



Pullen News

February 2021

An Approaching Anniversary

We are one month away from the one-year anniversary of the last time we met in-person for worship or as councils and committees to do the “work” of the church. Virtual church has been both a blessing and a challenge. By blessing, I acknowledge the gift of technology and all the ways we have been able to stay connected through our devices. Honestly, I didn’t know about Zoom before the pandemic. But I have been grateful to learn of it. Being able to continue our council and committee work through this technology miracle has been a blessing, even fun at times. And, there have been challenges. While 95% of the time we have had success livestreaming our worship services, the 5% of internet troubles that has caused disruption to our worship has been extremely frustrating. I am excited to share with you that as of last week we now have fiber optic cable into the church which should eliminate any internet glitches with our livestreaming. This is very good news.

As we mark this one-year anniversary, I have been reflecting on what I am learning during this pandemic about being a virtual church and what those learnings might mean for post-pandemic church when we are able to meet again in-person. Discernment in the midst of crisis or change is not easy. Lessons usually come when we have some distance and can look back. And yet, it can be helpful to flag questions and observations in the process. Here are some of the questions and observations I am reflecting on.

- Observation: Virtual church is not a replacement for the community gathering in-person to worship and be the church together. Physical proximity to one another is necessary when building and nurturing our relationships.
- Question: What are we learning from being a virtual church that will shape our gatherings and programs when we return to in-person church? How will we value being together in our building?
- Observation: There is an element of convenience to zoom meetings, especially for council and committee meetings. For instance, people who might be traveling during the week can still participate in weekly committee or council meetings. Or if someone doesn’t drive at night they can still participate if the meeting is virtual.
- Question: Post-pandemic, will we choose convenience over the advantages of physically being present to one another in the same room?
- Observation: Technology will continue to change/shape how we are church and how we “do” church.
- Post-pandemic, how will we balance virtual church with in-person church? What will our values be as we seek this balance?

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Stay Connected

The Pullen staff works hard to provide meaningful ways for you to connect with the church. The [Pullen website](#), Realm, and social media pages are updated weekly.

Pullen worship services are livestreamed each Sunday and can be viewed on [our website](#).

The Pullen Staff is happy to provide assistance if you need it. Our goal is to make it easy for you to stay connected to Pullen. If you would like to get in touch, email news@pullen.org or call the church at 919-828-0897.

Donations needed for Round Table

We will continue through the winter months serving the guests who come to our door on Tuesdays and Thursdays. In warm weather we have been serving sandwiches, fruit, snack bags and bottled drinks. When cold weather comes, we like to serve our guests some hot food. For the next several months, we are asking for donations of these canned items:

- Hormel Chili with beans
- Progresso potato with bacon & cheese

We are continuing to collect for our next Snack Bag packing and need:

- cans of Vienna sausages
- cereal/granola bars
- 6-pack crackers (any variety except whole wheat peanut butter).

You can drop off these items off during Round Table Ministry times on Tuesday or Thursday between 1:00 and 3:00pm, or contact Brian Crisp to make alternate arrangements.

You can also donate money to the Community Ministry fund and we can purchase the items. Thank you!
-Nancy Bradley
and Brian Crisp

Let's Sing, Pullen!

A new and easy-to-use app makes it simple for all Pullen congregation members to combine their voices in song. Along with Music Ministry Group participants, all congregants of all ages are invited to record music for our livestreamed services of worship! The app, Choir Creator, is currently developed for iPhone or iPad, but the Music Ministry offers a Recording Kit for those who do not own these devices. During this time of physical distance, we'd love to see your faces and hear your voices blended in the worshiping community!



To participate, please fill out the information form and watch our tutorial video by visiting the Music Ministry Webpage: <https://pullen.org/music/>.

You will be notified about upcoming worship song projects. Join now to participate this week. Let's sing! If you have any questions just email me at lschultz@pullen.org. - Larry E. Schultz, Minister of Music



Housing All Update

In October of 2020, we began a new, multi-church, inter-faith initiative called Housing All. This began out of a desire to combine resources with other downtown churches and Wake County, to help our neighbors in need with rental and utility assistance. This partnership started with First Baptist Church on Salisbury Street and Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, combining our intake process to meet a greater need in our community. As two churches in partnership with one another, we quickly realized that we could do so much more together than

we could ever do on our own. Thanks to your generous gifts to the Housing All Fund, in four months we have helped 24 families with \$18,862.46 of rental assistance and \$1956.17 utility assistance! For questions about the Housing All Fund, please contact Brian Crisp at bcrisp@pullen.org. -Brian Crisp

Pullen Youth Ministry

Wednesday Night Zoom Talks at 7PM

- February 3 - Dating and relationships (friendships too!) - Boundaries
- February 10 - Dating and relationships - Defining the types of relationships

Other Zoom Nights at 7PM

- February 8 - YOUTH AND PARENTS Game night. Youth and parents get online together or on separate devices for game night.
- February 22 - Zentangle - A BYC favorite art group comes to zoom. All you need is paper and something to draw with. Most commonly, people use white paper and a black pen.

Calling all passionate Pullen people!

Do you have something you are passionate about that you would like to share with our youth group? We would love to hear from you in our Wednesday night gatherings. Contact Bryan Lee at blee@pullen.org -Bryan Lee

Join us this February at The Table

Wednesdays on Zoom

The Table: A Place to Connect

We continue to gather virtually each Wednesday night at 6:00 pm at The Table. It is a space to learn and grow together, and a space to simply “be” together. We take the first 15 minutes each night just to chat about anything from what we’re having for dinner to what news story is capturing our attention. Then we spend the next 15 minutes sharing joys and concerns so that we can know how to pray for and support one another. We begin our more structured programming at 6:30 featuring a presenter or facilitator.

February is Black History Month, and we’ll spend a couple of weeks looking at the history of discrimination in our state and hearing from a black history maker. We will have our Ash Wednesday service on February 17, and we’ll end the month by kicking off our Lenten series “Processing the Pandemic”. Register to join us at The Table in February!

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

◆ February 3-Jim Crow in North Carolina

Pullen’s own, Richard Paschal, offers reflections from his recently published book *Jim Crow in North Carolina: The Legislative Program from 1865 to 1920*, a comprehensive study of the Jim Crow laws in North Carolina from 1865 to 1920. While the book catalogs all of the laws enacted by the North Carolina legislature during those years, the laws and statutes do not fully explain the true extent of racial discrimination created through the implementation of those laws. Richard demonstrates how de jure discrimination in North Carolina was not simply a result of the Jim Crow statutes but was imposed through the operation of law and, in turn, how the operation of law was itself affected by societal attitudes.

◆ February 10-Race and Medicine in the year of COVID-19 and Nationwide Protests

Dr. Damon Tweedy, author of New York Times Bestseller *Black Man in a White Coat*, will explore how various challenges related to COVID-19 and other health-related problems have disproportionately been linked to the experiences of Black people in the United States. We’ll look at how this history impacts medical education, our health care system, and the experiences of Black student-learners who navigate this complex world.

◆ February 17-Ash Wednesday Service

We will gather to mark the start of the Lenten season and consider how we might prepare for resurrection. The service begins at 6:30pm

◆ February 24-Processing the Pandemic

We’re setting aside some time during Lent to process the trauma of living in a global pandemic. How has this time shaped us for better or for worse? What have we discovered that might inform how we do life beyond the pandemic?

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



The Pando Project

A Local Native Tree
Planting Initiative

**Tuesday, February 9,
7:00 p.m. with ICCT**

The ICCT Earth Friendly Practices Team is pleased to invite you to the Tuesday, February 9 zoom meeting-up at 7:00 about a local native tree planting project. Basil Camu, with Leaf and Limb, will present his Pando Project, inspired by the Pando, a massive clonal colony of Quaking Aspens in Utah with trees connected in a single root system. The Aspens serve as a reminder that all living things are connected, and a motivation for human behavior. With spring on its way, Basil will provide ideas about tree planting opportunities for individuals and groups (when it’s safe).

Many thanks to Donna Dowd for connecting with Basil after hearing his presentation at a JC Raulston Arboretum program and setting up this program.

To learn about local native tree planting volunteer opportunities, please mark your calendars for Tuesday, February 9 at 7:00. Feel free to invite others who might be interested, because Basil is used to big audiences. Register by emailing mpmkelly@hotmail.com to request an invitation. As a reminder, we will send out the link again prior to the meeting. -Lynn Lyle

Let's Try Zoom Worship!

On Sunday, March 8 we are going to try something different for worship—Zoom Worship.

Why March 8 and why something different?

March 8 will be the first Sunday of the month which means communion Sunday. One of the things I have heard people say about how we do communion is how much they love seeing the faces of people as we make the movement to come forward to the table. Having Zoom worship on a communion Sunday will allow us to see each other's faces as we gather around the table.

Why something different?

March 8 will mark the one-year anniversary of the last time we worshiped in-person in our sanctuary. It feels significant to mark this day in a special way. Being able to see faces as we worship virtually can be a sign of hope that one day, hopefully in the near future, we will be able to gather again in-person.

If you are not able to join via Zoom on March 8 at 11:00am, don't worry. We will still livestream the worship just like we do every Sunday morning. Look for more information in our weekly emails as we get closer to March 8. —Nancy Petty

Abbey Thompson, Moving Forward, Onward and Upward Despite COVID-19



One year ago this month, Abbey Thompson came to live in our church. When he arrived straight from

a detention center in Pennsylvania, he had no home, friends, job or money and limited status in the United States. The COVID-19 shutdown occurred three weeks after Jim McMahan, Thomas Price and Jonathan Sledge met Abbey at the bus station in Raleigh, creating months of isolated life for him. We could only see Abbey on a computer screen, drop off needed supplies and orchestrate limited contact to help him enroll in Raleigh life.

We worried about how Abbey would handle the isolation created by COVID-19, or how much the trauma he had experienced in his home country of Nigeria would affect his coping skills. We didn't know how much COVID would affect our coping skills either, and we had homes, friends, jobs, money and status! In retrospect, we have all had to cope with more change than we could've imagined.

Over the course of the year, we learned that Abbey has really good coping skills, fortitude and a strong relationship with God. He lived successfully in our church and then worked his way out to apartment life. He has been virtually attending weeks of Wake Tech GED prep classes. He began working six 12-hour shifts a week at Millenium Printing Company in

Morrisville. He still does. In fact, he earned permanent employee status as a line machine operator, and is now eligible for health benefits. He has been making friends at work and in the community.

There's more! Abbey has been paying all his bills for months. He has been faithfully sending money home to support his two sons in private school. On top of that, Abbey commutes one hour each way to work on the moped scooter he bought. He has passed the written driver's test and he began wearing prescription eyeglasses for the first time in his life so soon he can pass the DMV vision test. Whew!

What will the new year hold for Abbey? Some goals that could involve our group are getting his taxes filed, negotiating the process of getting health and prescription insurance, helping him log 60 hours of required driving practice to earn his full driver's license, helping him find a good a car to buy so he can drive to work more safely, and help moving to a more permanent apartment home. We are hopeful that the promise of COVID-19 vaccinations will give us more access to him and to each other soon, and these goals can be more easily addressed.

In light of the "climate change" created by our newly installed federal government administration, Abbey's chances of earning asylum in our country may improve. He meets virtually with ICE in March. We remain hopeful. We ask Pullen folk to keep Abbey in their thoughts and prayers, and to consider joining our volunteer corp. to help Abbey reach the goals of the new year. Jim McMahan jimmcmahan1019@gmail.com and Serena Buckner beanbuckner@gmail.com remain our primary contacts and would love to hear from you.

Noelle Schofield, Resettlement and Sanctuary Mission Group



Hope Center

We're off and running in 2021 and have a lot to share with you!

SAVE THE DATE

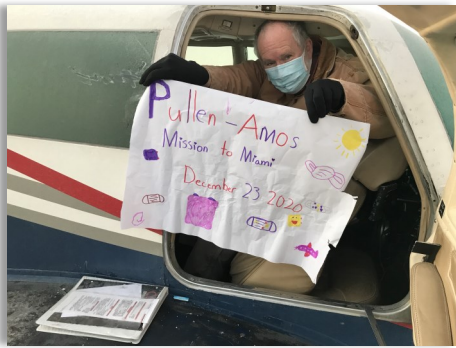
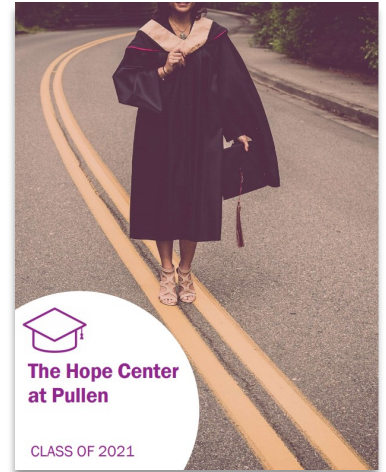
Mark your calendars for **April 15, 2021 for 2021 Raising Hope!** We're thrilled to have **Kristin Cooper, First Lady of North Carolina**, returning for the third year to support this crucial event AND **Elizabeth Gardner, WRAL's meteorologist**, is also returning to emcee the night for the third year in a row. This year's event will be all virtual. We can't wait to share more details with you in the coming months.

GRADUATES!!

In the past month, two more Hope Center clients have graduated from our program. We gifted each new grad with a gift card and a personalized certificate to honor their HUGE accomplishment. We're really proud of these two young parents. Although they are official graduates, they know that HCP will stay in their corner and we look forward to keeping in touch while they move forward in life.

ACADEMIC MENTORS NEEDED

We receive ongoing requests for Academic Mentors from our foster teens throughout the school year. Academic Mentors meet weekly with a teen to help them as a tutor, while also building relationships with students to become another trustworthy adult in their lives. Meetings are virtual or socially-distanced in person, depending on the comfort level of the teen and mentor. If you are interested in learning more, contact Joseph McNeill at jmceill@hopecenteratpullen.org. *-Erin Witcher*



Good News About the Nicaragua Layettes

With the pandemic cancelling travel this year, Pullenites found a creative way to get over 80 baby layettes to AMOS in Nicaragua. The layettes, funded primarily by the Pullen Mission Women, are bundles of baby clothes and supplies given to pregnant mothers receiving their care through AMOS. A team of Pullen volunteers gather donations and assemble layettes each year, then the layettes usually travel to AMOS with Pullen members on mission trips to Nicaragua. As a Covid-era alternative, PMW member Julia Williams connected us to a shipping company that could send the layettes affordably from Miami to Managua, but we

needed to get the layettes to Miami.

Enter Jonathan Sledge, who is a licensed pilot. After extensive research and planning, Jonathan and Andrew Kasper traveled roundtrip to Miami in Jonathan's plane in one very long day just before Christmas and delivered the layettes to the shipping company. Each layette included the traditional elements plus 2 adult cloth face masks for the mothers to use. (Eve Kasper, age 8, helped add masks to each bundle). Our call for donated masks was so successful that we also were able to include over 150 additional cloth face masks (adult and kid sizes) in the shipment for AMOS' use separate from the layettes.

Special thanks to Jonathan for expertly piloting the plane and donating the running costs for the flight, and to the Pullen Mission Women for their long-term support for this project, including funding the shipping costs this year. *-Elizabeth and Andrew Kasper*



Time to Pledge

A time when things are different,
a time when they are the same.



Please Pledge to Support Pullen in 2021!

“Just Ask”

I was struck by the clarity and simplicity of our Pastor’s letter to us last week. She referred to the “Ask Barrier.” The theme seemed to me to be, “be straight, be clear, trust the people, Just Ask.”

The privilege of providing a prompt to follow that one falls to me, and I can think of no better theme than that one. “What She Said,” is one way to put it. Maybe “Just Ask.” Is another.

We of the Finance Committee have been heartened over and over again during the 2020 church year and up until the present moment. We have given to the church’s ministry faithfully and generously over that time, and we find ourselves in what I have learned since I moved to North Carolina to call the “short rows.” (If you’re new here, ask around...).

I recall last year as we approached the third Sunday of February, the traditional and Constitutionally-mandated day upon which we convene as a church in conference for the purpose of considering the final budget.

We were close but had not yet met the threshold we felt would allow us to provide full financial support for the church’s ministries. We were faced with a stark choice. We would either be required to modify the budget in ways we did not want to do in order to be proper stewards of our finances, or we would reach our threshold and we would have cake and a sparkling beverage to celebrate. I believe it was the night before the vote that Pastor Nancy called on her cellphone as she was driving home.

“We made it!” she said.

It was then I came to believe that among our other strengths at Pullen, we don’t like to peak too early.

As we’ve been saying this whole year, “Things are Different, and Things Are The Same.” Our celebration will be virtual when the pledges come in to meet our threshold and turn our faces toward the rest of 2021, but no less heartfelt. We need to meet our pledge threshold. We who love and believe in Pullen’s presence and work will follow through.

Thank you for your faithfulness.

*Jim Jarrard, Chair
For the Pullen Finance Committee*

We are so close to reaching our pledge goal!

We are \$59,000 away from our pledge goal. So if you have been waiting to pledge now is the time to do it! Your pledge will ensure the continuation of all the amazing ministry work Pullen performs.

To make a pledge to support Pullen in 2021 you can enter your pledge through our website pullen.org/pledge; through your Realm account; call (919.828.0897, ext. 224) or email Lucy (Lkucmierz@pullen.org).

Directions for Using Realm

By now you should have received your Realm invitation. If you have not, contact Lucy at Lkucmierz@pullen.org.

To use your Realm portal for giving:

1. *Login*
2. *Select Giving*
3. *Click on + Give*
4. *Enter Information*



2020 Contribution Statements

Your 2020 contributions statements were mailed at the end of January. Please contact Lucy if you have any questions. Your statements are also available through your Realm account.

An Approaching Anniversary, continued from page 1

These are just a few observations and questions that are occupying my thoughts as we mark this significant anniversary. Maybe I am thinking about these things because I am hopeful that we will return to in-person gatherings sometime this year. It is my prayer. I miss you—your hugs, hearing your laughter ring through the hallways of the church, gathering around the table on Wednesday night, being able to visit you in your home or at the hospital, the community gathering and offering support in life's transitions whether that be the birth of a child or the death of a loved one, and everything else in between.

When you find that you have a few minutes to reflect on what church has been like for you during the pandemic think about what you have enjoyed about virtual church, what you have missed about in-person church, and what you see as blessings and challenges for the church post-pandemic. March 8, 2020 was the last time we gather in-person in our sanctuary for worship. The week that followed would be the last time our groups would meet in-person at the church. There is a lot to learn as we mark this one-year anniversary. Our learnings have the power to shape our present and future in positive ways. To name our learnings and to wrestle with the questions those learning offer can help us be more intentional about who we are and how we want to be church as we emerge from the pandemic.

How have you experienced virtual church? What are you learning about what you need from your church community? What observations and questions do you have about virtual church and church post-pandemic? I would love to hear your observations and questions. Until then...I miss you and cannot wait until the day when we gather in-person for worship and fellowship.

- Nancy Petty

ONE Wake Update

Calling Educators and Parents

The ONE Wake Education Team has launched a listening campaign with the goal of engaging 1,000 education stakeholders by March 31. The purpose of the listening campaign is to surface top education concerns that take into consideration how education has been transformed by COVID. These concerns will shape ONE Wake's actions around education.

We will hold a series of virtual small group (10-15 people) sessions at Pullen to engage education stakeholders like parents, students, teachers, staff. Please click the meeting date to register

* Educator Meeting: [February 22](#) or [March 4](#) at 7:00 pm

* Parent Meeting: [February 28](#) at 2:00 pm * Youth Meeting: TBD

Affordable Housing Team Starts Year with Record Turnout

Close to 80 members of the ONE Wake Affordable Housing Team met last month to discuss and shape ONE Wake's 2021 power strategy for affordable housing.

The major opportunity this fall is to win support for affordable housing construction on county owned land through a series of strictly non-partisan public actions with candidates running for office in up to five municipalities. Given that off year, municipal elections are historically low turnout and low information, ONE Wake is in a strong position to make affordable housing a top election issue this fall. The Affordable Housing Team committed to break into municipal sub-groups to begin a series of research actions necessary to prepare proposals for candidate actions this fall.

[Learn more about this strategy and how you can get involved here.](#)

Register Today for Internal Assembly on February 25

Join hundreds of ONE Wake leaders from institutions across Wake County for the internal assembly on February 25. The purpose of this assembly is to evaluate ONE Wake's public launch and the political lessons learned last year as ONE Wake entered the public arena. A power building strategy for 2021 will also be introduced for review and ratification by the full membership of the organization.

Please join us for this important assembly!

[Registration for the meeting is available here.](#)

-Chalice Overy

Pullen Photos Needed!

We hope you are enjoying the slideshow on Sunday mornings between 10:45 and 11:00am prior to the start of worship!

We would love to have some new pictures. Show us what you are up to these days!

Please email any pictures of you or your family to Bryan Lee at blee@pullen.org, or share your photos on social media and tag [#pullenchurch](#).

*If you do not wish to appear on the slideshow, please email Bryan Lee to let him know.



2020 Giving Report - Thank You!

Pullen continues its generosity to vital work in our community and in our world. Our \$51,900 Missions and Outreach budget supported our mission groups, offered emergency assistance and seed grants, and provided support to our international partners and local non-profit organizations and ministries.

Our non-budgeted outreach funding is given throughout the year through contributions from Pullen members and friends, including Pullen Mission Women (PMW), for a wide variety of ministries including:

- ◆ *ABC (International Ministries)*
- ◆ *Alliance of Baptists*
- ◆ *AMOS Health and Hope (Nicaragua)*
- ◆ *Community of the Cross of Nails*
- ◆ *Community Ministry*
- ◆ *Cuba Gifts*
- ◆ *FIGS (Rx for the uninsured)*
- ◆ *Georgia (Tbilisi)*
- ◆ *Hope Center at Pullen*
- ◆ *Housing All*
- ◆ *Match (Mothers & Their Children)*
- ◆ *Nicaragua Prenatal Care*
- ◆ *Urban Ministries Crisis Intervention*
- ◆ *Zimbabwe Gifts*

You also give countless gifts such as Round Table lunch items, medications for Cuba, layettes and face masks for Nicaragua, gifts sent directly to the Hope Center, food for PMW's donation to Urban Ministries and other ways you reach beyond our walls.

Pullen has also volunteered to let the Alliance of Baptists use our address for their mail. In addition to this service, Lucy has been preparing and making their deposits on a weekly basis. This additional donation of time and services amounts to approximately \$2,500 per year.

Thank you for your tremendous generosity. Because of you, we are making a difference in our world.

-Brian D. Crisp

Minister of Missions and Adult Education



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

