



Pullen News

August 2021

Living Beyond the Knowing

There are certain themes that I seem to keep circling in this life. Some of them, like forgiveness and grace, are theological in nature. Others, are more focused on my life. For example, the question I regularly ask myself: Am I enough? One theme that seems to blend both the theological and the personal is this notion of *living in the not knowing*. I was actually writing a sermon on this theme the weekend Karla had her heart attack. I was about two-thirds through my writing when Karla called to tell me I needed to meet her at the hospital. As of this writing, I have not completed that sermon. In the days following Karla's heart attack the theme seemed a little too close to home to pick it back up. But the theme has stayed with me in a slightly different form. Realizing that there are so many things that we just can't know I began wondering about *living beyond the knowing*.

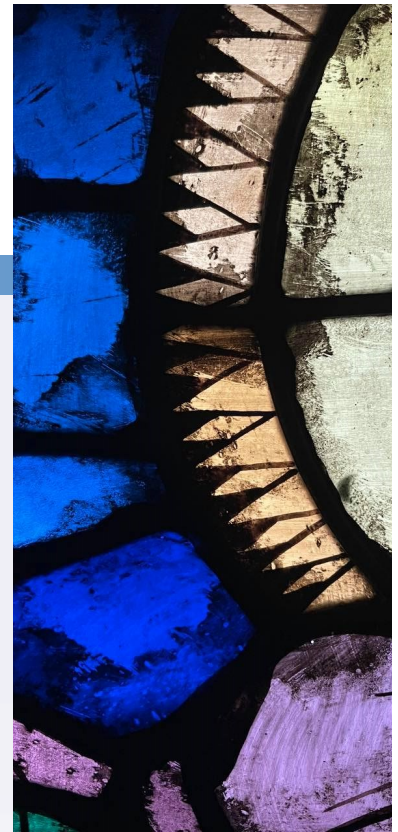
As curious people we like knowing. Why did that happen? What's happening right now? What will happen in the future? It's human nature to want to know. Knowledge gives us agency. It gives us power and it empowers us. Knowing can also offer relief. It's hard to not know the test results and to have to wait hours or days on them. These days, it's anxiety producing to not know if the flu like symptoms are the flu or COVID. Not knowing is hard and challenging.

With all the knowledge we have, literally at our fingertips, it seems that much of our life is spent living in the space of not yet knowing. Sure, we know a lot. But when you put our knowledge alongside the great mysteries of life, our knowledge is like a grain of sand on the ocean floor. And so it is, in this knowledge, I have been thinking about this notion of *living beyond the knowing*. To live not knowing what we wished we knew is one thing. But having a willingness to embrace living beyond the knowing is, I am learning, a deeper spiritual practice. This practice is requiring a new kind of trust on my part. A kind of trust that grounds me and holds me in the most challenging life moments. A kind of trust that allows me to release my grip. A kind of trust that reminds me there is a force of goodness and love in this universe at work and I can choose to join that force no matter what my challenges might be.

In the past week, I have been asked the question numerous times: What is the fall going to look like at church? With this new delta variant will we keep meeting in-person for worship? Will we be able to come back to church for The Table on Wednesday nights? Can groups start meeting again at the church? The "not knowing" what the fall will look like for our communal life together is frustrating at best. And time will only answer that question.

And so, I am making a commitment (and challenging you to do the same) in the months ahead to practice this idea of *living beyond the knowing*. Live! Beyond! The Knowing! Let these days bring you surprise. Welcome into your heart a new kind of trust that opens up a life beyond the knowing. Release your grip on having to know what is coming next. Live in that space that affirms that there is a force of goodness and love in this universe at work and you/we can choose to join that force; and even in the midst of a global pandemic we can still make a difference in the world.

-Nancy E. Petty



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Finance Report

July Giving

(includes a 2020 carryover of \$7,818.20)

\$ 70,091.07

As of July 31, 2021

Total Contributions:

\$ 639,220.65

Total Expenses:

\$ 677,476.37

Difference:

\$ 38,255.72

Give online through:

[Realm](#)

Review contributions through your Realm account.

Questions contact Lucy:

Lkucmierz@pullen.org

- Lucy Kucmierz
Church Administrator

Office Volunteers Needed

Volunteer in the church office. Help sort mail, answer phones and greet guests. Send Lucy an email with the days and times you are available. She will set up a schedule beginning in September. Thank you!

lucmierz@pullen.org

- Lucy Kucmierz
Church Administrator



Cox Avenue Update

Building Updates

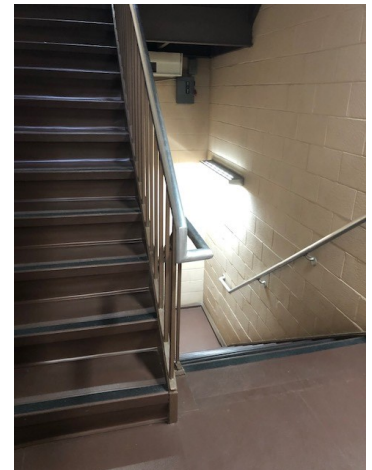
And the walls came tumbling down.....

During the pandemic we have been busy making repairs and renovating the Cox Avenue building. The entire first floor has fresh paint, new carpet, floor tiles, and ceiling tiles. Walls have been removed, doors have been added, and the front entry has been fixed. One of the hallway restrooms is now an accessible restroom, and the kitchen is in the process of being updated.



The stairwell has all new stair treads and landing flooring. Another major renovation was the updating of the elevator. It is now a smooth ride from the parking lot to the 2nd floor.

A huge thank you to Warren and Sylvanda for replacing ceiling tiles and doing much of the demolition!



New Tenants

Rebuild it and they will come...

From October through May many of the offices at Cox Avenue were vacant. We can now report that as of August 1, we are fully occupied!

Our first floor is occupied by The Hope Center and The Repairers of the Breach, which will also occupy two spaces on the second floor. The second floor continues to be occupied by Ignite, The National Farm Workers Ministry, The Partnership to End and Prevent Homelessness, which added three new offices, and our new tenants CompTIA and Heir Jewelry. The large room will be used as meeting space for the second floor tenants.

- Lucy Kucmierz, Church Administrator



Staffing Update

Communications Director

We would like to welcome Kate Amesbury to the Pullen staff as our Communications Director.

Kate grew up in Colorado and Florida and is a graduate of Florida State University with degrees in Business Management and Art History. She relocated to Raleigh in 2014 and has absolutely loved being a part of the community. She has seven years of church communications experience, mainly working at Forest Hills Baptist Church down the road from Pullen.

Kate currently lives in Raleigh with her younger brother, Sam, and Lab-Pitt mix, Rikku, and enjoys baking, board gaming, and hosting people in her home. Kate is very excited to grow with the Pullen community!

To contact Kate, email news@pullen.org or call 919.828.0897 ext 4.

- Lucy Kucmierz, Church Administrator



Joys & Concerns

We celebrate

The birth of Mackie "Mac" David Chesson on May 27th to Benjamin and Kelli Chesson. Mac is the grandson of Warren and Gail Chesson and Brenda Jernigan.

The birth of Emilio Jon Vigil on July 1st to Elizabeth and Carlos Vigil. Emilio is the grandson of Jeff Bond and Judy Williams.

The engagement of Emily Porterfield-Winstead and James Jeter, son of George and Vaness Jeter, over the weekend. James and Emily first got to know each other on a youth trip to Matanzas.

The marriage of Allie McKinney and Jack Pruden on July 3.

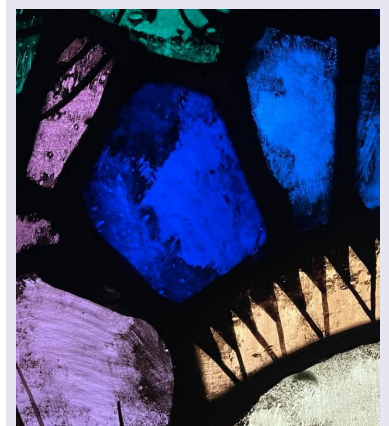
We hold in our prayers

Renee Keever in the passing of her uncle, Darrell Beidleman.

Richard Self and Becky Veazy in the passing of Richard's brother-in-law.

Celebrate Larry Schultz's 20th Anniversary

Save the date and plan to be in the Pullen sanctuary on Sunday, August 15, 2021, at 11:00 AM, as we recognize Larry Schultz's twenty years as our Minister of Music. Larry joined our staff on August 13, 2001, and what a wonderful gift he has been to Pullen Church and beyond our congregation through his composition of progressive church music. His work with our Children's, Youth, and Chancel Choirs, and our Orchestra, and his meaningful contributions to our weekly worship for the last two decades, has greatly enriched our life together. Please join us on August 15th and show Larry that he is truly appreciated by his church family!



Brian Crisp Celebrates 5 years with Pullen

Brian Crisp, Minister of Missions and Adult Education was recently recognized by the Personnel Committee on his fifth anniversary as a Pullen staff member. Brian began his work at Pullen in Community Ministry and is now serving in the expanded role of Minister of Missions and Adult Education. In that capacity Brian coordinates, guides, and supports individuals and groups in community ministry programs and international partnerships, as well as plans and coordinates adult Sunday groups. He provides primary support for Missions and Outreach Council, Peace and Justice Mission Group, Care of Creation Advocacy Group and Pullen Mission Women. He is the staff liaison to The Hope Center and is the face of Pullen in wider community ministries such as Oak City Cares and One Wake. His work plate is full!



Brian was offered tributes from several church members who work closely with him in mission ministry and Adult Sunday Groups. He was also given a card containing the monetary anniversary gift from the Personnel Committee as a symbol of gratitude for him, as a member of staff, as a friend, and as an example of how to live and move in and through the world, loving and caring for others in ways that Jesus did. The card aptly read, "Hold on to your realness. Trust your own voice. Believe in the difference you make." Congratulations to Brian and join me in wishing for many more anniversaries with him at Pullen!

- Lynn Jarrard, Personnel Committee member

Pullen Prepares to Go Solar on the Cox Building Roof "\$30K in 30 Day"

If you could snap your fingers and reduce the amount of greenhouse gases emitted to Earth's atmosphere annually by 129,631 pounds, would you do it? Now you have a chance to help Pullen do just that. **Support Pullen's solar fund raiser: "\$30K in 30 Days".**



There are numerous reasons to go solar: First and foremost, it is the right thing to do. We have a responsibility to protect God's Creation. Climate change is urgent. It is critical that we dramatically reduce our carbon footprint in the next ten years to preserve life on Earth. Second, homeless and marginalized communities will suffer most from climate change. By acting now, Pullen can do our part to reduce this impact on these communities and set an example for others to take similar action.

To donate:

<https://onrealm.org/PullenMemorialB/-/give/solarpanels>

-The Earth Ministry Team

FALL at PULLEN

Children's Ministry Volunteers Needed

As we begin the process of coming back, it is important that we have people in place to support Pullen's children. Consider some ways YOU can give of your time and smile to assist with the children's ministry at PMBC. Please thoughtfully look at the list provided on the church website and select an area of Pullen's Children's Ministry in which you might be interested.

No teaching experience is needed. We provide training and opportunities for teachers to gather and discuss upcoming lessons and talk about any concerns or questions.



All volunteers go through Pullen's "Safe Congregation" orientation and are background checked.

- Tommy Cook, Minister with Children and Their Families

Fall Music Ministry Groups

With new opportunities and safety protocols, Music Ministry Groups resume in-person gatherings this fall.* Chancel Choir, Pullen Orchestra, Children's Choir and Music Discovery Groups will begin in September with Youth Choir beginning in January 2022.

Are you an adult who has wanted to participate in Chancel Choir in the past, but didn't want to miss other Wednesday night programming? Or, are you an instrumentalist who has desired to play in the Pullen Orchestra but didn't want to miss participation in other Sunday Groups? If so, good news! An integrated approach to adult education at Pullen will make it possible. This fall, Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings will no longer be geared toward specific kinds of adult education groups and programs, as both days will include a variety. One might find a typical "Wednesday night" program on Sunday, or on Wednesday, might discover a "Group" experience that previously occurred on Sunday morning. Chancel Choir and Pullen Orchestra are included in these opportunities and all adults are warmly welcomed to participate.

Chancel Choir rehearsals resume on Wednesday, September 1, from 6:30-7:30PM in the Sanctuary. **Pullen Orchestra** resumes with a Saturday morning rehearsal on September 11 at 10:00AM in the Sanctuary (following Sunday in the Park, rehearsals are on Sundays from (9:00AM-10:00AM)). **Children's Choir** resumes on Wednesday, September 15, from 6:00-6:30PM in the Rehearsal Hall, and **Music Discovery** resumes the same evening at 6:30PM in Room 122.

**Covid vaccination is currently required for adult participation in Music Ministry Groups. Participants in Chancel Choir, Children's Choir and Pullen Orchestra will be provided with singer or instrumentalist masks and appropriate instrument covers for singing and playing indoors. Music Ministry Groups will follow the CDC and Pullen Church safety protocol guidelines, not excluding the possibility of suspended activity if deemed necessary.*

For additional information on Music Ministry at Pullen, go to:

pullen.org/music.

- Larry E. Schultz, Minister of Music



Fall Adult Groups on Wednesday and Sunday



This Fall, Adult Education at Pullen will occur on Sunday and Wednesdays. This is an effort to integrate our approach to faith formation, spiritual practices, biblical education, music ministry, and community advocacy. Each Wednesday and Sunday will be anchored with traditional groups and gatherings while being supplemented with shorter, topic-specific classes. Adults will have the opportunity to choose between classes, combining experiences that fit their needs and enhance their faith.

Several times during the fall we will come together for an all-congregation gathering featuring special guests and topics. Wednesday, October 20th will be an all-community gathering. On Sunday, October 31, LaShauna Austria will talk about her work as a farmer, activist, and ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. Pullen will commemorate World AIDS Day on Wednesday, December 1st. Brian Crisp and Charles Holden will explore the art of Advent and Nativity on Sunday, December 12th. In addition we will have our traditional Advent Candlelight Service on Wednesday, December 8th and LoveFeast on Wednesday, December 15th.

Listed below are the Wednesday and Sunday group selections. Sign up for the group(s) that interest you via [Realm](#), under “Find Groups”. This will assist our group leaders as they prepare for the fall.

Wednesday Group Offerings

Are We Fragile? Exploring White Fragility Among Progressives//Room 203

Using Robin DeAngelo’s widely acclaimed book *“White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard to Talk About Racism,”* this series will explore whether it’s true that white progressives are obstacles to addressing personal and systemic racism. Eight Wednesday evening sessions led by Cathy Tamsberg, will include consideration of the major themes in DeAngelo’s book as well as critiques of her analysis.

Defund The Police?

This abolition curriculum from the Mennonite Church dives into the history of policing and challenges us to see what public safety and transformative justice might look like outside of policing. This class is a joint endeavor with the United Church of Chapel Hill, co-led by Chalice Overy and Ian McPherson. Participants can access this group in person or online, space is limited. We ask participants to sign up via Realm and commit to attend at least 6 of the 8 sessions.

Chancel Choir

This group provides worship leadership through the choral art as it engages the texts and music of hymns, anthems, service music and larger choral works that resonate the values of the Pullen congregation. Annual participation in the adult choir, *Festival by the Sea* in Charleston, South Carolina, provides the experience of singing with other regional choirs while working with some of the nation’s finest choral clinicians. Offering the opportunity for progressive growth in communal music-making, this group welcomes all adults with any or no prior choral experience.

Earth Ministry

This 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.



Wednesday Group Offerings continued

Free Thinkers

Free Thinkers is a discussion-based class that grapples with hard questions in the current political and social world. These discussions are informed by written, oral and visual references that encourage and enlighten the commitment of participants to justice and compassion in our personal and civic lives. Participants may access this group in person or online.

Sunday Group Offerings

Discoverers | Room 303

The Discoverers Sunday Group moves into another uncertain year for gathering in person heartened by the time we've spent together virtually during the pandemic. If meeting in person is safe, Discoverers will gather on Sunday mornings to consider topics that will help us become better human beings, more loving in our relationships, and more courageous in supporting God's justice work in the world. Leadership of this Group is shared by members who will kick-off each enthusiastic discussion with a podcast, a poem, a piece of art, or another conversation-starter. We hope to be able to offer a hybrid format so those not able to be present in the room can join us via zoom. All are welcome.

Exploring the Bible | Room 307

With a rotating roster of teachers, Exploring the Bible focuses on thematic, topical, and exegetical passages from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. The group combines the best and current practices of biblical scholarship with contemporary issues and social situations. Participants may access this group in person or online.

The MacMillian Group

This group looks to stories and life for great questions and greater answers.

Pullen Orchestra

This intergenerational group combines both adults and youth to provide instrumental music and accompaniments for services of worship at Pullen and for community events. Players of wind, string and percussion instruments (intermediate level and beyond) are invited to participate.

Pullen 101 | Room 203

This 8-week course introduces people to the culture and ministries of Pullen Memorial Baptist.

Spiritual Practices | Poteat Chapel

This group will continue to deepen its exploration of contemplative practices in a worship-like fashion, including centering prayer, chant, lovingkindness meditation and lectio divina. This year, we will expand our practices to acknowledge our relationship with the natural world.

Witnessing Whiteness

This class will consist of a series of workshops based on the book *“Witnessing Whiteness: The Need to Talk About Race and How to Do It”*, by Shelly Tochluk, a white educator with a background in psychology, who spent ten years as a researcher, counselor, and teacher in California's public schools. Facilitated by Chris Schwertman, each week participants will read and discuss a chapter of the book, using experiential activities, to help explore the white experience and culture. The goal is to build a shared understanding of privilege, whiteness, and racism, and increase our ability to become effective in racial justice work. To really understand and ultimately address how whiteness affects racism, it is important to commit to attending as many of the eight workshops as possible and doing the assigned readings each week from the book. The required reading for each workshop is approximately 25 pages.

Abbey in the Driver's Seat

If anyone wants to hear what it has been like for an adult (Abbey) to earn a driver's permit from the North Carolina DMV during COVID, be sure you have plenty of time to listen. You may recall that Abbey is the gentleman that the Pullen Resettlement and Sanctuary Committee has been working with for the past year and a half; who due to the COVID lockdown had to live in our church for several months.

Aside from becoming fully vaccinated against COVID, a driver's permit has been Abbey's top priority lately. We are proud to say that he now has that permit, and is eligible to take the road test for his license in mid-September. He received six hours of professional driving instruction in July. Now, all that stands between him and a license is driving experience and a road test. After that, all that stands between him and being in the "driver's seat" of his life is a safe, reliable car to drive.

Through our relationship with Abbey, we witnessed the many things he has needed to become accustomed to the demands and requirements of living successfully here. Once again, we were reminded that we take for granted our freedom and privilege. In just one life area, Abbey's struggles demonstrated to us the importance of having a driver's license: the hardship and lack of privacy that come without having one, the freedom of transporting oneself, the restrictions of relying on other people to get around, the credibility a driver's license gives, and the means to do simple tasks of daily life.

Recently, we held a pot-luck supper for Abbey in Finlator Hall to celebrate his many accomplishments. Some of us had not physically seen Abbey in person since the COVID lockdown, but participated in many online meetings with him. We cannot forget a shout-out to modern technology, or most of the progress we made would have been next to impossible.

At our gathering, we celebrated with Abbey such things as his permanent job status at Millennium Printing, the health insurance that comes with it, his full vaccination status, earning his driver's permit, his researching car ownership, his participation in classes at Wake Tech, his openness to future planning and the new friendships and family ties he has cultivated.

Afterwards, we came away knowing that through our involvement with Abbey and his involvement with us, we all had become closer to one another despite the heavy wall of physical confinement during COVID. Also, we learned that some of us have some really good pot-luck recipes. We regret that we cannot share a photo of the food, especially Serena's beautiful deviled egg tower...

- Pullen Resettlement and Sanctuary Mission Group

Seated: Emily Cato and Mary Moore

Standing: Luz and John Frye (Raleigh Mennonite Church), Serena Buckner, Abbey (last name withheld), Jim McMahan and Barbara Smalley-McMahan, Thomas Price, Noelle Schofield, Nancy Landis



GEMS Committee Awards Three Scholarships

The GEMS (Gifts/Endowments/Memorials/Scholarships) Committee has awarded three scholarships for higher education to Pullen students: Cecilia Tenney, Noelle Kiester and Caleigh Norris-Bradshaw. Each of these young people have been at Pullen for many years participating in different ways in the life of the church, including children and youth groups, choirs, working in child care, marching and volunteering).

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 to the fund are always welcome. The earnings of the Scholarship Endowment are used for the scholarships.

A bit of information from the three members awarded the scholarship:

Cecilia Tenney: “This coming school year, I will be a freshman at UNC Greensboro. I hope to be involved on campus socially and academically. I’ve joined the UNCG martial arts club and am looking forward to learning more about the offered activities through the school. Academically, my goals are to expand my class schedule according to my interests and, along with my advisors, find a major in the next two years.”

Noelle Keister: “I am currently attending UNC-Chapel Hill, majoring in environmental science. I enjoy learning about marine life, as I spent the past summer working at an aquarium in Topsail Beach. I hope to work in the field of shark research when I graduate from college, so working at the beach was an amazing experience. I hope to teach people that sharks are an integral part of the ocean's ecosystem and that they are fascinating creatures that are necessary to the ocean and to people. I also enjoy singing and hope to join an acapella group on campus this semester.”

Caleigh Norris- Bradshaw: “I am a senior at Meredith College, and I am studying pre-veterinary 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 in my senior year!”

- *Natalie Hampton and Pat Thomas*
GEMS Committee co-chairs



Hope Center Updates

Welcome, Cara!

Cara O'Connor is HCP's new Teen Programs Manager. Cara is passionate about supporting youth overcoming trauma. She holds a Bachelor's in Psychology with a minor in Leadership Studies from Appalachian State University. Cara's past experience coordinating services for at-risk youth and youth mentor make her an excellent fit for this position. We're thrilled to have her on board!



In her first week, Cara worked with one of our college-bound youth to create an Amazon Wishlist of items this young woman needs for a smooth transition to college. Thank you to everyone who has already contributed. If you would like to help with this need, click [here](#). The items will ship straight to our office and we'll bundle them for a proper college send off

Fall Tutoring

It's August and time for us to prep for our youth who are returning to school this fall. We are anticipating a high number of tutor referrals after the year of virtual/hybrid school. Tutors meet weekly with a teen to help them overcome gaps in their knowledge and learn the skills needed for academic success. Virtual and in-person options are available.

If you're interested in learning more, contact: coconnor@hopecenteratpullen.org.



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

