



Pullen

Memorial Baptist Church

April news & updates



PULLEN.ORG/CONNECT

Upcoming Events

See what's happening this [month](#).

Financial Update

Date: February 29
Income: \$229,715
Expenses: \$206,458
Difference: \$23,257

Financials are updated for the previous month on the 10th of every month.

April Adult Sunday Group Offerings

Sundays at 9:30 am, March 31: Easter, No Sunday Groups

Don't miss out on these amazing opportunities for learning, meaningful conversation, and the possibility of deepening your faith and spiritual life.

Exploring the Bible

Sundays, Now- May 19 at 9:30 am in 307 and on Zoom

Exploring the Bible is a Bible study class led by a rotating team of teachers. Each one leads several weeks to focus on various themes or Books of the Bible. The format involves some lecture and open discussion. On April 7 and 14, Allen Page will lead us in focusing on providing a "corrective" approach to viewing the "ransom passages" of the New Testament, for example, Mark 10:45. These passages have often been the primary filter for understanding the Gospel. We will attempt to see these passages through an alternative lens. On April 21, we will consider the Passover, which will be celebrated during that week. Lisa Grabarek will lead the April 28 class as we look at Philippians 2:12-13. We will consider what it might mean to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling."

This class has no prerequisites; no Bible study experience is necessary. All are welcome to join us. Email Steve Smith at smith@mspraleigh.com to be included in the class emails for

updates and a Zoom link.

Race and... Conversations Around Intersectionality

April 7, 14, in Room 203

What does race have to do with climate change? Criminal justice reform? LGBTQ rights? In this 6-week series, we will learn about a different social justice issue each week to discover how race and racism relate to other causes Pullenites are passionate about because injustice does not exist in a vacuum. Every aspect of Pullen's radical vision for justice-love has a racial dimension, and seeking our collective liberation must include dismantling racism in all the many ways it shows up in the world.

- April 7: *Healthcare* (Dr. Jeremy Mani)
- April 14: *Disability* (Jill Hinton)

Ask the Pastor: Conversation with Nancy

April 7, 14 in 310

Do you have a curious question you have been holding not sure how to ask your pastor? A theological question? A question about the direction of the church? An inquiring question about her life that you have wondered about? A question about world events that you would like to know her perspective on? On April 7 and 14 you will have a chance to ask your question(s) to our pastor, Nancy Petty.

North Carolina's Political Landscape and a Faith Response

April 21, 28, May 5 in 203

April 21 – Many people are saying that 2024 will be the most important and potentially impactful election year in modern U.S. and North Carolina history, but what's really on the ballot and at stake? In this season, Rob Schofield, the Editor of NC Newsline (and Pullen member), will summarize some of the key races and policy debates that will dominate news coverage and public discussion between now and November and help us think about how we can remain fully informed and engaged.

April 28 – A panel of Pullenites lead by Cathy Tamsberg and Jeff Cherry will share their perspective on what they see as the important issues in this election year and how they are engaging on a state and national level to make a difference in the outcomes. Conversation facilitated by Nancy Petty.

May 5 – Rev. Rob Stephens will offer his perspective on a faithful response to the moral issues impacting this election, specifically in North Carolina. Rob will also discuss ways that people of faith can be involved in our state and national elections. Rob is an organizer with Repairers of the Breach and the Poor People's Campaign. He also served on Cheri Beasley's campaign for US Senate. Rob is a dear friend of Pullen Church.

Eco-Theology and Eco-Spirituality 101

April 21, 28 in 310

April 21 - Rev. Ian McPherson will lead an Eco-Theology 101 class lifting up some Biblical and Christian theo-ethical approaches to environmental justice and creation care. Together we will encounter artists, activists, church leaders, and scholars who will embolden our faithful response to the climate crisis and reconnect us with our faith's deep reverence for God's Creation.

April 28th - Carol Lenox will lead a session on eco-spirituality. Carol is an employee of the Environmental Protection Agency, has a Masters in Pastoral Studies with a focus on spirituality and ecology, and is an avid student of Christian thinkers and writers such as Thomas Berry and Teilhard de Chardin. Participants will be led in a discussion on eco- spirituality followed by the use of Christian ecological texts in Lectio Divina, an ancient way of reading scriptures that includes prayer and contemplation on the written

Community Prayer

Joys and Concerns

Celebrating Joys

- We celebrate with Jeff Evans and Dave Parnell celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary on February 28;
- Deb Norton and Jonathan Sledge who celebrated their wedding anniversary on March 3;
- Lucy Daniels who turned 90 years old on March 17;
- and Ian McPherson's partner, Heidi Biermann, who will be ordained on Sunday, April 7 at First Presbyterian Church-Durham.

Praying in Loss

- We pray for the family of Brooks Wicker. Michael, the husband of Brooks' first cousin, Ellen, who is like a sister to Brooks, died on March 7 after a long battle with cancer.
- We also remember the family and friends of Rabbi Raachel Jurovics who died of a heart attack in the early morning hours of March 9.
- We pray for the family of Suellen Leonard, who died following a serious car crash with her family in Morehead City on March 3. Suellen's husband Nate was the youth minister of David and Kristen Anderson. We pray for Nate as he recovers and for their three children.
- We pray for Jonathan Sledge and Deb Norton in the death of Jonathan's mother, Dorothy Sledge, who died on March 15. Dorothy's service was held in Louisiana on March 23.

Praying with our Community

- We pray for Deb Norton's mother who is recovering in rehab from a hairline fracture;
- for Bo Reece who had a severe case of vertigo;
- and for Gene Moore, whose sister is hospitalized in South Carolina.
- We offer prayers for our family in Cuba and all the people of Cuba. The government has announced that their daily rations of bread will now be cut in half, to every other day, exacerbating the hunger issues.
- Gail Carson requests prayers for her sister, Sally, who has recently been diagnosed with an autoimmune disease, and for her first cousin, John Rowley, whose chemo treatment for pancreatic cancer is reported as no longer working.
- We pray for Lisa Wilson who began treatment this month, and is experiencing some fatigue.
- We continue to pray for Tim Stevenson who continues his treatment and healing from a serious respiratory infection;
- and The Gomez family whose adolescent niece recently attempted suicide. We also pray for Stephanie Poole Gomez who was diagnosed with COPD.
- We pray for Jarvis Beard who has been dealing with some health challenges for the past year and a half. Doctors recently discovered a growth on his pituitary gland. He has several doctors visits over the coming weeks to determine how to treat the condition.
- We pray for Round Table volunteer, Marty Keever, who has infections in both legs;
- for the sister of Deena, who is dealing with a painful divorce after 46 years of marriage;
- and for more financial resources for Jermel and his family.

Praying for our World

- We pray for the Israeli hostages held captive by Hamas;
- for the people of Palestine as hunger is added to violence with the blocking of humanitarian aid;
- for the people of Haiti who have been impacted and displaced by the unrest in their country;
- and for the people of Moscow and the families of the terror attack victims.

-Chalice Overy, Associate Pastor



Ordination of Heidi Biermann

Please join Ian for their partner Heidi Biermann's ordination service at First Presbyterian Church of Durham (305 E Main St, Durham, NC 27701) at 4pm on Sunday, April 7th. Reception to follow.

Pullen Events



The Table

Wednesdays at 5:30 pm in Finlator Hall

Join us at The Table this month! Our Wednesday evening begins with dinner from 5:30-6:15 pm, and continues with community celebrations, announcements and prayer before we move into our programming for the evening at 6:30 pm. We also offer activities for children and youth. Dinner is \$4 for children (grades K-5), and \$7 for youth (grades 6-12) and adults, with a \$24 cap per family. Check out what's going on in April at The Table!

April 3 - Deconstructing White Privilege

As part of Pullen's ongoing conversation around anti-racism, this program will begin with a 20 minute video clip of Robin D'Angelo talking about *Deconstructing White Privilege*, followed by an open and honest conversation about key ideas in the film that will be facilitated by Cathy Tamsberg and Chris Schwertman. The film is a powerful and succinct distillation of Robin D'Angelo's analysis of the pillars of white privilege, white identity, and white fragility which white people need to understand in order to be responsible and constructive allies with BIPOC people in undertaking anti-racism work.

D'Angelo is a professor and scholar in the area of Whiteness Studies and is best known for her book, "White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism."

Menu: Peppers stuffed with corn, black beans, and rice, and topped with tomato sauce and cheese, salad bar, and cookies.

April 10 - A First Step for Social Justice: Identifying Pullen's Nonprofit Partnerships

Pullen's recent Vision Statement charged the congregation with identifying "a few non-profits working on social justice issues in the larger Raleigh community to partner with for five years." Tasked with leading this process, the Missions and Outreach Council invites all Pullenites for a congregation-wide conversation facilitated by Rev. Ian. This will be our first step in discerning together what justice issues and partner organizations we hope to prioritize in the coming years.

April 17 - Indigenous Spiritualities Worship Lab

Norma Merriman will provide an overview to Pullen congregants of Cherokee beliefs and spiritual practices that demonstrate the interconnectedness of the spirit, all living things, and the earth. We will be exposed to a Cherokee spiritual ceremony, including a discussion of practices at the Stomp/Ceremonial grounds. Expected outcomes are that participants will understand that each Native tribe has distinct spiritual beliefs and methods of spiritual practice, and will learn the Cherokee worldview. Norma is a regular attendee at Pullen and a Citizen of the Cherokee Nation located in Northeastern Oklahoma.

April 24 - Ask the (Associate) Pastor

You know the drill, this is your opportunity to ask your Associate Pastor questions about anything from theology to current events to a lingering wondering from a past sermon. Chalice will begin by giving a little background about her life before opening the floor for questions. Then comes the twist—the pastor will ask back! Chalice will ask you about some of the things that she's curious about, and give you some time to get curious about one another. Come out for a night of community connection!

-Chalice Overy, Associate Pastor



Join Pullen's Earth Ministries for These Opportunities in Celebration of Earth Day:

On Wednesday night, April 17 from 6:30 pm to 7:30pm in the Chapel, Norma Merriman will provide an overview to Pullen congregants of Cherokee beliefs and spiritual practices that demonstrate the interconnectedness of the spirit, all living things, and the earth. We will be exposed to a Cherokee spiritual ceremony, including a discussion of practices at the Stomp/Ceremonial grounds. Expected outcomes are that participants will understand that each Native tribe has distinct spiritual beliefs and methods of spiritual practice, and will learn the Cherokee worldview. Norma is a regular attendee at Pullen and a Citizen of the Cherokee Nation located in Northeastern Oklahoma.

Rev. Ian McPherson will lead an Eco-Theology 101 class on Sunday, April 21st from 9:30am-10:30am, briefly reviewing some Biblical and Christian theo-ethical approaches to environmental injustice/creation care. They/He hopes to feature voices such as Hebrew Bible scholar Ellen Davis on the Creation narrative in Genesis; Rev. Dr. Benjamin Davis (UCC Minister from Warren County, NC) on Christian responses to environmental injustice; William Barber III (son of Bishop William Barber II) on grassroots organizing and intersections between poverty and ecology; ecofeminist and ecowomanist scholars who challenged the white, male lens often brought to this field's earliest work; and Catholics teachers like Thomas Berry and leaders like Pope Francis.

On Sunday, April 28th from 9:30am-10:30am, Earth Ministry will be joined by Carol Lenox for a focus on eco-spirituality. Carol is an employee of the Environmental Protection Agency, has a Masters in Pastoral Studies with a focus on spirituality and ecology, and is an avid student of Christian thinkers and writers such as Thomas Berry and Teilhard de Chardin. Participants will be led in a discussion on eco-spirituality followed by the use of Christian ecological texts in Lectio Divina, an ancient way of reading scriptures that includes prayer and contemplation on the written word.

-Ann Eller, Earth Ministry



Imagine God! A Multigenerational Worship Experience

May 5 at 11:00 am in the Sanctuary

led by the Children's, Youth, and Adult Choirs

Through story, song, and creative arts, the Children's Choir and Sunday Groups for Kids have explored many different ways to imagine the divine. Join them on Sunday, May 5, as they lead in imaginative worship through the musical, Imagine God! by Jann Aldredge-Clanton and Larry E. Schultz.

Imagine God! 20 Years Later

In 2004, a musical created by Jann Aldredge-Clanton and me was published by Choristers Guild and released into the world. Though focused upon Children's Choirs, it also invited multiple generations to participate in a variety of ways. The musical explored and expressed a diversity of divine images found in the Bible and

included feminine along with masculine and non-gender depictions of God. At the time of its publication, singing of God as "She" was met with a variety of reactions, even though the Bible includes imageries for God such as "Mother Eagle," "Lady Wisdom" or the feminine Hebrew "Ruah" for "Breath." As discrimination and patriarchal systems continued in the early part of the 21 st Century, one of our hopes for the musical was for girls and women to know and celebrate that they are also part of the Divine. While singing to God as both "He" and "She" is important for individuals to realize their own divine connection, as the years and our understandings progressed, we awakened to the truth that there are others who do not identify as either "She" or "He," and that they, too, are in God's image. While creating the musical for its 2004 publication, Jann penned a lyric that prophetically expressed God as "She and He and so much more." Now, 20 years later, we know that part of the "so much more" are persons who identify as "They." With this understanding, we have updated the musical's words to move beyond the binary in expressing God as "She and He and They and more." We hope this expanded language has been meaningful as the musical provided a curriculum for Children's Choir and Sunday Kids Group this year, and as the children lead us in an "Imagine God!" worship experience on Sunday, May 5.

-Larry E. Schultz, Minister of Music

Pullen News

Alliance of Baptists Annual Gathering

April 12-14 at Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte

In 2000, I had the privilege to travel with a group of Alliance of Baptists friends to the Broken Land (what used to be called the Holy Land). There I met Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, a native of Palestine and then the pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church in Bethlehem. Our interaction with this peacemaker was one of the highlights of the trip for me. Mitri has made it his life's work to create educational opportunities for both Christian and Muslim Palestinians who have faced the harsh conditions of occupation. You can learn more about Mitri's work here: <https://www.brightstarsbethlehem.com/page/mitri-raheb>

The Alliance of Baptists will welcome Mitri as one of its keynote speakers at the Annual Gathering at Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte on April 12-14. Many of our international partners will be in attendance including Rusudan Gotsiridze from the Republic of Georgia. I hope you can join us! Register here: <https://allianceofbaptists.org/ag24>

[-Brooks Wicker](#)



Thanks for Over 318 Letters!

On March 17, 20, and 24, Pullenfolk signed letters encouraging our legislators to pass a strong Farm Bill that would help alleviate hunger at home and abroad. Many thanks to the 109 adult signers. Special thanks to the 10 Pullen kids who wrote their own letters. Thanks to the folks who organized the volunteers, staffed the tables, and prepared the materials. If you did not sign a letter, it's not too late to participate! Click on this link and write to your members of Congress!

https://go.bread.org/page/62477/action/1_gi=1*1t7jp6z*_gcl_au*NTAzMzg3Nzk5LjE3MTE2MjUwMjg.

On March 27, 109 letters were hand delivered to the office of Sen. Thom Tillis by Pat Long, Pam Hunter Dempsey, and Pam's daughter Caroline. They delivered 100 letters to Rep. Ross's office. Some 109 letters were mailed to Sen. Budd, who does not have a Raleigh office. Those 318 letters do not include the many kits of letters people took home to sign and mail. Thanks for your amazing response to our annual Bread for the World Offering of Letters!

[-Pat Long](#)

2024 Pullen Directory

Looking for the latest directory? You can easily get your hands on it! Simply download a copy from the link [provided here](#) or swing by the "All are Welcome Desk" in our lobby for a printed version.

Please note: Our directories feature individuals who have opted into the online directory via Realm. Haven't done so yet? No worries! You can always access the directory through your [Realm account](#). Once logged in, head to the lefthand option menu and click "Directory" to find the contact details of fellow members who have opted in by updating their privacy settings.

Didn't spot yourself in this edition? Fear not! Ensure you're included in the next one by adjusting the privacy settings in your Realm account. Simply click on your profile icon in the top right corner, select "Privacy," then opt for "Anyone in the Church" before hitting save. Need a hand setting up your Realm account? [Check out our handy guide here.](#)

Let's put faces to names! Many of the photos in our directory date back to 2019. Why not freshen up your profile picture? It's a great way for everyone, especially newcomers, to get to know you better. Updating is a breeze: Click on your profile icon, select "my Realm Connect Profile," then click on your current photo to swap it out.

Stuck on any step? Don't hesitate to reach out to me for assistance!

[Click here to view the directory](#)

[-Kate Amesbury, Communications Director](#)



Clothing and Toiletries for Migrant Farmworkers

Many thanks to Pullen Mission Women for leading the charge this month! Thanks to your incredible generosity, Pullen was able to collect 4 big carts full of toiletries and clothing for farmworkers through the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry.

[-Pat Long](#)

Pullen Youth Ministry

Sunday Group

Sundays at 9:30 am in 130-H

In April we will return to our conversations around faith and social justice.

Wednesday Youth Group

6:30 pm in Room 130-H

Citizen Redefined continues! Over the past several weeks, we have explored various civic tools necessary for building a multiracial democracy. We have discussed what it means "to citizen" through deep listening, critical thinking, and navigating conflict together. In the month of April, we will explore Citizen University's formula of citizenship = power + character. How do we map out and practice power together? What is our civic moral code and how do we channel our power for the common good? All of this will culminate in preparation for our Civic Confirmation on May 15, when our youth will share their civic commitments with our community.

-Allie Pruden, Youth Ministry Coordinator

Kids Ministry



Park Gathering for Pullen Families (Pullen Kids & Pullen Pals):

April 20 at 10:30 am at Roberts Park (1300 E Martin St, Shelter 1)

Families, join us for a fun day at the park as we enjoy community with our Pullen Families. Parents, grandparents and caretakers of babies to 5th grade are welcome to gather to picnic, play and connect

-Tommy Cook, Minister with Children and Their Families



Camp Pullen:

July 8-12 at 9:00 am-5:00 pm Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm Friday

Camp Pullen is hosting another awesome children's day camp this summer! It's a whole week of fun for kids who have finished Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. Our theme this year is all about "What Every Living Thing Needs." We'll be diving into how important it is to take care of our planet and all the living creatures on it. Humans are a part of this amazing creation, but we want to focus on understanding the needs of every living thing - like shelter, food, water, air, and community. And of

course, we'll explore how humans can show compassion towards the more-than-human world when it comes to meeting those needs.

Now, for the logistics. The times for Camp Pullen this summer are 9:00 am - 5:00 pm on Monday - Thursday and 9:00 am to Noon on Friday. Drop-off begins at 8:30 am, and pick-up is by 5:20 pm. Families may pick up children at noon if this works best for their family.

Exciting, right? We can't wait to have a blast with your kids this summer!

[Register for Camp Pullen here by June 1!](#)

-Tommy Cook, Minister with Children and Their Families

Around the Pullen Community

Find More information about these opportunities at pullen.org/connect.

Speaking Truth, Seeking Justice: Stepping into the Whirlwind of Israel-Palestine

Art Exhibit now- Lent at Binkley Baptist Church (1712 Willow Drive Chapel Hill, NC); Community-wide Conference April 5-7 at Binkley Baptist Church

Learn More

Being Trans in 2024:

April 11 at 7:00 pm at Watts Street Baptist Church (800 Watts St, Durham)

[Learn More](#)

Celebrate Oberlin:

April 20 at 4:00 pm at Latta University Historic Park (1001 Parker St)

[Learn More](#)

Worship Service Celebrating the Community of the Cross of Nails

May 15 at 8:00 am in the Goodson Chapel (407 Chapel Dr, Durham, NC)

[Learn More](#)

Support Habitat for Humanity with a Specialty License Plate

[Learn More](#)

Community of the Cross of Nails: Litany of Reconciliation via Zoom

Third Tuesdays at 12:00–12:30 pm

[Learn More](#)



April HOST Update

This spring has been a busy time for HOST, and in the spirit of Spring, we are growing and experiencing new things.

- We matched our first family, a student with a teenage son, with a host home, which will provide this family with a safe, stable place to finish out their spring semesters of school before they start looking for permanent housing.
- We have started working with our first students from Meredith College and St. Augustine's University. We are working to match these students with summer host homes.
- The HOST Board of Directors and staff are engaging in strategic planning with the support of consultants from Partners for Impact, Inc., and funding from Triangle Community Foundation.

If you are looking for a new experience this spring, please consider the following ways to support HOST and the students we serve.

1. **Attend our next information session on Tuesday, April 9**, at 11:30 AM at the HOST office to learn about becoming a host home to provide college students with safe, welcoming housing while they continue school and look for permanent housing. We especially need host homes that can house students for the summer (May through early August). Register for the next session at hostnc.org/hostinfo.
2. **Become a monthly donor for HOST.** You can donate to HOST at hostnc.org/donate.
3. **Amplify HOST's presence on social media.** Follow/like the @HOSTNC pages on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Social media is one way we recruit hosts and share information about the issues facing college students. Links to these pages are on our website, hostnc.org.

-[Libby Stephens](#), HOST Program Coordinator



April Hope Center Update

- Our Raising Hope event is quickly approaching on May 2 and tickets are selling fast! Join us for an uplifting evening featuring an inspiring word from our youth, live and silent auctions, raffles, heavy hors d'oeuvres and dessert, a beer and wine bar, and some surprise special guests! Individual seats are only \$100 each. Order today at: <https://event.gives/raisehope2024>

-[Brittney Sherley](#), Director of Development and Communications the Hope Center at Pullen



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