



Pullen News

JULY 3, 2020

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

“You Can’t Imagine ... You Have Changed Our Lives”



Although we are not able to gather in-person, there is still a lot going on with our congregation. Even if you have been keeping up with the Tuesday and Friday emails, joining us for Sunday worship, and participating in the many Zoom calls and meetings going on it can still be hard to keep up with everything. So, I want to take a few minutes and update you on some things that I think are important happenings within our church family.

Pullen’s Generosity...In the past four months, you have proven again your character as a generous faith community. Through your generosity of time and talent, you have continued to stand as a visible witness of radical welcome and inclusion in Raleigh and beyond.

Pullen’s human chain stretching from our church to the State Capitol was a powerful witness to the Black Lives Matter movement. Although participation is limited, your time as volunteers showing up on Tuesday and Thursday to assist with Round Table is another witness. And your generosity of time given to Zoom meetings to imagine new ways of how to keep our faith family connected is a powerful witness to your commitment to Pullen’s vision and mission in the world.

But your generosity hasn’t stopped there. In addition to continuing your financial support to our annual budget, you have gone above and beyond in your contributions to help people who are negatively impacted financially by COVID-19. You, Pullen people, have given over \$10,000 (above your pledges) to the pastor’s discretionary fund and to the Community Ministry Fund. I want to share with you how we have dispersed those funds.

Several families within our church lost significant income due to the pandemic. Approximately \$4,000 of the \$10,000 has been dispersed to those families. Your generous contributions have helped pay the utility bills of a single woman who works in the cafeteria at Meredith College but has not had work since the campus shut down. We were able to help a gentleman who had lost his job but was able to secure a construction job. In order to begin the construction job he needed steel toe boots, work shirts and work pants. We were able to provide those as well as a full tank of gas and some food money. And we have helped several more families outside of Pullen with utility bills and rent. In addition, we were able to send \$500 to the Cecilia Rawlins Foundation at Wiley Elementary to help with grocery cards for Wiley families.

The remaining money in the pastor’s discretionary fund and a portion in the Community Ministry Fund will help residents at Heritage Park Housing Community, the closet public housing community to our church. Food insecurity among children during the pandemic is a big concern. I knew the complex housed a lot of children, so I reached out to someone I know who has family living at Heritage Park to ask how we might help. She spoke with the community council at Heritage Park, and their request was for us to help several families with utility bills and to provide food to distribute to families with children. So, this week, with your generous contributions, we will assist with utility bills in the amount of \$1,200 (serving a number of families) and we will distribute \$800 worth of food to families with children, food that will be chosen by those families.

One of the recipients of your generous gifts wrote to me:

“You can’t imagine how this helps my family. You have changed our lives.”

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News from Nancy, Continued:



New Church Administrator... There is no way we could ever replace Brooks Wicker as our Church Administrator, and we won't even try. With that said, we are very fortunate to have found Lucy Kucmierz who will take up the mantle from Brooks on August 3. After meeting Lucy, I have no doubt that she will be an exceptional Church Administrator for us and fill the position with the same commitment and professionalism as her predecessor. While we transition Brooks from Administrator back into laity, we say a grateful hello to Lucy.

Deacon Council... By now you have read [The Deacon Council Statement on Antiracism](#). It is my sincere hope that you will join them on this very important journey of moving our church toward becoming an antiracist church. This journey will take much patience, understanding, forgiveness, and grace by all of us. It will also require direct, honest and sometimes difficult conversation. As we walk this road together, may it be our collective prayer that we will do so with a commitment to kindness and compassion. There will be differences but those differences must not stand in the way of us working toward racial equity within and outside our walls.

Small Support and Fellowship Groups with Nancy... As the pandemic continues to limit our contact with one another I am becoming more aware of how the isolation is effecting the emotional well-being of many. So many of us depend on the support and fellowship of our fellow Pullenites to stay emotionally and spiritually healthy. This past week, I asked my COVID-19 advisory team about starting some small in-person support/fellowship groups at the church. The idea is that I would sit in a circle with **4 or 5** of you (outside in front of the chapel if the weather permits) and we would offer support and fellowship to one another. Our hour conversation would focus on how we are doing during this time of isolation and sharing ways that we might offer more support to one another. Of course, we would social distance and wear our masks. If you would like to sign up to participate, please send an email to Kiara at kruth@pullen.org to sign up. I will offer two times to begin with: **Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m.** and **Tuesday mornings at 9:00 a.m.** Please indicate in your email to Kiara which time you prefer.



We could have never imagined four months ago how this pandemic would change our lives. But what we do know now is that it has changed and is changing us. The pandemic is not the only thing changing us. We are beginning as a nation to try and imagine what it would be like to finally address racial inequality in our country. It is impossible to know now how this journey of becoming antiracist might change us. But one thing is for certain, this is the imaginative work that God is calling us to do in this, our time. And if we are to be God's faithful people today, this is our work to do. While pandemics and movements for racial justice are changing us, you—Pullen people—are changing the lives of people in our church family and in the Raleigh community by your generosity and your commitment to doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly. Our scriptures tell us that God is always doing a new thing. May we continue to commit ourselves to imagining and creating this new thing that I believe God is birthing within people all across this nation!

-Nancy Petty



URBAN MINISTRIES
OF WAKE COUNTY

Urban Ministries Food Drive July 6 - 14 at Pullen

Urban Ministries Food Pantry is in need of food. During the Covid-19 crisis, the pantry has experienced higher demands for groceries and pronounced difficulties in securing bulk items. Currently, UM Food Pantry is servicing almost 100 families a day. To help feed people in Wake County, Pullen will host

a food drive July 6 - 14. Canned goods and non-perishable food items are needed, and canned meats, vegetables, fruits, and boxed cereal items are in high demand. **All foodstuffs can be delivered to Pullen between 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Monday - Friday from Monday, July 6th through Tuesday, July 14th.** Should you need another drop-off time then contact Brian Crisp at bcrisp@pullen.org

- Brian Crisp

Emergency Assistance Partnership with First Baptist Church and Wake County

First Baptist Church and Pullen are partnering with Wake County Department of Housing to offer emergency rental and utility assistance. Combined resources will allow faith communities to focus on one-time assistance while being able to engage Human and Health Services at Wake County to provide long-term support. This venture is set to launch August 1 and will be virtual at first. If you are interested in volunteering, then contact Brian Crisp at bcrisp@pullen.org.

We grieve with:

- ☞ The family of Tony Goldston who died on June 15. Tony was a regular Pullen attendee and friend of Valerie Collins.
- ☞ Barbara Ann Hughes in the death of her sister-in-law, Sarah Farmer, who died on June 30. A memorial service will be held in Johnson City, TN.

We celebrate with:

- ☞ Kay Hampton in the birth of her second grandchild, Jaziah, who was born on April 4.



CCN Virtual Pilgrimage October 15 -17

Our partners at the Community of Cross of Nails in Coventry will be hosting a virtual pilgrimage and gathering on Thursday, October 15th through Saturday, October 17th. This international gathering will be virtual with three-hour sessions in the morning. The Community of the Cross of Nails is a worldwide network of over 200 churches, charities, peace-building centres, and educational and training organizations, inspired by the Coventry story of destruction, rebuilding and renewal, and active in reconciliation in our own ways.

If you are interested in this virtual pilgrimage, then please contact Brian Crisp at bcrisp@pullen.org by September 1.

- Brian Crisp



**Next meeting:
July 15**

For over a year, Pullen's **Caregiver Support Group** has been meeting monthly

to offer mutual support to those caring for parents, spouses or adult children who are dealing with special health concerns. The group is facilitated by Jeannene Wiseman, a spiritual director, and the Rev. David Wiseman.

Providing emotional or physical care, especially during this season of social distancing, can be a stressful, anxious and lonely experience. Having the companionship of those on a similar journey can generate hope, insight and encouragement. During this time of COVID-19, we are meeting via Zoom on the third Wednesday of each month at 2:30 p.m. for approximately 1 1/2 hours. Anyone interested in participating is invited to join us for our next meeting on Wednesday July 15th.

If this article has piqued your interest, if you have questions or if you would like to receive a Zoom invitation, please contact David Wiseman at 505/231/3362 or via email at j davidwiseman@yahoo.com.

-David Wiseman

Church Financials

In addition to your faithful financial support, our June financials remain positive due to the Small Business Administration Payroll Protection Plan loan/grant (\$127,000) plus the three month deferral granted by our bank on both of our mortgages payments. Thank you for your intentionality in support of Pullen's ministries in these unprecedented times.

-Brooks Wicker, Church Administrator

As of June 30, 2020

Gifts to Date:	\$ 676,507.54
Expenses to Date:	\$ 571,518.42
Difference:	\$ 104,989.12

ZOOM Sunday Groups for Children

This SUNDAY (July 5) We will not have Sunday Group, however, we will still meet at 10 AM to check in with each other.

Next SUNDAY (July 12 and ending August 30) We will begin 2 groups at 2 different times. The younger group (upcoming K-2) will meet from 9:30-10 AM. The older group (upcoming 3-5) will meet from 10:15-10:45 AM.

NOTE:

For our first lesson (July 12) I will mail activity kits to ALL children. The following weeks, parents must sign up to receive Sunday Group kits. Next week I will provide a sign up for parents to request future kits.

We would love for your children to join us! If you are not on the Children's Ministry Email list, please contact me at tcook@pullen.org to be added!

-Tommy Cook 3



“Count the Cost”



In light of the most recent outcry against racial injustice, many have approached me with the question, “What can I do?” This is a question we should be asking. Yet, each time I heard it, I became a bit uneasy. It was hard for me to trace the origins of that feeling until I saw local pastor Dorell-Tracey Briscoe on CNN a couple weeks ago. In his encouragement to white congregations to do the work of dismantling racism, he lifted the words of Jesus who tempered the excitement building around his movement by admonishing his newfound followers to first “count the cost” before jumping into the mission. “That’s it!”, I thought. The question had made me feel uneasy because it often seemed to presume a simple solution—one that could be encompassed in an email reply, or formatted in a task list of the 3-5 items we needed to check off to finally be done with this nagging problem of race. I felt ill equipped to respond because I didn’t have those kinds of answers for myself, much less anyone else. That’s because the work of dismantling racism is difficult work. It is spiritual warfare. It will require us to open ourselves to the Spirit of Truth, and reckon with the ways in which we continue to be part of the problem. We will have to clothe ourselves with humility to admit that the first steps toward getting in line with God’s liberation movement may be to move out of the way. We will have to deny ourselves daily to dismantle the very systems that serve us well.

As I fielded the question over and over, what I felt was a nagging suspicion that we had yet to really count the cost. But that doesn’t mean we should stop asking the question; we just need to ask it in earnest.

To this end, we will dedicate our time at The Table on Wednesday evenings this summer to begin a series: Ever Embracing, Ever Becoming. This is a joint effort of the Adult Summer Sunday Group Committee and the Wednesday Night Committee to respond to the calls from our leadership to begin seriously engaging the work of anti-racism. The series will focus on education, dialogue, and action that helps us dismantle white supremacy, understand the systemic structures of racism, and embody anti-racism.

We will return to a weekly gathering (on Zoom) from July 8-August 26 to engage readings, learn from other voices and participate in dialogue that leads to action as individuals and as a community. The evening will begin with time for informal conversation. Then we will move to community announcements and prayers, introduce the subject for the evening, and spend time in small group discussion. Here’s what the evening will look like.



- ◆ 6:00-6:15 pm Informal Gathering Time
- ◆ 6:15-6:30 pm Announcements and Prayers
- ◆ 6:30-7:20 pm Programming and Small Group Discussions
- ◆ 7:20-7:30 pm Large Group Closing

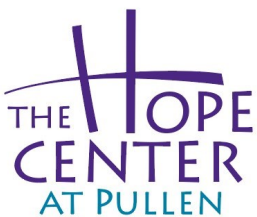
You must register online to attend. To ensure a spot, please register by the Tuesday before the first session you plan to attend. For example, if you plan to attend the first session on July 8, you will need to register by Tuesday, July 7. If you register on July 8, that registration will be good for the July 15 session and every session thereafter.

Once you register, that registration is good for the remaining sessions in the series. [Register here](#) or email bcrisp@pullen.org if you need help.

The answers may not be easy, but they do exist. There **is** something that we can do, that we must do as individuals and as a community of faith. I don’t have all the answers, but I believe if we keep the question before us, we’ll find a path forward.

- Chalice Overy and Brian Crisp

July Update from The Hope Center



Thank You We have been inspired by and are so grateful for Pullen’s leadership in spurring our community toward anti-racist practices and institutional support for poor people. The future of the teens, young adults and young children we serve is directly tied to dismantling racism across all our systems. It is a privilege to be supported by you and we look forward to working alongside you in this work. Thank you.

Get Outside for a :bit We have always been an anchor for teens in foster care over the summer, when they often move placements and lose the connections they have built. This summer is no different. Our Youth Programs staff are busy creating opportunities for virtual connection, learning and stability. We piloted our Get Outside for a :bit Virtual Camp in June. Teens participated in this 5 day 15 hour camp that integrated coding, electronics, math and science. Campers learned to code devices that could measure soil temperature and other meteorological events. Our Youth Programs team is working on creating more opportunities like these in the coming months.

-Erin Witcher

