



Pullen News

June 2021

Marking the Journey

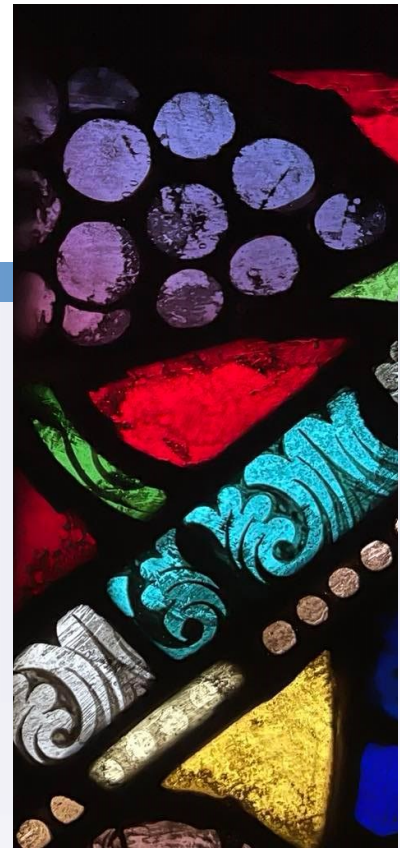
Time stamp: June 1, 1999. I am writing this article exactly 22 years later on June 1, 2021.

Twenty-two years ago today, I landed at the Raleigh-Durham airport after a 14 day trip to Vladivostok, Russia to adopt Nora. Utterly exhausted doesn't even come close to describing the state Nora and I were in from our journey home. The 24 hours prior to arriving in Raleigh, I could not wake Nora up. But the second those wheels landed in Raleigh, her eyes popped open and she was wide awake. A foreshadowing of the next two years 24/7. As we stepped off the plane and made our way down the jet bridge all I wanted to do was kiss the ground once inside the airport terminal. I shall never forget walking through that doorway with Nora in my arms and seeing the faces of loved ones standing there ready to welcome us home and take us into their arms—Vickie, Jasmine, Randy Hall, Cissy McKissick and Santi Matthews.

As I mark that journey each year on June 1, I am always aware that on that day one journey ended and another began. The long journey of the adoption process and going to Russia to get Nora had ended. We were home. Exhausted, yes. But safe at home. And, on that same day, another journey began—life with Nora. The journey of being Nora's mother has been and continues to be life changing for me. We have experienced the highs and lows—the challenges and celebrations—that every parent and child experiences together. Our specifics may be different from yours but it's all in there somewhere. For me, the journey with Nora has been the single most life-changing experience in my 57 years of life. (Marriage is a very close second with being your pastor rounding out the top 3.) What I have learned about being a parent, about myself, about Nora and about life has shaped and molded me into the person I am today. For every part of the journey I am grateful. Do I wish I could have avoided all the parenting mistakes I made? Sure. Do I wish each of us could take back some words spoken in frustration, fear and anxiety? Sure. But isn't all that part of life? Don't we learn from our "failures" just as we do from our "successes?" How can we know the highs if we never experience the lows? Don't the challenges and struggles draw us closer to one another, giving us a sense of connection and being on the journey together? The journey is about *all of life*. *The journey is about life's transformations—those moments when you dare to walk through the unknown and into a new life.*

As a faith community, we are at a moment of marking the journey of our collective life. We have journeyed through the past 15 months of a pandemic that has, no doubt, transformed us in ways we never dreamed of. We've been challenged. We have struggled. We have experienced both highs and lows during this time. We have learned things about ourselves, others and the world that have now shaped us into the people and community we are today. As for marking the journey, I wouldn't say one journey has ended, and another is beginning. This pandemic is not that clear or clean. And yet, we are marking the journey with another transition as we begin coming back to in-person worship and other church activities.

There is another marking happening along our journey together—our work as a community on becoming an anti-racist church. The Deacons and other church leadership has placed a high priority on this work for the coming years. It will be a journey. There will, no doubt, be highs and lows, challenges and celebrations, struggles and sacred moments of learning together. We will learn about ourselves, each other, our community and the world around us. God willing, we will be transformed as a community in the hope that we reflect more fully God's kin-dom here on earth. This journey will not be a quick road-trip. It will be and is a long journey—a life-time journey. There will be mistakes that we make together. In frustration, fear and anxiety we will say things to one another that we will require compassion and forgiveness. That's all a part of the journey. And, I am more convinced than ever that to be the *(continued on page 2)*



Inside this issue

| | |
|--|---|
| Reopening, Children's Ministry Update, Scholarships, Budget, Prayer Concerns | 2 |
| Realm, Let's Do Lunch, Bike Ride, Hope Center Updates | 3 |
| Summer Education Groups, ONEWake Update | 4 |

Financial Update

As of the end of May, Pullen is maintaining a positive trend of contributions exceeding expenses. Our contributions for May were \$80,003.94 this includes the 2020 carry-over of \$7,818.20.

Remember you can give on-line through the Pullen website, through the mobile Realm app, or through your Realm account. If you have any questions please reach out to Lucy at:

Lkucmierz@pullen.org.

—Lucy Kucmierz

Church Administrator

As of May 31, 2021

Gifts to Date:
\$ 482,516.58

Expenses to Date:
\$ 479,762.45

Difference:
\$ 2,754.13

Prayer Concerns

Virginia Dupree Phillips who died on May 1 at the age of 101.

Jean Batts' mother who passed away on May 6 in Michigan.

Making the Journey, continued from page 1:

church this is a journey we are being called to take. Is it the only journey for our church? No! There will be exits off the main road that we will take because we are needed along those routes too. And lord knows, we will need the rest areas/stops as we make this journey. But as Paul writes to the Philippians: "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you (us) will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."

As we mark the journey, I recommend to you [Mary Oliver's poem, The Journey](#). Along with our sacred scriptures and sacred stories, may it guide us in the days to come!

—Nancy



We hope to see you soon!

During the pandemic we've welcomed you to join us virtually for worship each Sunday, read our emails, follow Pullen on social media, and reach out if you'd like to talk. As more of the church family have been vaccinated, and as gathering restrictions are being eased, we are pleased to know that a return to in-person worship is possible. We have been cautious and careful during the pandemic, and will continue to be during this reopening process. We are looking forward to seeing you!

Beginning June 13 we will welcome 100 people for in-person worship each Sunday. Sign up now online or by calling the church office!

Visit this page for info: <http://pullen.org/reopening>

Children and Family Ministry Update:

- ◆ Families will soon be coming back together at Pullen!! This will be a gradual process. Below are several upcoming events for children and families this summer!
- ◆ June 16 – PULLEN KIDS "CATCH-UP" DAY - A Children's fun day at Pullen for children who've just completed Kindergarten - 5th Grades—9 am -5 pm. Drop off at the church opens up at 8:30 am and pick up ends at 5:30 pm.
- ◆ July 11 - Messy Church at Pullen – 10:30 am (Rising K-5) Family Worship in Finlator Hall – 11 am
- ◆ July 18 – Preschool Play Day @ Pullen 10:30 am Family Worship in Finlator Hall – 11 am
- ◆ July 21 - Children's Fun Day at Pullen - 9 am- 5 pm for rising Kindergarten - 5th Grade



More information coming soon!! Please make sure you're on the Children and Family Email list. Sign up by emailing tcCook@pullen.org

—Tommy Cook

Pullen Scholarship Applications Due June 15

The Pullen Memorial Baptist Church Scholarship(s) will be offered again for the 2021-22 academic year. This Scholarship is need-based and is for seniors in high school who have been accepted to a college and for current college or graduate students.



The amount of each scholarship will be up to \$750, depending on availability of funds. Applications are due by June 15th and can be found on the Pullen website: <http://www.pullen.org/scholarship/>. Successful applicants will be notified by July 1st. All application information will remain confidential.

Please let us know if you have any questions. Contact Natalie Hampton, nhampton0725@gmail.com or Pat Thomas, dragonflyfiberarts@nc.rr.com



Now that more of us are using Realm for giving and event registration, let's get the most out of it! Realm is a tool to help us stay connected. It helps our staff connect to you, and connect you with opportunities that align with your passions and interests. So consider checking your profile to make sure we have your most up to date contact information, or take a moment to add your occupation, skills and interests. Realm also helps you stay connected to other members of the Pullen community. Have you taken a moment to opt in to the directory so others can get in contact with you. Why not take a moment to do it? You can find detailed instructions on the Realm page on our website under "Completing Your Profile" and "Privacy". <https://pullen.org/realm/>



We're having a series of small lunch gatherings geared specifically to our vaccinated elders. The past year has been pretty isolating, so this is an opportunity to reconnect with some of your Pullen friends over a meal. The dates are June 23 and July 21. If there is enough interest we may add a

date in August. We will gather in Finlator Hall and serve lunch at your tables. Space is limited to maintain distance, so you will need to register by June 21 and July 19, respectively. You may register on [Realm](#) or by calling the church office at 919-828-0897, ext. 0. Please note that you will receive a confirmation email with your Realm registration. If you do not receive a confirmation, please call us so we can make sure you are registered. If you are not able to take the vaccination but are still looking for ways to connect with the church, please contact me so we can discuss some other options.

-Chalice Overy

Pullen Bike Ride June 26!

We are planning a big group bike ride for anyone who wants to join us. We will meet at Dix Park, in the parking lot on Blair Drive, at 10:00am, June 26. The ride will follow the greenways to the Neuse River Trail and back. This is a 20 mile ride, but we can split into groups for anyone that needs to turn around early. At the end of the ride, we will find a place to have a nice drink and relax!

Contact Ted Buckner for more information:
twbuckner@gmail.com

Updates from The Hope Center

Graduation Celebration

Twenty one Wake County foster teens are graduating from high school in June! On May 27, we held a hybrid graduation celebration for these youth. Some youth chose to attend online and others came to Finlator Hall. The new graduates received graduation gifts from Wake County and HCP. Wake County gave laptops and, thanks to your generosity, HCP gifted each graduate with a gift card.

One teen, who is valedictorian of his class, gave a speech and used his platform to remind his peers that their futures are full of possibility. Delana Epps-Avery, Director of Teen Programs, left youth with these words:

*Seek opportunities to unbecome who you thought you had to be so that someone would love you.
Seek opportunities to unbecome cultural stereotypes and other people's opinions of you.
Seek opportunities to unbecome a person driven by trauma, pain and generational curses.
Seek opportunities to peel back the layers and just unbecome and to embrace the beauty of who you are!*

I charge you to go out into the world and make conscious efforts to live bold, free and in service of others. Choose happiness and love no matter what that looks like. Because sometimes the greatest rewards in life come not from what you receive but by what you give.

Thank you for allowing us to use Finlator Hall to host these amazing events. We are so grateful for your partnership in helping our teens take their next step forward into adulthood.

Wednesday Life Skills Group is Returning to In-Person

When COVID struck, we moved our Wednesday Life Skills Group from weekly in-person meetings to Zoom. Virtual meetings filled a crucial gap for us over the time, but we are so excited to be returning to safe in-person meetings. If you'd like to help by providing a hearty meal for our youth to share, please Email Jadie Baldwin-Hamm at jbaldwin-hamm@hopecenteratpullen.org.

Transportation Volunteers Still Needed!

Thank you to everyone who has already signed up to be a transportation volunteer for summer internships. **We have a need for more individuals to help with this crucial piece of the program.** Transportation volunteers pick up interns from their foster homes and bring them to the internship site. **Volunteers decide their time investment.**

Whether it's one trip over the summer or a weekly commitment take a teen to work, we need your help.

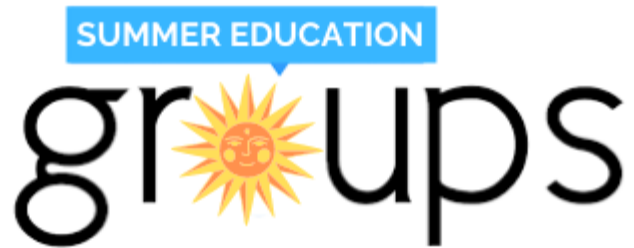
Please contact Delana Epps-Avery to find out how you can help:

depps-avery@hopecenteratpullen.org.



Summer Education Groups: Reorienting Beyond Covid

June 16 - July 28



As we anticipate a world where COVID-19 becomes less of a threat and restrictions begin to ease, the Adult Education Committee has been working diligently to develop a Summer Education Series that will inspire and challenge a wide-range of attendees. This year's series was planned intentionally to examine and strengthen our personal and corporate lives as we come out of this pandemic. As not to impede with Sunday worship, we are moving our time to Wednesday evenings from 6:15 - 7:30 pm. To bring us closer to our normal rhythm of a lighter schedule for mid-week gatherings in the summer, we will suspend The Table in June, July and August. "We will have a gathering time before we feature members of our community. The following topics will be covered:

- **June 16: Pandemic Losses and the Movement Toward Kindness**
- **June 30: Raising and Curating Hope**
- **July 14: Practices and Practicalities**
- **July 28: Reorienting and Reshaping Our World**

These offerings are meant to encompass a wider scope of education as Pullen strives to support people in a full-body experience. Each session will take place on Zoom and registration is required. A component of the Summer Series will have people assigned to small groups. These small groups will meet each session as a means to offer people a way to foster and strengthen community. Register on Zoom [here](#) or call the church office for assistance.

-Adult Education Committee



ONE Wake Update

Issue Platform and Power Strategy

Leaders from member congregations are reacting to ONE Wake's platform for change affordable housing, good jobs, and education equity. Clergy caucus members had an opportunity to preview the platform last month and other leaders will take a peek this month ahead of the June 10 annual meeting. In addition to the main platform, there are also plans for an ambitious summer base building strategy to build a non-partisan voting block behind our priorities in advance of the next municipal elections.

The full ONE Wake issue agenda and our summer base building strategy will be discussed and ratified at the upcoming Annual Meeting on June 10 (see below).

Over 200 to Graduate IAF University this Month

Over 200 members of ONE Wake institutions, including 9 members from Pullen, have attended a three part evening training series called IAF University this spring to learn how to use organizing tools to build strong core teams for action in their institution. Topics covered included Power, Core Teams, How to Create an Effective Power Analysis, and Relational Meetings. Handouts and supplemental podcasts from each session are [available on the ONE Wake website](#). If you are interested in working with Pullen's core team, please contact Chalice Overy.

ONE Wake Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 10, 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

[RSVP here to receive your unique link](#)

This meeting will kick off the second leg of the 2021 power strategy which will culminate in a series of large public actions in multiple municipalities this fall. If you have been wondering what ONE Wake does, this is a great opportunity to learn about what concrete steps are planned for the next 1-2 years.

[REGISTER EARLY](#) to receive advance materials to prepare for this crucial meeting.

Please contact me if you are interested in connecting to the work of ONE Wake.