



Pullen News

April 2021

The Question on Everyone's Mind

Well, maybe it is not the question on *everyone's* mind, but it is on the mind of a great many Pullen folks. How do I know this? Because I hear it daily. What is the question? *When can we begin gathering for in-person worship again?* Let me give you the answer up front and then explain. The answer: I don't know but I'm working on having an answer soon.

I have had a Pullen COVID Response Team meeting with me for over a year now to advise me and the church on our policies and procedures for dealing with the pandemic. Members of team are: Rob Schofield, Lisa Grabarek, Shannon Neiley, Mark Nance, Shane Barham, Carol Hobbs and Bob Harris. These folks have responded with faithfulness each time I have sent them a text asking for a meeting, and I am grateful for their wisdom over this past year.

As Easter weekend approached, the phone calls, emails and text messages asking the "when" question increased. I was clear that Easter would not be the right time for us to re-engage for in-person worship on any level. We were not ready as a staff for that transition, nor did I believe the timing was right for our church and community.

Some of those calls, emails and texts noted, rightly so, that many in our congregation had already received their second vaccine and wouldn't it be okay for those folks to attend if they wore a mask and physically distance themselves. I am so grateful that our members have been vigilant in getting vaccinated when it was their time to do so. However, the staff have only recently been eligible to receive the vaccine. All of the ministerial staff received their second vaccine the week of Easter (some of us on Saturday before Easter Sunday) which meant we were still 14 days out from the full force of the vaccine. It felt important for the staff to be fully vaccinated before re-engaging members in coming back for in-person worship or other programs and activities.

Each time I was asked the question about "when can we return to in-person worship" my response was: "As soon as we get through Easter weekend and the staff have had their second shot I will convene the COVID Response Team to begin that conversation." And so, I want you to know that I am keeping my promise. The COVID Response Team will meet this Sunday, April 11 at 6:00 p.m. to begin helping me think through the question of when and how we begin gathering for in-person worship again.

When this pandemic began, I imagined in those early days that after a couple of months there would be a Sunday when we would all gather again in our sanctuary for worship and it would be one great celebration. I imagined that our sanctuary would be full to capacity with every pew filled. That we would spend the whole worship time greeting one another (passing the peace), singing joyful hymns, and sharing our gratitude for our church family. Needless to say, I have had to adjust and readjust that picture again and again. And I am still having to manage my expectations about what it will be like when we begin returning to in-person worship. I feel quite certain that the returning will take place in stages with limited attendance. We will still be wearing masks. We won't be able to give those wonderful hugs and handshakes we love to share with one another. I imagine that we will not be able to sing our beloved hymns together when we gather. It will still be some time before our choir is able to gather in the chancel and lead us in worship with their beautiful music. So much will be different. And yet, when that moment comes when I step into the pulpit and look out and see some of you sitting in those pews, whether it be 25, 50 or 100 people, my heart will be filled to overflowing. And I imagine you will feel the same sitting near your Pullen friends for worship.

Words cannot express the depth of sadness I have felt on Sunday mornings looking out into an empty sanctuary and not seeing the faces of the people that I hold so dear to my heart—the people who have taught me what it means to truly worship God as the community gathered.

We will again gather, all of us, in one place to worship. That one great day of celebration will happen. I know that in my heart and head. Until then, we will continue to care for one another, we will keep worshipping together virtually, and we will continue to share God's justice-love in the world. Of that, I am confident. -Nancy



Inside this issue

- Congregational Voices2
- The Table, Joys & Concerns.....3
- Care of Creation.....4
- April is Earth Month!, ICCT5
- Hope Center Updates6
- Welcome New Members7
- Alliance of Baptists gathering.....8

Congregational Voices

A new app makes it simple for all Pullen congregation members to combine their voices in song. Congregants of all ages are invited to record music for our livestreamed services of worship!

We welcome everyone to join in song. Sign up at: www.pullen.org/music.

To the participants, thank you for the ministry of music you are providing by participating in our Congregational Voices recordings for worship! As the pandemic has separated us, you have demonstrated that it cannot keep us apart nor our song silent! Recording congregational music for worship, involving everyone and all ages is a deeply meaningful part of our ongoing experience. Very few activities in church life gather us on a weekly basis, and your sights and sounds are cherished in the continued nourishment and nurturing of our worship life together.

I'm also finding from the response of colleagues across the country that our recording of *congregational* voices is unique! This activity also helps us continue to realize our invitational and welcoming commitments -- and in that spirit I continue to encourage you to invite friends to join us.

-Larry Schultz

ONE Wake Update

ONE Wake is a non-partisan, multi-ethnic, multi-issue group of religious congregations, associations, and other non-profits in the Wake County area. As a member institution we commit to showing up for our neighbors especially around the issues of educational equity, living wages and affordable housing.

Action Update

A big 'thank you' to those who were able to attend the press conference in support of the residents of the Las Americas mobile home community in Cary. The purpose was to call for the property owner to meet with the 300 plus residents to address their concerns. Residents are alarmed by proposed rent increases and arbitrary fines and fees during a time when so many are facing economic hardship. Another concern comes from residents who have completed their rent-to-own contracts, but have been waiting for years to receive titles to their homes. Several media outlets attended the press conference, and there is hope that an April 2 *News & Observer* article along with pressure from the NC Attorney General's office will lead to a fair resolution.

Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) University

ONE Wake is one of many IAF affiliate organizations across the US, Canada, Australia, the UK and Germany. IAF University trains community leaders in the organization's strategy, equipping them to organize within their own organizations to support change in the larger community. We have 10 Pullen members enrolled in the current IAF University Cohort!

Please contact me if you are interested in connecting to the work of ONE Wake.
-Chalice Overy
covery@pullen.org



THANK YOU
Health Care Workers
EVERYWHERE

Calling All Healthcare Workers and Caregivers

Are you a healthcare worker, employed at a healthcare facility, or a caregiver? We recognize that it has been a tough year or so, and want to offer some tangible encouragement for you as you continue your work. In order to do so, we need to know who you are! Please complete this short form so we can recognize you for the work you've done and offer blessings for the work ahead.

<https://forms.gle/8uMnNQjbj583vb558>

-Congregational Care Council

Congratulations, Nancy!

We rejoice with our pastor, Nancy E. Petty, who was recognized in March by Congresswoman Deborah Ross of the 2nd District as an outstanding North Carolinian. Congresswoman Ross stated "Nancy Petty has dedicated her life to the service of others. As a member of the LGBTQ community, she welcomes all people in her church, Raleigh's historic and progressive Pullen Memorial Baptist Church. She is a champion of marriage equality, has focused on facilitating interfaith dialogue with Raleigh's Muslim community, and has partnered with the Jewish community on social justice advocacy." We continue to be grateful for our pastor's witness in the world!

-Nancy Jones



*Join us this April
at The Table*

Wednesdays on Zoom

Register to join us on Wednesdays at The Table

Spring has sprung and everything is in bloom at The Table! We'll talk about anti-racist initiatives at Pullen, farmworker and healthcare advocacy, and introduce you to Pullen Earth Ministry's new sustainability initiative. As always, each week we'll begin with time to connect with each other, share important events in the community and pray. Please be sure to **register today** to attend The Table in April and May.

[Click here to register](https://pullen.org/wednesdaynights/), or visit <https://pullen.org/wednesdaynights/>

April 14 - Farmworkers are Essential Workers

Evelyn Archer of Student Action with Farmworkers will give us a look into the Farmworker and Migrant Food Labor industry in America, and the human rights which these essential workers are denied every day. She will also highlight advocacy work around this issue and how the church can participate in the fight for migrant worker justice.

April 21 - Waste Initiative Launch for Earth Day

Mel Gilles, Recycling Education and Outreach Specialist for the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources will join us in celebration of Earth Day and our new waste initiative at Pullen. The "Sacred" Waste initiative supported by a grant from Wake County Waste Management is aimed at providing our congregation with the tools to support our earth's sustainability. We will learn how our church can manage our waste in a way that honors the planet.

April 28 - Medicare for All for Health, Economic and Racial Justice

More than one million North Carolinians were already uninsured before Covid-19, and pandemic-related job losses have left even more people without health care coverage. Healthcare

advocate, Stacie Borrello, will explain how a universal, single-payer health care system, known as Medicare for All, is a moral necessity that will extend equitable coverage to everyone in the country for less than we're paying now. She'll cover how Medicare for All improves upon

traditional Medicare and serves as a more comprehensive and cost-efficient solution compared with Medicaid expansion. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the Medicare for All Act of 2021, its potential to address racial health disparities, and other information participants can use in future health advocacy conversations. Stacie Borrello is a founding member of the NC Medicare for All Coalition and serves as co-chair of the healthcare committee for the NC Poor People's Campaign.

Please contact me at covey@pullen.org if you have questions or need help [registering](#). -Chalice Overy

Joy and Concerns

- ◆ Jonathan Sledge and Deb Norton and Deanna and Dan Figgins in the birth of their youngest grandchild, Callaway River Sledge who was born on March 21.
- ◆ Jimmy Creech, in the death of his wife, Chris Weedy on March 10. Chris was a fierce advocate for the LGBTQIA+ community and worked tirelessly not only for equal rights for the LGBTQIA+ community but also for human rights.
- ◆ First Baptist Church Matanzas in the death of Luis Perez Martinto on March 16. Luis was the first openly gay man baptized at First Baptist and a fierce advocate of LGBTQ rights in Cuba.
- ◆ Judy Williams in the death of her father Bill Williams who died on March 27 at the age of 95 in Gastonia, NC.





EARTH MONTH

April is Earth Month and April 22 is Earth Day

The Pullen Earth Ministry Team helps lead our congregation as we care for the environment.

Pullen's Rich History of Creation Care

During the month of April we acknowledge Pullen's rich history of Earth Care. We are deeply indebted to three Pullen members (Alice Loyd, Dan Figgins, and Pam Bruns) who in 1999 had the foresight and spiritual direction to care for the Earth by organizing the Earth Care Mission Group, and the Earth Care Sunday School Class at Pullen.

Their goal was to support each other in their commitment to live in harmony with the Earth and to raise awareness among church members of Earth care as an expression of faith. Pullen's Care of Creation mission group continued to organize programs for the larger congregation, as for example these in 2002: led a Wednesday night adult session on Community Supported Agriculture (CSA's); helped youth raise money by selling compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL's); sponsored the showing of the IMAX video *The Cosmic Voyage*; and presented a Wednesday night program on butterflies for 2nd through 5th graders.

In 2005 leadership segued to Linda and Bob Rodriguez, who continued to grow and develop the program for eleven years. Bob has served on the NCIPL advisory board since 2004 and was a member of the design committee for the Pullen building expansion. Bob carried the voice and spirit of Care of Creation in the new building design which integrated geothermal heating/cooling, daylighting, rooftop garden and rainwater cistern. Linda Rodriguez, who has formed connections with local environmental leaders in organizations such as 350.org, introduced the Pullen's Sunday School Creation Care class to visionaries such as Robin Wall Kimmerer, Bill McKibben, the 13 Indigenous Grandmothers, Majora Carter and many others from the Bioneers Conferences which Linda and Bob attended regularly. Classes also hosted local political leaders and many citizens with practical information to share. Under their leadership, Care of Creation hosted educational screenings of films for the entire congregation as well as organized a church-wide eco-fair.

Leadership of the Sunday school class was passed to Karen Delahunty in 2016. During the last four years this class has focused on an ecopsychological investigation of how it is that humans have become dis-connected from the Earth and explored practices to reintegrate the human psyche with the psyche of the non-human world which included studying the works of Thomas Berry, Richard Rohr, and Pope Francis' 2015 Encyclical on Climate Change & Inequality.

In 2018, the Care of Creation Sunday School class spawned the Earth Ministries Advocacy Group - a dedicated group of people seeking ways to live a life that cares for Creation as part of our Christian Spiritual practices. This ministry creates opportunities to educate the congregation on ways that we can individually, and collectively, live a sustainable relationship with our planet. The group contributes regular articles on Creation care in church bulletins and newsletters; they implemented a comprehensive composting program for all food waste within the church, with an annual average of 6000 pounds of organic waste diverted from the landfill. In 2019, the group developed a 3 part presentation about Project Drawdown (100 solutions to draw down CO2 from the atmosphere) and presented them to church members at our Wednesday night community gatherings. We recently received a grant to increase awareness of recycling at Pullen, are exploring use of solar panels, have launched a local farmer CSA program and are designing a new rooftop garden.

This ministry also spawned the Interfaith Creation Care of the Triangle network (www.interfaithcreationcare.org) The mission of this group: "Working within and across communities of faith to urgently fulfill our sacred duty to love and protect Creation, address our changing climate and ensure justice for all life." ICCT now encompasses members from 66 faith communities within the Triangle, who share Earth friendly practices, education programs and promote advocacy for Creation Care from an interfaith perspective. ICCT is one of the programs that is supported by the Pullen Church Missions and Outreach efforts.

The Earth Ministry is always looking for others to join us! Find us online at pullen.org/earthministry, or reach out to karen.a.delahunty@gmail.com.
-Karen Delahunty

Earth Care Books in the Pullen Church Library



As spring bursts forth, we are reminded of how our leftovers become compost, which goes into the soil, which nourishes the plants that give us our food, some of which turns into leftovers and the cycle starts again! That is how resurrection works!!! During this season, we are so happy to have had the opportunity to purchase some "creation care" books for all ages with our Wake County Waste Management Grant! They will be part of Pullen's library and featured especially during April. We are trying to make them easily available during times when Pullenites are slowly beginning to gather. Please look for opportunities to check these books out and peruse them in the library as they become available! Visit our web page for a list of the books offered. Pullen.org/earthministry - Ann Eller

Just in Time for Earth Month! Newly Released ICCT Climate Action Recordings,

ICCT of the Triangle has just released recordings of their climate change Drawdown slide shows. This offers easy access and viewing! These recordings are the perfect tools to inspire your faith communities to take action on climate change. They are based on the book *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*. Take a few minutes during April, Earth Month, to listen to our four part series. Learn about powerful, but easy lifestyle changes you can make to reduce your carbon footprint.

Week 1: Introduction to Drawdown:

The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming (1 hr.) <https://interfaithcreationcare.org/drawdown-project/>

Week 2: Food related Drawdown Solutions:

Plant-Rich Diet, Reduced Food Waste, and Composting (1 hr.)
<https://interfaithcreationcare.org/drawdown-project/> (Scroll down to week 2 recording)

Week 3: Reducing Dependence on Fossil Fuels

and Advocating for Science-Based Climate Change Policies (1 hr.)
<https://interfaithcreationcare.org/drawdown-project/> (Scroll down to week 3 recording)

Week 4: Reaching Drawdown: Climate Solutions for the Next Decade, Project Drawdown's Director of Drawdown Learn, Dr. Elizabeth Bagley, presents an uplifting Zoom presentation to an ICCT audience

<https://interfaithcreationcare.org/reaching-drawdown/>



If you are interested in learning more about our ICCT Drawdown recordings or webinars, please contact Gail Powell at ICCTriangle@gmail.com. To learn more about Project Drawdown, visit www.Drawdown.org.

-Gail Powell

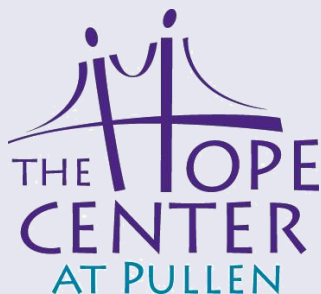
Math and Science Tutors Needed

Calling all Math and Science lovers! We have an immediate need for tutors, particularly anyone who loves math or science.

Tutors meet weekly with a teen in one-on-one sessions. Safe, socially distant in person and virtual options are both available.

Contact Joseph McNeill at the Hope Center to find out how you can help: jmcneill@hopecenteratpullen.org.

-Joseph McNeill



RAISING HOPE- annual fundraiser for The Hope Center at Pullen!

Thursday, April 15, 2021 * 7:00-8:00 p.m.

We're so grateful for the slow but steady progress towards being physically together again. Thank you for providing us a safe place to continue to support our youth throughout the pandemic.

New Affordable Housing Options. We've been working with Wake County to implement a new Permanent Supportive Housing voucher for our youth. In March, Selina (pictured below), became the first Hope Center participant to qualify for this new voucher. Selina is a working mother and a former student at Wake Tech. She and her Transition Specialist worked tirelessly together through a long application process. **This voucher means that she and her daughter will always have the safe, stable housing they need to be a strong and healthy family.**

Selina is also one of our **Raising Hope** presenters! Tune in on April 15 at 7 pm at event.gives/home2021 to see her present an award to Michelle Blackmon of Fostering Bright Futures (pictured on left) during the 2021 Raising Hope Virtual Event. She'll be joined by emcee Elizabeth Gardner, and Special Guest NC First Lady Kristin Cooper. Thank you to everyone who has already sponsored or donated. We're so grateful for this opportunity for you to hear directly from our youth about how your support is impacting their journeys.

Here's **4 steps you can take today to make the most of Raising Hope:**

1. **REGISTER TODAY.** Don't risk missing a moment. When you register today, you're signed up for event notifications and will be ready to join the party at 7:00pm on April 15.
2. **ORDER YOUR RELISH MAC & CHEESE PACKAGE.** **Place your order by Saturday 4/10** to ensure that 10% of your meal's proceeds are donated to HCP.
3. **DONATE TO WIN A BIOLOGICS BY MCKESSON DREAM VACATION or VIDERI CHOCOLATE FOR A YEAR.** Thanks to the good people at Biologics By McKesson and Videri Chocolate Factory, 100% of proceeds will directly support teens in foster care and former foster youth.
4. **The silent auction is open!!** Bid today. Make your next car service benefit our youth. Midtown QuickLube has donated \$409 worth of regular maintenance! Or plan your next vacation or staycation by bidding on a night away at a hotel or Airbnb! All to benefit youth right here in our community in their journeys to safe and stable futures.

-Erin Witcher

Welcome New Pullen Members!

Are YOU interested in joining Pullen? Please reach out! Contact Chalice Overy at covey@pullen.org for membership information.



Erin Cleghorn

Originally from West Virginia, I spent most of my life in north Florida before moving to Raleigh in 2007. I currently work for Meredith College and I'm pursuing a doctoral degree in Higher Education Leadership at Appalachian State University. I have two pesky dogs, Dinah and Moon Pie, who have been good company during the pandemic.

I've been on a spiritual journey for the last few years. Pullen was recommended to me by some women I know from Meredith College. Women I respect and trust. I started attending services online in November, 2020 and I've enjoyed them so much. I'm hoping to get involved at Pullen in ways that will educate me, open my mind and heart, and allow me to be of service to others.



Teresa Coleman

I'm a single mother of two beautiful children. I am a Veteran and I currently work on Fort Bragg as a civilian employee. Also, I'm a runner, having completed multiple half marathons and one triathlon.

I chose Pullen because of its inclusion and community messages. I really enjoy the diversity with congregation. I imagine myself growing in community involvement.



Georgette Foster

A native of Thomasville, NC, I spent my career in nonprofit communications, most recently working to mitigate climate change and improve air and water quality. An avid reader, I enjoy time on Oak Island and High Rock Lake and being with my two sons and their wives.

I chose Pullen because of the abundance of love and respect for all. After my first visit, I told a friend, "No one is going to hell in this church."

I will continue working with Round Table. I can't wait to get back in the kitchen and help cook and serve our guests!



Bailey Schob

I am a Speech-Language Pathology Assistant who comes from a Protestant background. I enjoy trying new recipes and doing yoga in the mornings.

Pullen reflects my social and political beliefs while leaving room for discussion and growth. I delved into Christian Mysticism and folk magic at the start of the pandemic last year. I want to explore that further in group discussions while becoming more service-oriented within the community.



Cameron Wade

I am a full-time PACT Clinician for Ellenhorn, LLC and Expressive Arts Therapist in private practice originally from Durham, NC. I am also an Arts Educator and Therapeutic Theatre researcher with a passion for harnessing the power of art and authentic relationships for healing and growth. Currently I live with my brother and sister-in-law in Durham.

Like many, I grew up in the Baptist/evangelical tradition and - while I always felt connected to the love and truth of Jesus - I repeatedly experienced deep wounding and trauma in relationship to the people who led and made up the congregations of my churches. In college, I left the church and searched after my inner sense of universal love to cultivate spiritual truth of and on my own. After searching for many years for an embracing faith community rooted in and driven by the social justice love and life of Christ, Pullen is an answer to prayer, and feels in so many ways like coming home.

Growing in this community would mean creating meaningful, intergenerational relationships of love, authenticity and growth among its members. Growing in this community means connecting with a beloved group of folks to grow our capacity to navigate the difficult places in our inner worlds, the wounded places that want to keep us small and quiet and comfortable and dim. I imagine serving this community through truth-telling, caring, praying, loving-through-action, and holding ourselves accountable to the big love and big purpose and big work that our Creator has called us to and empowered us to do in the world.

How Then Shall We Live?

April 23-24 Alliance of Baptists Annual Gathering

On April 23-24, the Alliance of Baptists 2021 ANNUAL GATHERING will explore this theme as we gather at this unique time. After a year of particularly acute trauma and loss, we are reminded of the importance of gathering, dreaming big, deepening our discipleship towards justice, and reaffirming our desire for an emancipatory future for all.

The 100% online 2021 Annual Gathering will be a unique experience in the life of the Alliance of Baptists — one where we affirm our new covenant and hold space for community in the midst of a pandemic and white supremacy. At the 2021 gathering, you will be inspired by powerhouse keynote speakers:

- Aurelia Dávila Pratt, the founder and lead pastor at Peace of Christ Church. She is co-chair of the Religious Liberty Council of the Baptist Joint Committee and President of the board for Nevertheless She Preached – a national, ecumenical preaching event designed to elevate the voices of womxn on the margins.
- Robert P. Jones, the CEO and Founder of PRRI (Public Religion Research Institute) and the author of “White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity” and “The End of White Christian America.”
- Naomi Washington-Leaphart, a queer Black theologian who serves as the Director for Faith-Based and Interfaith Affairs for the city of Philadelphia and an adjunct professor of Theology and Religious Studies at Villanova University.

At the Gathering you can discover how to deepen your commitment to ongoing antiracist work; find space with fellow Alliance members for lament, praise, or conversation; and be equipped with new skills that you can use in your personal life, ministry settings and justice work.

Join us April 23 and 24 as we celebrate and affirm a new era in the life of the Alliance of Baptists.

REGISTER : <https://hopin.com/events/ag2021>

-Cathy Tamsburg



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

HOW THEN
Shall We Live?

Covenantal Life in the Midst of Coronavirus & White Supremacy

ALLIANCE OF BAPTISTS 2021 ANNUAL GATHERING

APRIL 23-24, 2021

If you want to take part in the business decisions of the Alliance of Baptists, register separately for the 2021 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

APRIL 10, 2021

THESE EVENTS WILL BE 100% VIRTUAL.

