . . forget it." Particularly when confronted by those trying to trick him with provocative questions, Jesus sent zingers in return, sending his provocateurs away scratching their heads. Consider the Pharisees' attempt to trap Jesus into taking an explicit stand on whether Jews should pay taxes to their oppressive Roman rulers. They expected Jesus to oppose their paying taxes to Pilate, the Roman ruler. Jesus asked for a Roman coin and asked them whose head was on it. They looked and, probably irritated, said "Caesar's, duh!" He replied, "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Did they get an answer, and was it one they expected or hoped for? I don't think so.



Likely the tricksters went away exasperated that Jesus had directed them to pay their taxes. And maybe they did as he directed. But what about the rest of his directive: *"render unto God the things that are God's?"* I'm not sure they figured that one out. In fact, I'm not sure many of us have deciphered what that means. What are "God's things," and how do we find them or give them to God?

I'm no theologian, so I'm not going to attempt a meaningful explanation. But strangely, when Nancy asked me to write a piece about stewardship, this verse came to mind. So, is Pullen Church a "thing of God" that we should revere and support? I guess most of us would say it is, despite not being too sure.



So, since we (or at least I) don't know for sure what Jesus meant by giving to God the things that are God's, I'm just going to assume that in some sense it means we need to support, to give, to this place we call Pullen. But while trying not to sound "commercial," it seems to me that everyone who claims some affiliation (member, frequent visitor, committee member, choir member) with Pullen receives certain "goods" that have value. Maybe most of those "goods" are difficult to describe, but adjectives like uplifting, clarifying, calming, educative, even provocative and challenging come to mind.

But those goods come at a cost, literally. We worship in a century-old beautiful sanctuary, and meet and eat and conference and do mission work in adjacent buildings, one of relatively recent construction. We sit on cushioned pews, in air-conditioned comfort, with a (sometimes leaky) roof over our heads. Even when we intentionally meet outside, costs are incurred. We publish newsletters and now offer video streaming of services. We are led in the church's endeavors by a professional staff, real people, with real and costly, specific education and training, who need real jobs to support themselves and their real families. The staff attends to us in times of joy, and particularly, in times of need, whether the timing is convenient for them or not. We financially support a variety of important mission/relationship work, both nearby and in distant countries, and a number of like-minded organizations.

Since all of these "goods" come at a cost, we must support them if we want them to continue. Each of us Pullenites has an obligation to monetarily support this church, to the extent we are able. We all need to have "skin in the game." So as we approach tax season and file our Caesar taxes, let us similarly pledge to give to this church. There are many ways we can do that, most of which have been published previously in Pullen News and the weekly bulletin. Maybe this can be at least one interpretation of what it means to *"give to God the things that are God's."* For me, I'm going to assume so.

-Bob Harris

February News Inside:

- Pullen News, Joys & Concerns page 2
- Grace in Aging, Meditation, New Members page 3
- Racial Equity Institute, Shirley Murray Obituary page 4
- Faith in Action, Alliance of Baptists, Youth News page 5
- Earth Ministry Challenge, St. Ambrose Event page 6
- Hope Center, The Table in February page 7
- Children's Ministry News page 8

2020 Budget Pledging

2020 Budget:	\$1,177,045
Pledged to Date:	\$1,005,097
Percent Pledged:	85%
Pledging Units:	258

We grieve with:

- ☞ Diana Jewel in the death of her grandson, Seth Adam Sylvia, who died on December 22 at the age of 34.
- ☞ Katie Hurley in the death of her nephew, Adam Ludwig, who died on January 2.
- ☞ Carol Ashcraft in the death of her cousin, Nancy Hinchey, who died in Charleston, S.C. on January 23.

Round Table Ministry THANKS YOU

I am frequently in BJ's purchasing sausages, crackers, etc. for the lunch bags we pack for Round Table Ministry. Though your contributions help A LOT, I usually have to purchase more items so that we can pack 1200+ bags about every six weeks. It is easier for me to purchase and unpack smaller loads of items between packings than it is to do one mega shopping trip and unpacking right before we pack the lunch bags. In mid-January, I was in BJ's purchasing several boxes of Vienna Sausages



when a nice young man (who obviously worked there) came up to me and asked if I needed any help. I thanked him and told him no as I was just putting the last of the boxes I planned to purchase into my cart. As many people are when they see all the boxes of sausages I buy, he too was curious and asked me if I was going to feed them to my dogs. I told him they were for the homeless bags my church packs. He said that was great and was a really important thing for us to do. As I was going down another aisle to get other items, he came after me and told me, "I want to personally thank you for what you do. I was homeless when I lived in Washington, DC and I would not have made it had it not been for people doing things like this that you are doing." Though that Thank You was said to me, I know it was really meant for every person who has helped pack bags, helped with the Tuesday/Thursday meals, donated items for the bags, donated money, or helped with Round Table Ministry in any other way. You are appreciated.

And if you can help us now, we need many cans of Vienna Sausages, many packages (4-pack or 6-pack) of crackers, and cereal/granola bars before our next packing. Cans of tuna and chicken are also needed for the Tuesday/Thursday meals. Please place your donations in the blue buggy outside the church office or drop them off with the backdoor volunteers on Sunday mornings. And know that what you do is important and makes a BIG difference to folks in the world like this young man I met at BJ's.

-Nancy Bradley



Come camp with Pullen friends!

Pullen Outdoor Weekend May 22-25

Memorial Day Weekend at Hanging Rock State Park

Please email Kevin Neiley at kneiley1@gmail.com to reserve your campsite!

More information will be posted soon. -Shannon Neiley



Young Adult Lunch- 4th Sundays

Love dumplings? Join the Pullen Young Adults at David's Dumplings on the 4th Sunday of the Month directly after the service. Enjoy food, fellowship, and a light theological discussion! Contact Chalice Overy, covey@pullen.org, for more information. -Chalice Overy

LGBTQ Second Sunday Lunch

Please join us immediately following worship on February 9 for LGBTQ Second Sunday Lunch at El Cerro Restaurant at 2217 Avent Ferry Road. Parking is plentiful. I hope to see you there! -Randall Brady

Looking for an opportunity to connect with other Pullenites?

Eat, chat and get acquainted on the second Friday of each month at 11:30am. The group meets at the handicap accessible K&W in Cameron Village. If you have questions, please contact Elmer Johnson at elmphy@aol.com or 919-848-7335. -Elmer Johnson

PMW Brunch

PMW Brunch- February 13

Pullen Mission Women invites you for brunch on Thursday, February 13, at 10:00 in Finlator Hall. Bring yourself and your sweetheart for a delicious meal, good conversation, and great company.....just for the fun of it! Just call the church office to let us know you're coming. 919-828-0897.

-Sharron Underwood



The Grace in Aging

The Grace in Aging

*And don't we all, with fierce hunger,
crave a cave of solitude,*

*a space of deep listening-
full of quiet darkness and stars,*

*until finally we hear a syllable of God
echoing in the cave of our hearts?*

-Macrina Wiederkehr

Aging can be a time for a focus on the many losses we are experiencing or it can be an opportunity to turn inward, to grow in love and wisdom, and to deepen our connection with the sacred. Using Kathleen Singh's book, "The Grace in Aging" to help us focus, we will gather to reflect, meditate, and share our collective wisdom as we open ourselves to hear "a syllable of God".

The group, which is limited to 8 participants, will meet for 6 weeks. We will use "The Grace in Aging" to stimulate our inner and outer dialogues about aging, and we will explore various meditation practices such as Vipassana, Centering Prayer, and Loving Kindness.

We ask for a commitment to attend all 6 sessions, an openness to explore meditation practices, and a desire to live our lives more fully.

Facilitated by Suzanne Hayes and Ned Yellig

Consecutive Sundays, March 29-May 10, (with the exception of April 12, Easter Sunday 3:30-5:00) at Pullen in the parlor

To register, or for additional information, contact Suzanne Hayes at sphayes@earthlink.net or Ned Yellig at ebeyellig@gmail.com

-Suzanne Hayes

Meditation Group

Please join us this year in regular meditation or centering prayer practice, usually on the first and third Sundays of the month in the Pullen Chapel!

-Ann Eller and Karla Oakley

Upcoming Meditation Dates:

- February 2
- NO meditation Feb. 16 due to Congregational meeting
- March 1
- March 15
- April 5
- April 19
- May 3
- May 17



New Members



Rose-Eileen Maria Sheridan was born on January 7, 1989 at Rex Hospital. She spent several years attempting to be a proper catholic boy before giving up on both goals. She earned a bachelor's in economics and statistics at Elon University and her master's in applied economics at UNC of Greensboro. She is currently working with the Department of Health and Human Services performing the Sisyphean task of explaining to the General Assembly why they need to fund Medicaid.



Jessica Werdel

I'm a transplant here in the Triangle; I moved from Rhode Island in 2009 to pursue a nursing degree at Duke. I am married to Mark, my husband of 5 years, and we have a blended family with our stepdaughter Bea, who is 10, our daughter Violet, who is 5, and our newest addition Robin Francis, who is 3 months old. I started attending Pullen after meeting Nancy through a mutual friend almost 2 years ago.

Ashley Eubanks



I'm an NC native and have been in Raleigh for about 30 years. I went to Peace College and started my banking career here after finishing college at ECU. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with friends and family, soaking up the salt air at the beach. My son Miles is a freshman at UNC. My partner Kathy (pictured on left) and I started visiting Pullen about five years ago and we are so thankful to be a part of the Pullen family.



Rebecca Kuiken

I arrived in Raleigh just in time to become a grandmother. Marika, my eldest daughter has lived and worked here for a decade. My youngest daughter Janna will graduate from NYU medical school this May.

I come from a long line of Dutch Reform missionaries who worked in India, China and Iraq building agricultural colleges and hospitals.

For over 30 years, my ministry took place in the San Francisco Bay area. I was a pastor at an inner-city church in Oakland, a large suburban church, and a neighborhood church in San Jose. Between these pastorates, I served as the Director of Communications for San Francisco Theological Seminary, as a staff consultant for a Human Resource firm, and as the Director of the Interfaith Council on Economic Justice in Silicon Valley, where I worked on behalf of low-wage workers and undocumented immigrants.

In 2011, I left California to become a pastor in the French Reformed Church, first in the historically Protestant region of the Cevennes mountains, and then in Reims where my parish included "champagne Protestants", as well as African immigrants. I returned to the US and served a congregation in Elkhart, Indiana.

I am grateful to have found a community of faith that sees social justice as a core commitment. In these perilous times, I need faithful encouragement and support.

REI Phase I Training, February 7-8 at Pullen

REI

racialequityinstitute, llc

I am a Pullen member and also a member of Raleigh Organizing Against Racism (ROAR). Each month ROAR hosts a two-day anti-racist workshop facilitated by organizers for the Racial Equity Institute out of Greensboro. On February 7-8, this workshop will be held in Finlator Hall. This foundational two-day workshop opened my eyes to institutional and structural racism in ways I could never have anticipated. This is not a workshop about prejudice, diversity or inclusion – this is about the foundation of our country's systems and institutions that lead to disparate outcomes across every system in America for our brothers and sisters of color. It is fundamental to understanding race and racism in America, and it's coming to Pullen! We still have seats available. Cost is \$295 for individuals and \$275 for groups of 3 or more. Sliding scale scholarships are available. Breakfast, lunch and snacks are included. To register, please go to www.oaralliance.org. If you have questions or would like to know more, please email me at csharin@mindspring.com. Hope to see you there! --Cas Shearin

From <https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/> : "REI's two-day Phase 1 training is designed to develop the capacity of participants to better understand racism in its institutional and structural forms. Moving away from a focus on personal bigotry and bias, this workshop presents a historical, cultural, and structural analysis of racism. Topics covered include our fish/lake/groundwater analysis of structural racism; understanding and controlling implicit bias; race, poverty, and place; markedness theory; institutional power arrangements and power brokers; importance of definitions of race and racism; history and legacy of race in American economic and policy development; racial identity and its interaction with institutional culture. With shared language and a clearer understanding of how institutions and systems are producing unjust and inequitable outcomes, participants should leave the training better equipped to begin to work for change. "

To register, please go to www.oaralliance.org.

The Passing of Shirley Erena Murray

With sadness I write to inform the Pullen congregation of the passing of Shirley Erena Murray, a true "hymn poet laureate" for our church. Her words permeate our life together: *Carol Our Christmas, An Upside-Down Christmas* (from this past December), *Touch the Earth Lightly, Community of Christ, Who Is My Mother, Who Is My Brother?* (and others from the Chalice Hymnal), *For Everyone Born, a Place at the Table* (sung every chance we get), *Set the Sun Dancing!* (Epiphany anthem), *Go-Between God* (our new Murray hymn to which a few weeks ago James Forbes' responded: "is truly a Pullen hymn") and many, many more.

But among all her works, we are perhaps most grateful for: *In Our Own Voice (Raise Up New Hope)*. Eleven years ago, when Shirley was 77, she accepted the task of a commission for our 125th Anniversary. Though known in our era as the most prolific and influential hymn writer of progressive hymn poems, and not knowing if she accepted commissions, I inquired of her about the possibility. After sending her a pile of history about Pullen, she responded that she did not often accept commissions, but she did so for Pullen after learning of the church's brave witness. And she encapsulated our church life magnificently in "Raise Up New Hope."

After receiving word from Shirley's family by email this week, I responded on behalf of our congregation, sending them a digital copy of our Pullen hymnal, *In Our Own Voice* which contains her hymn for us along with a tribute to Shirley.

Many of you know that it was at Festival by the Sea where I became aware of Shirley's passing, interrupting our festival rehearsal to share the sad news with the crowd -- meaningfully, the notification on my phone came just as the festival choir was rehearsing an anthem that expressed "neither death nor life shall separate us from the Love" in which Shirley now rests.



In Celebration of Her Life that has Impacted Our Own Lives,
Larry E. Schultz, Minister of Music

February 20 ICCT Event:



*Are You Concerned About Global Warming and Ready to Act?
Join Us to Discover How People of Faith
Can Affect Climate Policy*

Faith in Action: Advocating for Effective Climate Policy

An Update on Climate Issues in the Triangle & NC and
How a Local Faith Community Can Influence Climate Policy
featuring Rob Schofield from North Carolina Policy Watch

Presented by

**The United Methodist Church NC Conference
Creation Care Ministry,
NC Policy Watch, 350 Triangle, and the
NC Conservation Network**

Sponsored by Interfaith Creation Care of the Triangle
and Co-sponsored by Campaign Nonviolence NC

Thursday, February 20, 2020, 7-9 PM

Registration and Resource Tables will be open at 6:30 PM

**Benson Memorial United
Methodist Church**

4706 Creedmoor Road,
Raleigh, NC.

More information and complete
agenda: interfaithcreationcare.org.



**INTERFAITH
CREATION CARE
OF THE TRIANGLE**

Annual Gathering



Alliance of Baptists

**TAKING ON THE CROSS: [RE]LEARNING THE LOVE
OF GOD**

**Annual Gathering
April 24-26, 2020**

**PLUS: Theological Retreat on Atonement April 23, 2020
Broadway Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas**

For a thousand years western Christianity has seen the cross through the lens of substitutionary atonement—that Jesus died in our place and reconciled sinful humanity to God. Many find this deeply meaningful. Many find it deeply troubling. After a thousand years, isn't it time to re-examine this theology? Come join a conversation at this year's Alliance of Baptists Annual Gathering, where we will "Take on the Cross" in order that together we may reimagine, or relearn, the Love of God.

Join us for a dialogue with Alliance panelists who are reimagining atonement in their ministries. Engage in workshops designed for those now exploring atonement ideas and for those who have already moved beyond substitutionary atonement. Worship in ways that will touch both heart and head.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS The Alliance of Baptists is pleased to welcome Rita Nakashima Brock and Eboni Marshall-Turman to the 2020 Annual Gathering. These pioneering theologians will lead the Gathering into a conversation about atonement theology. On Friday, April 24th, Dr. Brock will offer a lecture on atonement, to which Dr. Marshall-Turman will offer a response. The next day the roles will be reversed, and on both occasions a Q & A period will follow. In addition, Dr. Brock will offer an opening lecture at the Theological Retreat on Thursday, and Dr. Marshall-Turman will preach at Sunday morning worship.

Pullen Youth Ministry News

PYM Wednesday Nights

- ♦ **Feb 5 - Collaboration Night at St Ambrose** This is a family night! All are encouraged to be there. If parents are unable to attend, youth will meet at St Ambrose at 6 pm and can be picked up from there at 7:30 pm. If you are in need of a ride, please let Bryan know.
- ♦ **Feb 12 - The Reality of Immigration in the US** Join us in a conversation with an immigration attorney about the reality of the difficulties people face trying to come into the United States.
- ♦ **Feb 19 - Hang Time** Our monthly downtime to be with one another, play games, and talk about life.
- ♦ **Feb 26 - Ash Wednesday Service in the Chapel**

Youth to Cuba Team Meeting

February 9 - 12:15 - 1:30 This meeting is for all those traveling to Cuba this summer. Bring your lunch and join us right after worship! Please email blee@pullen.org for info about Pullen Youth Programs!

-Bryan Lee

Earth Ministry Challenge: How to Talk about Climate Change

Seventy percent of people agree that climate change is happening. Yet 66% of people never talk about it. According to Katharine Hayhoe, climate scientist and Evangelical Christian, the most important thing we can do to address climate change is to talk about it and spread awareness of the issue. Why are we so reluctant to talk about climate change? Is it bad experiences or fear of political conflicts? Here are some ideas to make it easier.

Ask someone about their views on climate change. Then listen, really listen; make it about them, not you. If they don't have much to say, reflect on what you heard and ask questions. Don't talk science or politics. Acknowledge ambivalence if this is the message you hear with a statement such as, "It's ok that some of us are less worried about climate change than others". This will help them be comfortable and listen with an open mind. Share your perspective. Don't try to convince them, just share your story about when you became concerned. Share from your heart. Thank them for sharing their views and end on a positive note.

When you are ready to continue the conversation consider values that you have in common with this person. If you understand their values, you can open their hearts and minds by showing that you share those values. Connect these values to climate change (faith, family, social justice, etc.). Talk about solutions that offer hope for a bright and prosperous future. Fear does not motivate. Hopeful, engaging solutions inspire action! Avoid all or nothing positions such as "you must become a vegan". They can be a total turnoff. Focus on the personal benefits that will accompany changes in behavior such as cost savings. Make climate change more relevant by focusing on local examples of impact. In NC this is easy, 2019 was the hottest year on record largely due to warmer night temperatures. More frequent and severe hurricanes, droughts, floods and sea level rise will become common.

End with an ask. Now that you have them talking, can you persuade them to act? We recommend the Drawdown Project's message on climate change, (www.drawdown.org). It offers hope and inspiration for a bright and prosperous future. It offers opportunities to engage in solutions that can have significant impacts, such as: reduce your food waste; eat a plant rich diet; eat less meat; focus on energy conservation at home and for transportation. Use mass transit, go solar, get a hybrid or electric car; talk to your political representatives on local, state and national levels about climate change etc.

It is time for all of us to start talking about climate change. We urgently need to spread awareness of the issue! This week 141 people attended a Pachamama Drawdown Project training session in Raleigh that was sponsored by Interfaith Creation Care of the Triangle. It was absolutely inspiring to see the level of interest and concern! The climate change conversation has begun. I challenge Pullenites to join in. Please start a conversation with someone you know this week. Then make it a habit to keep talking about climate change!

-Gail Powell

Resources Used: [ResourcesTalkingaboutclimatechangesources](#) Please visit pullen.org/earthministry for more links!

February Wednesdays at The Table

We look forward to gathering with new friends at The Table in February!



February 5 – Ethiopian Meal and Evensong at St. Ambrose Episcopal Church

Saint Ambrose has graciously made room for us at their table for an evening of food, fellowship and worship in the Ethiopian tradition. The meal begins at 6 pm and features a sampling of Ethiopian cuisine. The suggested donation for dinner is **\$5 per person**. The program continues as rector, Jemonde Taylor, presents on Ethiopian culture and

Christian tradition. Related, age-specific activities will be available for children and youth. At 7:00 pm, all will gather in the sanctuary for a 30 minute evensong service in the Ethiopian tradition. St. Ambrose is located at 813 Darby St. in Raleigh.

Please let us know if you plan to attend so that St. Ambrose can properly prepare. RSVP on our website here: pullen.org/wednesday-nights/ or email covey@pullen.org. Be sure to let us know the ages of children and youth attending.

The Hope Center February Update



Save the date!

**Raising Hope Gala
April 23, 6:00 pm
@ The Glenwood**

www.hopecenteratpullen.org



Raising Hope Gala– April 23!

Check your email inboxes in the coming weeks for information about our special guests and program highlights. We can't wait to see you there.

Want to be one of the first sponsors of our 10th Annual Raising Hope Gala?

Sponsoring our Raising Hope Gala on April 23rd is a tangible way for you to help remind our youth that they have a community of supporters rooting for them. Each sponsorship comes with event tickets and, if desired, recognition on event signage.

[Click here](#) for the 2020 Sponsorship Form or visit our office to secure your sponsorship now.

Storytelling

A growing part of our work is helping our clients reclaim their stories. As many of you know, John Pavlovitz has been instrumental in guiding our young adults through the process of writing their stories in their own words in a way that honors their past, celebrates their resilience and opens their eyes to the potential they have.



Through that storyteller program, our young adults are taking centerstage in educating the public about the needs of foster youth. In March, Meredith will travel to Washington, DC to present at the Child Welfare League of America's annual conference. The topic will be our game-changing partnership with Wake County Human Services and one of our young adults, T, will be featured in a video discussing her experience in foster care in Wake County. Seeing her courage and poise in telling her story was inspiring. We are so proud of her.

-Erin Witcher



February 12-Pursuing Peace

We'll hear from Manal El Tayar, a peacebuilder from Lebanon, who is currently studying at Duke University. In addition to her work with the Institute of Middle East Studies and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts, Manal has worked with NGOs, INGOs and UN agencies on issues related to conflict and peace.

February 19-Conflict in our Current Cultural Climate

Farris Barakat is the brother of Deah Barakat whose wife and sister-in-law were killed in what many viewed as an anti-Muslim hate crime in Chapel Hill in 2015. Since then, Farris founded the Lighthouse, an incubator of faith based programs for youth, and devotes his time to speaking out against hate.

February 26-Ash Wednesday Service

Join us in the chapel on this evening for our Ash Wednesday service as we mark the beginning of the season of Lent. Pullen members will begin their Lenten journey together as we place ashes on each other's foreheads as an invitation to deeper reflection.

-Chalice Overy



Join us on February 8

Pullen Kids Got Talent!

Saturday, February 8, 6:00 PM in Finlator Hall



EVERYONE is invited to join us for a night of fun entertainment as our children showcase their talents for our church friends and families. We'll have pots of soup and chili provided by some of our families. (Let Tommy know if you'd like to bring your favorite crock pot dish to share as well!) It should be fun for all and encouraging for our children!

This will be a great opportunity to showcase our children's talents! Please RSVP on our facebook page, or let Tommy know that you'll be attending.



**Family Service Day @
Oak City Cares
Saturday, March 8
10—11:30 AM**

Families will have an opportunity to serve the community by helping prepare and serving 150 to 175 guests at Oak City Cares. (1430 S Wilmington St, Raleigh) To sign up, email Tommy at tcook@pullen.org.

**2020 Children's Summer
Day Camp at Pullen
June 22-26, 9 AM - 5 PM**

It's already time to start planning for summer! Look for more information about our Summer Day Camp in February. Sign up begins in March. For children currently in grades K-5.



Please contact me at tcook@pullen.org if you have any questions about Pullen's Children and Family Ministry Programs, or visit our website: pullen.org/children/.

-Tommy Cook