

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

Is Saying “Thank you” a Lost Art ?

“As we grow into adulthood the amount of appreciation we express, and our ability to sincerely say “Thank You” has a dramatic impact on how we relate to others.”

— Kimberly Montgomery

A journalist for a prominent newspaper on the West Coast recently wondered if saying “thank you” has become a lost art. The author of the article goes on to explore every angle of why it might be that people no longer feel it appropriate to say thank you in situa-

tions where it used to be commonplace. Her headline caught my attention and offered me a moment of reflection as to whether I am lagging in sincerely saying those words often enough.

In my reflection, I realized that maybe I have not lived up to my own value of saying thank you enough. The reason, I concluded, is that I often move too fast through this world. Sadly, a lot of the time it feels like I am moving on to the next thing before the last thing is even finished. In my haste I forget to express my gratitude for what has been and instead focus my anxiety on what is yet to come. It is not a way I want to live.

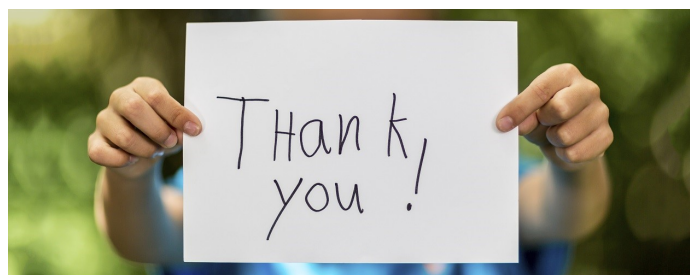
Pullen family...**thank you.** Thank you for hosting, with great generosity, our family from the Republic of Georgia in early October. It was an amazing experience for our church and so many of you made it so. For your hospitality of having our guests in your homes, feeding them meals, transporting them around the city, engaging in the 2-hour worship they led, and the generous financial gift you gave at the fundraising dinner, thank you!

Pullen family...**thank you.** Thank you for showing up this summer to worship as a community. In all of my time at Pullen, and that’s becoming a long time, our worship attendance throughout the summer usually slumps fairly drastically. Summer 2019 was historic and simply amazing in that our worship attendance remained strong, which, I believe, helped us stay connected to one another in a way that is critical to our life together. I was caught this weekend by

a statement that Kate Bowler made at the Sunday afternoon GriefFest conversation. As she spoke of being diagnosed with stage 4 cancer and how that turned her world upside down, she said, “I am still a believer in the institutional church and the need for it in our lives.” That coming from a millennial, the generation that has been labeled for not valuing the institutional church (which I don’t think is an accurate label). All that is to say, we are a stronger, more connected community when we worship together, and I felt that this summer.

And my last thank you for now. Thank you for showing up—to our interfaith services with our Jewish and Muslim communities, for things like Grief Fest, for vigils and protests, for funerals and weddings, for fundraisers for important relationships, for our international partners, for every single gathering that connects us to one another and to the larger faith community. I am convinced that we are better people when we show up for one another. So **THANK YOU**, Pullen people, for showing up and loving one another and loving the stranger who walks through our doors.

- Nancy E. Petty



November News Inside:

- Pullen News, Joys & Concerns page 2
- Earth Ministry, Spiritual Life, Building Tour page 3
- Alliance of Baptist, Children’s Programs page 4
- AMOS Dinner Nov. 9, Hope Center Update page 5
- Katie Hawkins-Garr Blog Post page 6
- Music Ministry, Opportunities to Help page 7
- Join us at The Table for *Race Matters* page 8



We grieve with:

☞ Chalice Overy in the death of her aunt, Delores Powell, who died on October 8 in Wilmington.

We celebrate with:

☞ Sarah Bowen, who has received the Southern Foodways Alliance John Egerton Prize, which “recognizes artists, writers, scholars, and others - including artisans and farmers and cooks- whose work, in the American south, addresses issues of race, class, gender, and social and environmental justice, through the lens of food. (Sarah is an associate professor of Sociology at NCSU. She teaches classes and conducts research on topics related to health, food, inequality, and development.)

Will You Help Pullen Grow in 2020?



With our 2020 pledge campaign gaining momentum I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what the pledge campaign is and why it is so important. In order for Pullen to plan for and actually execute future ministry works - with members and in the community at large - we as a church need to be on stable financial footing. Having financial commitments from our members indicating what they believe they will be able to contribute each week or month next year gives our leadership and members confidence. That confidence allows us all to not worry about paying the high heat bills in a (hypothetically) long winter or second-guessing whether or not we can afford certain programs and outreach events. As Paulette Campbell and I discussed, it might simply be a matter of really thinking about that extra \$5 item we can sacrifice this week. As you really start to think, that \$5 can often easily turn into \$15 and so on. Whatever the amounts and frequencies that are right for you or your families, please think about pledging for 2020 and regularly giving a little back to an organization that collectively gives so much.

-Jim Zupancic, Stewardship Committee

Pullen Women's Group - TOMORROW

The next get-together for the Pullen Women's Group is Monday, November 4, at 6:30 p.m. at SoCa Restaurant, 2130 Clark Ave, Raleigh. All women are invited to get to know each other and enjoy casual conversations. TEXT Rita at 919-360-0975 so we know how big of a table to reserve.

We hope to see you there!

-Rita Rakestraw

LGBTQ Second Sunday Lunch, Nov. 10

Please join us immediately following worship on November 10 for LGBTQ Second Sunday Lunch at El Cerro Restaurant at 2217 Avent Ferry Road. Parking is plentiful and I hope to see you there!

- Randall Brady

Pullen Youth Ministry

Pullen youth are working through the Rite 13 curriculum during Sunday Morning Group, and enjoying time together each Wednesday from 6:00-7:30 for “Wednesday Night Live”. All 6-12 graders are welcome to join us!

Please contact Bryan at blee@pullen.org if you have questions about the Pullen Youth Programs.

-Bryan Lee

Spring Trip to Matanzas, Cuba Interest Meeting November 24

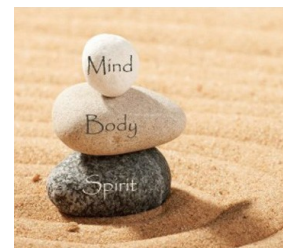
If you have been longing to experience the love we share with our siblings at Primera Iglesia Bautista de Matanzas and would like to learn more about the next opportunity to go, please join us for a brief interest meeting immediately after worship on **November 24 in Room 310**. Bring your calendar and any questions you might have. For more information please contact Clinton Wright at wrightclintonw@gmail.com or Jill Hinton (Hinton.jill@gmail.com).

- Vickie Leigh

Meditation Group

We invite you to join us for meditation in the chapel on select Sunday afternoons! On each of the following dates, the group will meet at 2:00 pm.

- November 3
- November 17
- December 1
- December 15



We look forward to meeting you in contemplative space during these Sunday sessions.

-Karla Oakley and Ann Eller

November 3, 2019

Get involved!

Spiritual Life Conversation Continues November 10

On Sunday, October 13, fifteen Pullenites participated in our first discussion about how we might enhance our spiritual lives and practices at Pullen. We had a thoughtful and meaningful conversation about what feeds our souls in these days and decided to continue the conversation. So after worship on Sunday, November 10, we will meet again to consider ways we might offer support for deeper engagement around spirituality that will support both the activists and the contemplatives in our church. We will gather in room 122 and lunch snacks will be provided. Whether you attended the first meeting or not, all are invited to join us as we explore this soul-enriching conversation.

-Suzanne Hayes and Cathy Tamsberg

Pullen Building Tour Sunday, December 8, 9:30 AM

Visitors and new members are invited to join Pat Hielscher for a thorough tour of our building. We will walk all three floors, talk about wall hangings and other points of interests in our facility. We will gather at 9:30 a.m. in Finlator Hall.



-Pat Hielscher



Preschool Caregiver Training Sunday, November 17 12:15 - 2 PM

The time is NOW for the preschool caregivers of Pullen to come together for a time of training. If you have responded to the call to holding, rocking and loving our infants and toddlers during our Sunday Group and Worship hours, or if you are interested in taking one, two or even more Sundays a month caring for our little ones, PLEASE come to this important training. It will be led by Janice Haywood, a children's ministry consultant and adjunct professor at Campbell Divinity School. We want our Nursery, Toddler and Pre-school Rooms to be filled with ready and caring adults!

Please email Tommy at tcook@pullen.org to sign up by Wednesday, November 13. Or you can sign up using this online form: <https://forms.gle/tgXRus89HQnepJGFA>

-Tommy Cook

Earth Ministry Challenge

When was the last time you:

- Touched a tree?
- Smelled a flower?
- Watched a sunrise?
- Observed a squash grow?
- Listened to a running stream?
- Walked barefoot on the sand?
- Sat on a porch in a thunderstorm?
- Snuggled with an animal or a baby?
- Noticed the beauty of a person's skin color?
- Remembered that God is expressed in all things?

When was the last time you:

- Bought local?
- Asked for "no straw please?"
- Planted a tree or other plant?
- Used reusable bags for groceries?
- Made a donation to offset carbon use?
- Purchased something used instead of new?
- Thought about where your food comes from?
- Turned off the water while brushing your teeth?
- Thought about conditions of migrant farm-workers?

-Ann Eller, Earth Ministry Team

Today– November 3, 3:00 PM "Shine Your Light" at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

The Triangle Interfaith Alliance is offering a service of prayers from many faiths on the theme "Shine Your Light" this afternoon, November 3rd, at 3:00 p.m. at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church at 2723 Clark Ave. (corner of Brooks Ave.)



TRIANGLE INTERFAITH ALLIANCE

All are welcome.

Becoming Anti-Racist: Alliance of Baptists Board Report

The Board of Directors of the Alliance of Baptists met in late September in Birmingham, AL to do the work of the Alliance, which included continuing its effort to become an anti-racist organization. Informed by tours of the 16th Street Baptist Church where four young girls were killed by a bomb in 1963, the Civil Rights Institute, and Kelly Ingram Park, members of the board wrestled with the challenges faced by every majority-white organization serious about examining how its life and ministry are influenced by white supremacy and white privilege.



In the last several years, trainings on anti-racism have been provided for the board, and the Alliance staff has met biweekly via Zoom with consultants trained in anti-racism. Today a new Racial Justice Task Force is at work and the board and staff share a deeper commitment to the hard work that becoming a truly anti-racist organization requires. Our conversations in Birmingham were both productive and hard. Honest dialogue about racism is not for the faint of heart. But in our time together we all grew in our relationships with each other, in our understanding of what being truly anti-racist will require, and in our vision of what an anti-racist Alliance might look like. Although the participation of people of color in the Alliance isn't very different from that of Pullen, forty percent of the board members are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). Thankfully, we are graced by the presence of the board members and by their patience with those of us who are trying to acknowledge what our privilege allows us to ignore.

In addition, the board conducted the regular business of considering a budget, hearing from its committees, planning for the 2020 Annual Gathering in Fort Worth, TX, and reflecting on a new draft of the Alliance Covenant. We also approved a statement in response to the proposed cap on refugees which condemned in the strongest terms the Administration's recent decision on moral and biblical grounds.

Our relationship with the Alliance of Baptists provides a critical way for Pullen to connect to like-hearted followers of Jesus. It also provides an example for us regarding how organizations can embark on the journey of becoming anti-racist. Despite our sense of independence as a congregation, I believe Pullen Church needs this relationship to amplify our voice on the issues of the day and to enhance our ministry of justice-love in our community.

*-Cathy Tamsberg
Vice President, Alliance of Baptists*

Upcoming Children's Events!

Children's Christmas Play Practice

Sunday, November 24 (12:15 PM) - Family lunch and first play practice for children (K-5th Grade Only) along with a "getting ready for advent" activity

Sunday, December 8 (12:15 PM) - Quick lunch for children and second practice (K-5th Grade Only)

Saturday, December 14 (10 AM - Noon) - Dress rehearsal for ALL children (Preschool Parents should be present with their children) followed by Christmas cookie decorating (begins at 11:30 AM)



Camp Chestnut Ridge kids camp with Watt's St. Baptist Church, October 26-28

Dinner with AMOS co-founders, November 9

Support Our Nicaragua Partners, November 9– Please RSVP

Pullenites have made a tremendous difference in the life of Nicaraguans through our decade-long partnership with AMOS Health & Hope. Some of us have visited communities, helping to install water filters or set up vision clinics, while others have assembled baby layettes or sent supplies and funds for support. Please join us for dinner on Saturday, Nov. 9 at 6:30 pm in Finlator Hall to hear from AMOS founders Drs. Laura and David Parajon, and meet many AMOS Board members. AMOS focuses on healthcare needs of Nicaraguans in poverty-stricken rural communities. The Parajons are always informative and inspiring, so join us for some fellowship and great food (featuring our resident gourmet chefs Paul and Chris Tew!) Please email Kim Gazella at kgazella@gmail.com or call/text 919.602.6092 to let us know you are coming.



-Kim Gazella

The Hope Center at Pullen

October 2019 Hope Center Updates

We hope everyone had a fun and spooky Halloween! We can't wait for our annual "Friends-Giving" Potluck where HCP staff and clients come together and sample all of our favorite Thanksgiving recipes. It is so much fun every year, and the only thing we fight over is who gets the last helping of Kelliann's Famous Mac & Cheese! The holidays can be a hard time for a lot of people, our youth included. Sharing this meal together gives us an opportunity to celebrate, but also reminds us all of the support we have to navigate those hard times. It's a time we all treasure. If you would like to donate a fully cooked, ready to serve turkey for our meal please contact Alex Lane at alane@hopecenteratpullen.org or 919-766-0290.



Our Annual Appeal Kicks Off November 8

Keep an eye on your mailboxes! We'll be mailing out our Annual Impact Report on November 8 as we kick-off the 2019 Annual Appeal. We are doing amazing things for teens because of your support. We hope you'll donate this year!

It's not too late to get on our mailing list or e-newsletter list to learn about the journey of one of our youth. If you want to be included in the mailing, please email your contact information to Erin Witcher at ewitcher@hopecenteratpullen.org.



Meet our Inaugural Youth Advisory Board

Four HCP graduates and current participants are the inaugural members of the Hope Center Youth Advisory Board (YAB). They've named themselves the Concrete Roses, a name that celebrates their ability to thrive in the midst of adversities and in environments where they were not expected to flourish. HCP Transition Specialist, Saunya Jones, is charged with facilitating the group. Saunya draws from her experience as a teen in foster care to help guide discussion and planning. They advise us on program and policy changes so we can better serve their peers. They also advocate for foster teens in the community and with local leaders.

The YAB has already sharpened our work by providing input to shape our Rulers, the new tool that concretely measures client progress in our Transition Programs. They are now hard at work planning "Level Up" celebrations to acknowledge the hard work that goes into reaching milestones around employment, education and housing.

HCP's first Graduation Ceremony will be hosted by the YAB at our Annual "Friends-Giving" Potluck in November.

Please join us in welcoming our youth to this new role at HCP!

-Erin Witcher

“I went to church, and I liked it”, by Katie Hawkins-Garr

Following is a reprint of a newsletter post written by author Katie Hawkins-Garr. Katie was one of the speakers in the Grief Fest conversation held at Pullen on October 27. To subscribe to Katie’s newsletter visit <https://mysweetdumbbrain.substack.com/>

I went to church, and I liked it

Blessed are those who have a community to lean on.

On Sunday morning, I stood in front of the congregation at Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, and spoke about finding signs of hope during times of grief. I was there for a weekend full of events called Grief Fest, organized by my friend and fellow widower, Nation Hahn. Later that afternoon, I returned to the pulpit to introduce two women I admire greatly, Nora McInerney and Kate Bowler.



McInerney, who has suffered her fair share of losses, is the incredibly prolific host of the podcast “Terrible, Thanks for Asking,” and author of three books on grief. Bowler, who has been diagnosed with Stage IV cancer, is a religious scholar and author of several books, including her memoir “Everything Happens for a Reason (And Other Lies I’ve Loved).” Together, they spoke in front of hundreds of guests at Pullen, offering up humor, wisdom, and grace as they described their experiences facing and making sense of death.

It’s been a while since I spent Sunday at church. Growing up, my brother and I would join my mom nearly every week at the Presbyterian church she attends. After I went off to college, I visited a few different churches around Atlanta, but quickly traded Sunday morning sermons for sleeping in. Now I never go to church, save for weddings or funerals, or the occasional historic cathedral visit while traveling. In my youth, I identified as Christian; these days, I’m firmly in the “spiritual but not religious” camp.

Because of my long absence from church, I was nervous — not just about attending Sunday’s service, but because I would be speaking at it. I stressed over what to wear, what to say, and whether I’d be viewed as an obvious outsider.

None of that mattered at Pullen. I felt welcomed, especially by pastor Nancy Petty, who has one of the best Southern accents I’ve heard in a long time. I found peace in the quiet moments of prayer and reflection. I was moved to tears by the choir’s songs that echoed through the sanctuary. And I was surprised and encouraged by how progressive the church was; at one point, we all sang a hymn that included the line, “any-gendered, any-loved — here all belong.”

Several times during her sermon, Petty referenced Matthew 5:4, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” It was a message I needed to hear. To me, it meant, go ahead and fall apart; we’ll be here to help put you back together.

As I sat in the sanctuary on Sunday, I was hit with a surprising pang of longing, followed by a slew of questions. What was happening? Did I really miss going to church? Is it possible to feel comforted by God, if I’m not sure He exists? After giving it some thought, I realized it’s not the religious teachings or traditions that I miss, though I do sometimes find comfort in those things. I think, rather, that I miss the community church provides. There’s an even deeper comfort in knowing that, no matter what happens in life, there are people to support you.

During the discussion later that afternoon, Bowler talked about the times when she’s not feeling strong enough to be inspirational — the moments when, whether exhausted by cancer’s toll or overwhelmed by the severity of her diagnosis, she needs to fall apart. She explained that sometimes she feels like nothing more than a crumbling old cathedral wall, one that’s only propped up by the various buttresses supporting it. Bowler said she takes note of the people in her life who are buttresses during her times of need.

It was a beautiful thought, and it made me reflect on the various people in my life who have kept me upright. It’s hard to imagine how I would have made it through my first year of widowhood without friends here in St. Pete to support me. And now, as I am wondering whether I can still become a mom, I’ve found myself thinking about the support systems I currently have, as well as the ones I’m lacking.

I’ve been craving community more and more often lately, and I know I’m not the only one feeling this way. Recent studies have found that millennials are much lonelier than other generations. We don’t see friends as often, in part because it’s increasingly hard to make plans. We feel alone, and that never feels good.

Church is one place to find community, but I’m curious about the other environments where we can reliably feel connected to others. My partner, who’s more outgoing than I am, has found community at a local coffee shop he visits multiple times a week. My friend Keeley, who’s more musically talented than I am, has found community in her a capella group. While I’ve had success finding kinship within virtual spaces, I’m still trying to figure out what community looks like for me, and where I can find it in my own neighborhood.

-Katie Hawkins-Garr

Music for the Holidays— join us!

Music for the Holidays

While every day is a “holy day,” the Pullen community observes various “holidays” in the months of November and December that focus on celebrating saints, giving thanks for harvest, and expressing Advent and Christmas. These days are enlivened by the music of the Pullen congregation, choirs and orchestra.

In November, the Chancel Choir sings anthems of gratitude, with the Children’s Choir and Pullen Orchestra joining them to offer music on **Sunday, November 17**. The Pullen Orchestra reaches out to the community with seasonal music at **Cameron Village on November 21**.

Advent Sundays in December begin with congregational hymns of expectation, and the carols of Christmas enter our worship on the Third and Fourth Advent Sundays, the Christmas LoveFeast and Christmas Eve. This year, the Second Advent Sunday on **December 8** will include the traditional singing of “The Dream Isaiah Saw,” and Children’s Choir singing an anthem based on the same “peaceable kingdom” passage. The Chancel choir offers a service of global Christmas music on **December 15**.



Add your voice as we seek to express the meaningful themes of the coming “holy days.”

-Larry Schultz

Opportunities to Help

Support Circle for Single Homeless Women

Catholic Charities and Pullen are hoping to partner a woman with a new Support Circle. The goal of the Support Circle Program is to engage members of congregations to end homelessness by partnering with individuals and families to assist them in their transition from homeless shelters to permanent housing. **Each Circle needs seven to nine people.**

Please contact me at bcrsip@pullen.org if you are interested.

-Brian Crisp

Items Needed for Lunch Bags

We are collecting items for the next packing of lunch bags for the **Round Table Ministry**. Needed are cans of Vienna sausages, juice pouches/boxes, packages of 4- or 6-pack crackers, and cereal/granola bars. If you can help, please place donations in the blue wagon outside the church office or drop them off with the Back Door Volunteers on Sunday mornings.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated!!

-Nancy Bradley



Hope Center Angel Tree—adopt a family!

The Hope Center at Pullen has approximately 27 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 11th to prepare for the December 18th holiday party. For more information contact me at bcrsip@pullen.org or Kelliann at kmiranda@hopecenteratpullen.org.

-Brian Crisp



November at The Table: Race Matters

The Table returns in November with our first speaker series of the year, Race Matters. The series will be held on 3 consecutive Wednesday nights in November, and look at the issue of racial equity from different perspectives. On November 6, Dr. Donna Coltrane Battle, Chaplain at Meredith College, will help us construct a theological framework for racial equity. Wanda Hunter, Organizer and Trainer for the Racial Equity Institute will join us on November 13 to look at structural inequity and why colorblindness won't fix the problems. Finally, on November 20, we'll welcome Danya Perry with Wake County Economic Development to talk about how local development can benefit all citizens.

These series at The Table are a great opportunity to invite the larger community into important discussions, so please share this event broadly and invite those you think may be interested.

-Chalice Overy



November 6

“A Theological Framework for Racial Equity”

Donna Coltrane Battle

Chaplain at Meredith College



November 13

“Fishes, Lakes & Seeing White”

Wanda Hunter

Organizer/Trainer, Racial Equity Institute



November 20

“The Case for Inclusive Prosperity”

Danya Perry

Director of Equitable Economic Development, Wake County Economic Development

