



Pullen News

SEPTEMBER 4, 2020

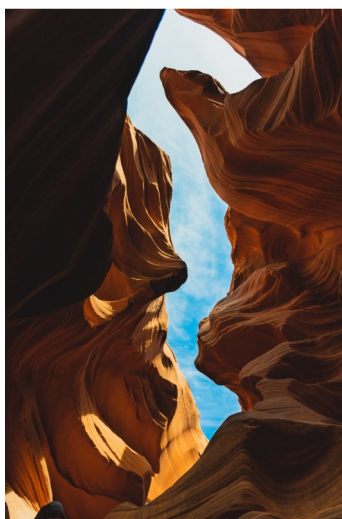
What does God require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. —Micah 6:8

The Wound is the Place Where the Light Enters You

The wound is the place where the light enters you. -Rumi

The act of love is a confession. -Albert Camus

*Confession is an act of honesty and courage – an act of entrusting ourselves beyond sin, to the mercy of a loving and forgiving God.
-Pope John Paul II*



Karla recently invited me to watch the movie *A Wrinkle in Time* with her. I'm not always sure about the movies she invites me to watch. The truth is that we have very different tastes in movies. She loves fantasy, science fiction, and anything "other worldly." She delights in those moments when people turn into colorful creatures with long tails and wings who can fly and work magic. Suspense intrigues her. The play between evil and good sparks her imagination as she seeks to understand those themes in a spiritual context. On the other hand, I prefer movies that portray real life stories. Movies like *Peanut Butter Falcon* and *Sordid Lives* – films that I can find myself in and relate to. But I will give it to her with *A Wrinkle in Time*. From the opening, I was captivated. Maybe it is because one of my heroes, Oprah Winfrey, is in the film. But I think it had more to do with one line in the movie that kept playing out in scene after scene. It is the Rumi quote: *The wound is the place where the light enters you.*

You know those experiences when you hear someone say something and you are not quite sure about it but you know with every fiber of your being that you have just heard a profound truth. That is how I felt when I heard those words, "*The wound is the place where the light enters you.*" I can't be sure, but I think I had heard this Rumi quote before. But this time, it landed in a way that it didn't the first time. Why? I'm also not sure

about that. My suspicion is that I was more ready to hear it this time. There is an openness and vulnerability within my heart and my wound(s) that feels more receptive than before. As I engage in the work before me I see more clearly the wounds within me and those caused through me by my white privilege. I can feel more intensely the wound and wounds that Christianity has left on so many. I know the wound of those messages: you're not enough, you're not good enough, something is wrong with you, you are less than, God loves you less, you don't deserve the same. And when I heard the Rumi quote this time, I felt a willingness to name the wounds that I have kept secret and closed up. I want the light to enter me and if the wound is the place to enter then I want to befriend those places. I want to acknowledge them, name them and sanctify them.

I guess it is never helpful to compare wounds, just like it's not helpful to compare grief. But I will say that as a white person whatever wounds I might carry pale in comparison to the wounds our nation has inflicted on Black and Brown bodies. And yet, in our common humanity, we are all looking for the healing light to enter us and heal the wounds we carry. In a powerful book, *My Grandmother's Hands*, Resmaa Menakem posits that white supremacy was born out of white trauma experienced in the class structure, poverty and persecution of medieval Europe. He encourages white people to explore and be willing to experience their own wounds as a beginning of the healing of the trauma we have inflicted.

Our individual work of identifying our wounds is important, and our nation is bearing a collective wound. It is the wound of racism. In order to heal this wound, before the light can enter and begin to heal it, we must first confess the violence that caused it. If we want the light to enter the wound of racism, confession will be a necessary part of the healing. As a church, we need to enter into a time of confession – not a one-time confession – but a prolonged period of confession.

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Pastor's Column, Continued:

We need to confess the violence, the pain, the injustice that created the wound. We are not very good with confession. The church has used and misused the sacred ritual of confession to keep people oppressed. I understand the shadow side of a confessing church. And yet, I'm not sure we can truly be the church if we are not a confessing church. How can we ever begin to heal the wounds that we have participated in inflicting if we can't confess what caused the wounds? How can the light enter the wound if we simply pretend there is no wound?

As I understand confession in our context today, as we face our nation's racist history, it has two purposes. The first is repentance - we must acknowledge the sin of racism and repent. And repentance will require us to "turn away" from the theologies and ideologies that have perpetuated racism in this country, theologies like God as light and Satan as darkness and ideologies like America as a true meritocracy. The second purpose of our confession is as an act of love and an act of honesty and courage. Love, honesty and courage is the path that will guide the church and our nation to a place of light and healing. To be the people of faith that we profess to be we need to take some time to look deeply at the wound of racism - caused by both the church and our systems of government - and engage in an extended period of confession that calls us to repentance and love.

"The wound is the place where the light enters you." Let us have the honesty and the courage to look at the wound so that the light can enter us and shine more brightly.

-Nancy Petty

THE HOPE CENTER AT PULLEN

Hope Center Updates

Celebrating New Apartments. Two young women moved into new apartments in August. They worked hard to get to this point and

we are so thrilled for them. Our Transition Specialists were hustling right alongside them to help them navigate the process from affordable housing application to move-in day!

-Erin Witcher



Sunday in the Park - September 13

This year's Sunday in the Park is centered around the theme: "Good, Very Good". At our September 13th worship service we will give thanks for the ways creation sustains us as we reflect on our obligation to sustain creation. This year will be different because we won't be able to worship together, but you will still find us worshipping beyond the walls of Pullen's sanctuary in the sanctuary that is God's creation. We invite you to do the same! Maybe you'll listen to the service as you hike or take your morning walk, or while you sit with your bare feet in the grass. Or, since this service will be a little shorter than usual, you might just use that extra time to be present in nature. Let the sun call you to worship; get still enough to hear the anthem the creatures sing; feel God's presence in the wind; and know that it is good, very good.

-Chalice Overy

Community Ministry welcomes Kimberly Dudley

We are excited to Welcome Kimberly Dudley to Pullen as an intern. She is in the MSW program at NC State University, and comes with an extensive background. She will be working with Round Table, The Home All Emergency Assistance Fund for Undocumented People, and the Wiley Tutoring Program. Kimberly will be with us until the late spring of 2021. Please welcome Kimberly when you see her. -Brian Crisp

Hello, my name is Kimberly Dudley. I am 25 years old and a native of Lillington, NC. I am a recent 2020 graduate from Fayetteville State University where I received my Bachelor of Social Work with a minor in Healthcare Management. This is my first year at North Carolina State University in the social work two-year master program. My plan after graduate school is to apply for my LCSW because I want to be a clinical or medical social worker who will work in the healthcare setting. My end goal is to open up my own social work clinic. The populations in which I am thinking about working with are children, elderly, and homeless. Helping others has always been a long passion of mine. Seeing smiles on the faces of client's knowing at the end of day I have really made a difference in someone's life will bring joy to my life. After opening up my own clinic and getting it up and running my plan is to return home and be a part of a community that was there for me. Belonging to such a great community supplies the hope and the inspiration that drives me.



We grieve with:

- ☞ Oppie Jordan in the death of her nephew, Zeb Dowd Nichols, who died unexpectedly in Fayetteville on July 29.
- ☞ Lucy Daniels in the death of her cousin, Edgar Foster Daniels, who died on July 31 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.
- ☞ Oppie Jordan in the loss of her brother in law, Ray Wheatcraft, who died on August 8 in Wilmington.
- ☞ Family and friends of Beth McAllister, who died on August 10 after a long fight with Parkinson's Disease. For those who knew Beth, you will remember her as a dedicated disciple to doing justice and spreading compassion. Beth made this world a more compassionate place for those who are marginalized and oppressed. A service for Beth will be held at a later date to be announced.
- ☞ Family and friends of Ruth Turk, who died unexpectedly on August 10. Throughout her life, Ruth was committed to the work of peace and justice. She was a loyal member of the Discover's Sunday group and a regular worship participant. Ruth's ashes will be interred in her home state of Ohio.
- ☞ Lucy Kucmierz in the death of her cousin, Janine Trail, who died in Florida on August 21.
- ☞ Allen Brown in the death of his father, Kirby Brown, who died on August 28 from COVID.

We celebrate with:

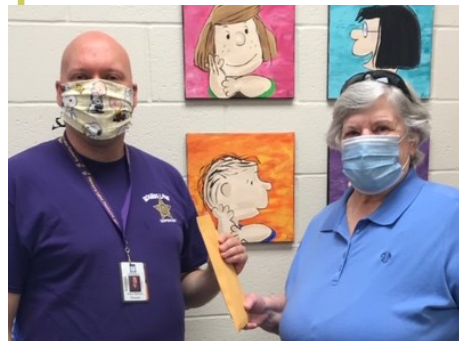
- ☞ Lucy Kucmierz, our new Church Administrator, who began her journey at Pullen in August.
- ☞ Lt. JG Jeter, who recently returned to shore from his second sea deployment.
- ☞ Trevor Colleton, who returned from his first deployment in Kuwait.
- ☞ Garry Walton who received the honor of Professor Emeritus after teaching for over 37 years at Meredith College.
- ☞ Brooks Wicker whose service to Pullen as a staff member has come to an end. We were grateful to be able to celebrate her despite the pandemic. We give thanks that she will still be with us as a dedicated member of the Pullen community.

Pullen Mission Women

Memorials to Phyllis Johnson Bless the Poor

When Phyllis Johnson died, Elmer directed memorial gifts to Pullen Mission Women, of which she had been an active member for decades. Generous donations came in. Knowing what a compassionate heart Phyllis had, the PMW board wanted to direct these funds to those most in need. With roughly half the money, PMW president Sharron Underwood purchased Walmart gift cards to be distributed to students in acute financial hardship at Rogers Lane Elementary School, where Pullen member Shane Barham is principal. The rest was devoted to Brian Crisp's emergency assistance fund. He is currently helping undocumented families, who have received neither stimulus money nor unemployment payments.

In both of these ways, gifts given in memory of Phyllis are blessing the poor. -Pat Long



(Left) PMW president Sharron Underwood presents gift cards to principal Shane Barham.

PMW Honor Brooks

Before life was affected by Covid 19, and before Brooks delayed her retirement date, Pullen's Mission Women were able to honor and thank her for all of the good work she has done within the Pullen family as well as in communities far and near. Brooks, we know that your continuing journey will not find you sitting still....and for that we will be greatly blessed. -Sharron Underwood



Church Financials

As of August 31, 2020

Gifts to Date:	\$ 828,677.32
Expenses to Date:	\$ 756,770.65
Difference:	\$ 71,906.67

Pullen Music Ministry Fall Schedule

This fall, Music Ministry Groups will meet online via Zoom. All are invited to participate as groups gather for connection, music-making, and to prepare recordings for worship. Now is a unique and easy time to be involved no matter your location! Join us for creative experiences together. Zoom links will be sent via email to current participants. New friends can participate by requesting a link from Minister of Music, Larry Schultz, at: lschultz@pullen.org. -Larry Schultz



Children's Choir & Older Micah Kids (Grades 3-5)
Every other Wednesday, 6:30-7:00PM, Beginning Sept. 9

Chancel Choir (Adults)
Every other Wednesday, 7:00-8:00PM, Beginning Sept. 9

Pullen Orchestra (Youth & Adults)
Every other Sunday, 5:00PM, Beginning Sept. 13

Youth Choir (Grades 6-12) will meet periodically, and participants are also welcomed to Chancel Choir gatherings.

Music Discovery (Grades K-2) is currently on hiatus, though periodic music experiences may be offered during Micah Kids with younger children.

2020 GEMS Scholarships



The GEMS (Gifts/Endowments/Memorials/Scholarships) Committee has approved three applications for higher education scholarships for Pullen members – Ginny Keister, Noelle Keister, and Caleigh Norris-Bradshaw. These young ladies have been at Pullen for many years participating in different ways in the life of the church.

Each will receive \$750 from the Pullen Scholarship Endowment Fund, which was established in honor of Geraldine Cates and in memory of Ethel Lewis. Both women invested their time and money in assisting students with college educations. Others have contributed to this fund over the years, and additional contributions are always welcome! The earnings of the Scholarship Endowment are used for the GEMS scholarships.

Here is a bit of information from the three members awarded the scholarship:

Ginny Keister : “I am a senior in Aerospace Engineering with a concentration on Spaceflight at NC State. This year I am starting my senior design project which involves designing and constructing a mini satellite with a team of other students. Outside of academics, I am a club officer for NCSU Women's Club Rugby, so this year we are focused on socially-distanced workout practices to keep everyone on the team safe and in shape over the course of the semester.

Noelle Keister: “I am currently attending UNC Chapel Hill, majoring in Environmental science. I cannot wait to start saving the world, especially the sharks. Much of my time at Pullen was spent being surrounded by music and community, which developed a love for music and performing. When things get back to normal, I hope to join an acapella group at UNC. “

Caleigh Norris-Bradshaw: “I am Junior at Meredith College and I am studying PreVeterinary medicine. My dream is to open an emergency clinic for animals of all shapes and sizes and provide the best care imaginable. I hold a few leadership positions on campus including Resident Housing Association Treasurer and Class of 22 Fundraising Co-Chair. I am excited to take part in Meredith's many traditions and finally get my Onyx ring! “

Congratulations to our scholarship recipients and best of luck with the coming school year!

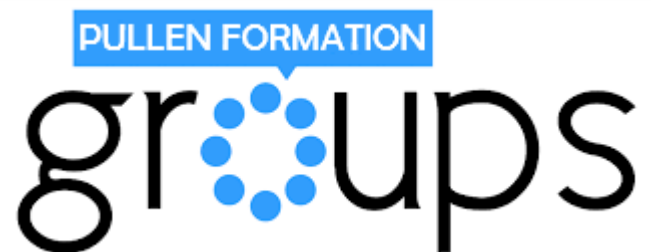
Faith Formation Groups for Fall 2020

COVID-19 has changed much of our lives together. We rarely gather with more than ten people, and our interactions are distanced from each other to prevent the spread of the virus. Our adult education leaders are looking for ways to continue with faith formation and adult education. We are also exploring meaningful ways to address the systemic issues of racism and white supremacy.

Because we see Sunday morning worship as essential to our community, we are offering classes at varying our times throughout the week. Hopefully, this will allow people to attend more than one gathering. For the moment, we are taking advantage of Zoom and can offer reading materials electronically. Here is the schedule and beginning topics for Fall 2020:

Community Conversations: The second and fourth Fridays of the month from 2:00 - 3:00 pm beginning September 11th. Brian Crisp and Kimberly Dudley will look at the intersections of Race and Homelessness in Wake County in an effort to propel our work into the community with advocacy and direct services. This course is designed for people currently working with Round Table, the Workgroup on Issues of Homelessness, and other aspects of community ministry. For Zoom information contact Brian Crisp at bcrisp@pullen.org

Discoverers: The first and third Tuesday of the month from 7:30-8:30 pm. Class members are leading the topic "What's on My Mind in These Days." For each session, the facilitator sends the topic with a very short description or reading several days ahead but no prep is required. For Zoom information contact Cathy Tamsberg at ctamsberg@nc.rr.com



Exploring the Bible: This course meets every Sunday from 5:30 - 6:15 pm and all are welcome. This group is a Bible study class led by a rotating team of teachers, each leading several weeks to focus on various themes or Books of the Bible. The format involves lectures and lots of open discussion with classes taught by Lisa Grabarek, Brian Crisp, Nathan Powers and Allen Page. There are no prerequisites to this class; no Bible study experience is necessary. This year Brian begins with "Decolonizing the Bible: Toward a More Ethical and Just Reading" by utilizing the tools of art, history and literature as well as the work of modern Brown, Black, Indigenous, People of Color thinkers. Allen will follow by looking at the concept of "General Welfare" from the perspective of the U. S. Constitution, the perspective of the biblical tradition, and reflection on our present cultural/political situation. Lisa will follow with a series on the ethics of opposition. She will lead us in looking at passages in the Bible that raise questions about how to oppose wrongdoing. For Zoom information contact Brian Crisp at bcrisp@pullen.org

Free Thinkers: Free Thinkers will meet the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm beginning on September 15th. Free Thinkers is a discussion-based class that frequently focuses on current events, historical understandings of currently how we got to where we are in the world, social justice issues, contemporary religious scholars' thinking and our commitment to scientific findings. Although spirituality is a part of our lives, Free Thinkers is a place for those not committed or comfortable with religious teachings or labels. Discussions take the form of written, oral, or visual aids that encourage and enlighten the participants so that each may sense that we are a part of something bigger where we are strengthened in our greater Pullen community and our communities at large. Our discussion will center on Anthony Pinn's work, "Writing God's Obituary: How A Good Methodist Became A Better Atheist." For Zoom information contact Linda Sibling at clsilber@gmail.com

Spiritual Practices: Every Sunday morning at 9:30 am this group gathers to practice meditation using the breath, voice, and body. For Zoom information contact Kevin Neily at kneiley1@gmail.com or Karla Oakley at karla.m.oakley@gmail.com

-Brian Crisp



Children's Ministry News



This FALL, children will be using "**Faith Seeker Kids**," a curriculum that is grounded in the rich faith narratives. Our Sunday Morning Zoom Groups will focus on "peace" through the narratives found in the Christian and Hebrew Scriptures. On Wednesday Evening, Micah Kids will look at "peace" through the narratives found in other faith traditions. This is an opportunity to bring interfaith education to life.

ZOOM FORMAT – We will continue using Zoom throughout the fall. These virtual meetings continue to give our children a sense of community and a time to have fun together, while we are apart.

Meeting Supplies – Each week your child will need supplies for crafts and activities, a weekly checklist of items will be provided so you can check to see what you might already have. The "PEACE" supply kit will be available at the church on the Tuesday before the Sunday meeting. If you are not able to stop by and pick up the kit, they can be mailed to you.

Email me to mail "PEACE" supply kits, or to sign up for Sunday Zoom Group, Micah Kids, or both!

I look forward to being together with your children, even though we are apart.

-Tommy Cook tcCook@pullen.org

Introducing the Home All Fund

As a faith community, we are deeply grateful to have a way to extend financial help to our neighbors in need. Last fall, four downtown churches sat down with the Wake County Housing Department to talk about the possibility of pulling our resources together for a collaborative, multi-church fund to provide assistance to our community.

Beginning in September, this dream is becoming a reality with the new **Home All Fund**, a partnership with First Baptist Church and the Wake County Housing Department. Pullen and First Baptist will be doing a coordinated intake process for anyone in need of rental or utility assistance. Wake County has significant funding and programs available for rental and utility assistance, but not every resident qualifies for that help. For example, our undocumented neighbors do not qualify for any assistance through the county, making up roughly 9% of our population that is in danger of becoming homeless over the next few months. When it's safe to gather in person again, we'll be training volunteers on Wake County's coordinated entry process so that we can bridge the gap between the church and county, connecting folks to available help. We have already had several churches give towards this effort, and we hope in the days and months to come that this develops into an interfaith, multi-church fund to help those in need. Our hope is that by working together as downtown churches, we will be able to help more families through this new, collaborative approach. For questions or further information, please email Leah Reed, First Baptist Church LReed@fbcraleigh.org.

- Brian Crisp and Kimberly Dudley

Staying Connected



There is page on the Pullen Website to help you stay connected during the pandemic. Visit it for links to our weekly emails, livestream videos,

and Zoom meeting info. <https://pullen.org/updates/>

If you would like to get in touch, email news@pullen.org or call the church and leave a voice mail (919-828-0897). Please reach out if you have questions or suggestions about church activities, or if you need to speak with a staff member!

-Dana Deaton

Pullen Women's Group

The Pullen Women's Group will meet at Fletcher Park on Monday, September 14 at 6:00pm.

BYOD -Bring Your Own Dinner and chair!

We will sit 6 feet apart and enjoy a meal together. Fletcher Park (820 Clay Street, Raleigh) Please let me know if you can come. Newcomers welcome too! Rita Rakestraw 919-360-0975 (cell).



-Rita Rakestraw

Youth Ministry News



Pullen Youth were able to volunteer with the Interfaith Food Shuttle a few times this summer. The Interfaith Food Shuttle farm provides organically grown fresh fruit, vegetables, and eggs to our community, including Pullen's Roundtable ministry. Being outside and well spaced out provided a wonderful and safe way



to continue to give back. The Interfaith Food Shuttle also has a farm stand if you would like to shop. Money collected there helps keep the farm sustainable. Visit <https://www.foodshuttle.org/> for more info.

-Bryan Lee

Presented by Campaign Nonviolence NC
Cosponsored by ICCT, a Pullen Mission Group

LIFT YOUR VOICE AND YOUR VOTE FOR THE PLANET WEBINAR MONDAY SEPTEMBER 21 - 7PM



Presented by Campaign Nonviolence NC

This timely Zoom webinar will show you how you can use your VOICE and your VOTE to make a difference.

[Register here](#) and share this flyer with fellow allies!

Campaign Nonviolence NC is dedicated to working towards peace, economic justice, environmental healing and a sustainable world. For more information, visit us on [Facebook](#) or contact Sue Woodling at woodlingsue@gmail.com



PANELISTS INCLUDE:



WILLIAM BARBER III (He/him)
Strategic Partnerships Manager
for the Climate Justice Initiative at
the Climate Reality Project



DESMERA (They/them)
Voter Outreach Coordinator at
Democracy NC



TYLER WALKER (He/him)
Executive Coordinator at
Democracy NC



GRADY MCCALLIE (He/him)
Moderator & Policy Director,
NC Conservation Network

Earth Ministry



The Season of Creation

September 1st through October 4th is a time when Christians around the world celebrate the gifts of Creation. This celebration began in 1989 by Patriarch Dimitros I of the Orthodox Church with the recognition of the Day of Prayer for Creation, September 1st, and has since expanded to the entire month ending on October 4th and the Feast of St. Francis.

In the weeks to come we will offer numerous ways you can celebrate this season. Our prayer is that we create regular practices which restore, renew and respect the many diverse ecosystems that surround us. May holy wisdom continue to inspire our imagination on how to care for Creation.

Please consider spending ten minutes daily, during this month, outside in a quiet place in reflection. Open your senses. Listen to the sounds of birds, wind, water, insects, and frogs. Savor the smells of flowers, trees and soil. Enjoy the rich colors of flowers, grasses, and skies. Allow yourself to slowly breath in the experience of God's presence.

Please visit <https://seasonofcreation.org/> for more info.

-Karen Delahunty

The Table— September Schedule



The Table has been a great opportunity to connect with each other and engage in conversation about some of the things that matter most. This fall at The Table we're talking education, voting, the environment and justice with phenomenal folks locally and across the globe! Please [register](#) to save your seat at The Table for September! Zoom calls begin at 6:00 each Wednesday.

◆ September 16 - Public Education Advocacy and Faith Forum

Everyone's talking about education in the age of COVID. In addition to the obvious challenges of online learning, the pandemic has exposed inequities in education that were already plaguing students and their families. This education forum addresses why the church should care about equity in public schools, takes a historical look at critical issues in NC education and explores actions that faith communities can take. Pullen is a co-sponsor for this event. To learn more go to <https://pastorsforncchildren.org/home/events/forum916/>.

The forum begins properly at 7:00 pm. We will still start at 6:00 pm with announcements, prayers, birthday celebrations and some fun activities to kick off our fall programming. We will provide a link for those who desire to proceed directly to the education forum at 7:00 pm.

◆ September 23 - Public Education Panel: A Closer Look

We'll explore issues in education in our local community and opportunities to get involved. Joining us on the panel is Lynn Edmonds, Outreach Director for Public Schools First NC, Tanyetta Sutton, Lead Social Worker with WCPSS and Hayat Shawwa, Student Assistance Program Coordinator at Broughton High School. Amy Jones, incoming president of the Wake PTA Council, will moderate this discussion around systems that support families in education like mental health, homelessness and access to technology.

◆ September 30 - 'Silent' Stories

What role do relics play in shaping our cultural narrative in the past and present? We'll be joined by Michelle Lanier Director of NC Division of State Historical sites, and Teddy Reeves Assistant Curator of Religion at the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Please contact me at covey@pullen.org if you have questions or need help registering.

-Chalice Overy