



Pullen News

May 2021

Striving to Become an Anti-Racist Church: an Update on Pullen's Anti-Racism Committee

Last December, in response to Pastor Nancy Petty's challenge to become an anti-racist church, the Deacon Council created what would become the Anti-Racism Committee and tasked it with the following:

The mission of the ARC is to engage the Pullen community in striving to become an anti-racist congregation. We understand anti-racist to mean implementing practices and policies that support racial justice and equity and challenging systems that perpetuate racial inequity.

The Deacons asked that each Council in the church identify one representative to serve on ARC, including two staff liaisons. The members currently are: Serena Buckner, Jill Hinton (co-chair), Carol Hobbs, Mary Martin, Mark Nance (co-chair), Jan Overman, Chalice Overy, Nancy Petty, Steve Rhudy, and Chris Schwertman.

In future newsletters and weekly emails, the ARC will provide regular updates on our work, share our own experiences with racism and anti-racism, and provide a wide variety of resources that we hope will spur deeper thought and conversation around anti-racism. In this first contribution, we thought it would be good to say more about how we, as co-chairs of the ARC, understand the mission statement above and the work that lays before us as a congregation.

We'd like to start with what this is not. Anti-racism should not be a modern-day witch hunt, where anti-racism is weaponized and all people are deputized to declare this person or that rule racist or not racist. That is decidedly not in the communal spirit of Pullen and not in the spirit of our understanding of anti-racism. Anti-racism is not a checklist that we can work through and quickly receive our certification. Maybe most confusingly, anti-racism is not a project with measurable goals: a more diverse congregation or more diverse partnerships or more diverse speakers. Those would be welcome side effects and some might be means to the end of anti-racism. But they themselves do not verify our authenticity as an anti-racist congregation, nor is the lack of them necessarily an indicator that we are failing.

So what is the work of ARC? If there is a central goal, it is to continually deepen our understanding of the ways in which the life and work of the Pullen community challenges or alternatively reinforces structures and systems that perpetuate racial inequity. Reflecting back on the mission statement, we will begin by 'engaging the Pullen community' in learning and discussion with each other. One path toward anti-racism is created by open, loving conversations in Sunday groups, lunch gatherings, Wednesday nights at The Table, or anywhere else Pullenites gather. A second path is forged as we develop new habits designed to help us see our role in countering or reinforcing racism: new questions to ask, new logics to consider, new outcomes to imagine. It is work that requires a close look at all that we do. It is an on-going evolution. It requires that we give and receive grace when we make the missteps that we inevitably will make. It is hard, important work.

We are not alone. The Deacon Council also agreed that Pullen would participate in cohort study of Christian churches attempting to move in similar directions. This is the THRIVE project; you'll hear much more in the months and years ahead. But the project says a lot about anti-racism work. THRIVE seeks to be a learning community of 25 congregations. It is a five-year project with different phases for each year: (1) observation; (2) evaluation and reflection; (3) action; (4) follow-up and observation; (5) reporting. Most of us are in uncharted territory and need to learn from (cont.)



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Budget Update

As of the end of April Pullen is maintaining a positive trend of contributions exceeding expenses. Our contributions for April were \$90,589.34, this includes the 2020 carryover of \$7,818.20.

Soon we will be back together and be able to “pass the plate” which will help maintain this positive trend. 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, Lkucmierz@pullen.org.

—Lucy Kucmierz
Church Administrator

As of April 30, 2021

Gifts to
Date:
\$ 401,743.91

Expenses to
Date:
\$ 397,891.23

Diffence:
\$ 3,852.68

Anti-racism Committee Update, continued from page 1:

others. This is a long and on-going process. It requires a commitment to being open to looking inward, observing our own traditions, discovering where our own traditions and ways of doing may have effects we do not intend, identifying barriers that prevent us from having the effects we hope to have, and allowing our learning process to move us forward in our journey toward becoming an anti-racist congregation..

We only ask that you join us on this journey. Ask us and each other hard questions. This work requires that we be open and honest on issues that are among the most fraught that we face in the United States. In that best Pullen tradition, let us challenge ourselves and each other to see more clearly how we might, to paraphrase Paula Clayton Dempsey’s recent sermon, welcome all God’s children to the table.

—Jill Hinton & Mark Nance

Music Ministry Update

Hold On to the Vision!

Worship on Pentecost led by the Music Ministry—May 23, 2021

Celebrate Pentecost by hearing and singing along with Pullen’s Congregational Voices, Chancel Choir, Youth Choir, Children’s Choir and Pullen Orchestra!

Included in the service will be the premiere of a new audio-visual arrangement of “Commonwealth of Love” (2015 Pullen Church Music Search winning anthem). The Chancel and Youth Choirs enjoyed re-connecting with UK composer, Chris O’Hara, for the recording and editing of this new version. Connection for this service was also made with Chicago-based composer, Keith Hampton, who gifted our singers with a vibrant multi-instrument recording accompaniment for his well-known gospel piece, “Praise His Holy Name.” Additionally, the first Congregational Voices presentation of Mel Bringle’s and William Rowan’s beloved hymn, “Light Dawns on a Weary World” will also be a part of this service (see info. below to add your voice)! Join us to celebrate the spirit among us as we hold on to the visions of justice, freedom and peace.

50 Congregational Voices for Pentecost!

Pentecost is the 50th day after Easter. For our service of music on that day, it seems fitting to strive for 50 voices singing the beloved hymn, “Light Dawns on a Weary World.” You are invited to be a part of this Congregational Voices project by signing up to record at: www.pullen.org/music. —Larry Schultz

Ice Cream Stroll-Through

Saturday, May 15

Pullen Memorial
Baptist Church

3:00-4:30 pm

Stop by to say HI and enjoy
a scoop of ice cream from the
Two Roosters Ice Cream
truck!

Celebrate spring with your Pullen friends!

Mark your calendars and plan to stop by the church on Saturday, May 15! Stroll through to say HI to friends and enjoy a scoop of ice cream. We'll have the ice cream truck from Two Roosters there, so you are in for a treat! Lots of yummy ice cream flavors will be available including dairy free.

Plan to enter and park in the lower section of the Cox Street parking lot.

Please [RSVP on Realm](#) by May 14. Contact Chalice Overy if you have questions or need help registering. —Chalice Overy



Meet us on Wednesdays at The Table

Wednesday nights are an important time of fellowship and learning in the Pullen community. An informal conversation among friends old and new, an open place to voice prayer concerns and celebrate joys, and an opportunity to engage our hearts and minds together as we seek to be the people of God in our place and time.

During the pandemic, we have missed our Wednesday in-person gatherings, so we have been meeting weekly on Zoom since July 2020. Zoom calls begin at 6pm with the featured program starting at 6:30. Please be sure to **register to attend** The Table.

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

May 5 - ONE Wake: Partnering for Change in Wake County

If you have been reading the Pullen newsletter over the last few months, you've noticed the updates about the activity of ONE Wake. Pullen's deacons affirmed our participation in ONE Wake last year, so we wanted to provide an overview of what it is and how it works. On May 5, organizer Devin Ross joined us to talk about ONE Wake, its organizing model and how it's bringing people together to make a difference locally. We were also joined by pastors Melissa Florer-Bixler of Raleigh Mennonite and Mycal Brickhouse of Cary First Christian Church to talk about why and how their congregations have gotten involved.

May 12 - Talk of Returning

After more than a year of virtual worship, we're looking to return to in person worship with limited numbers in June. Nancy Petty will share some of her thoughts and the logistics around reopening. This will be a Table Talk format where we also hope to hear from you. What has it been like returning to some other pre-pandemic activities? Have there been challenges with re-acclimating? What are you most looking forward to in returning to church? When will you feel comfortable returning?

May 19 - Year End Celebration

We've been hanging in there with each other as an online community week after week since June. As we break for the summer we'll have a little fun together playing games, awarding superlatives and giving thanks for all of you! We will also take a look at the Summer Sunday Group series, which will take place on 4 Wednesday evenings in the summer.

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



Prayer Concerns

- Boyd and Susan Rogers. Boyd's mother Margaret Rogers died on March 27.
- Bob Savage, whose brother died this last month in Washington State.
- Cathy Stone, whose father, Bill Stone, passed away on April 8.
- Sharron Underwood in the loss of her cousin Dawn Renee McKinney who died on April 13 in Park Hills, Missouri.
- The family and friends of Susan Frasier who died April 23. Susan was a dedicated supporter of Pullen and shared friendships within the Pullen family.
- The family and friends of Virginian Phillips died on May 1, at the age of 101. She was our oldest active member.

Pullen's Farm to Church CSA



The first delivery of fresh spring vegetables from Singing Stream Farm flowed seamlessly to Pullen's participants in our CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) partnership on Saturday, May 1st. Portions of totes containing squash, Swiss chard, kale, and turnips were quickly transferred to recipients and carried home for healthy meals. Ken Daniel of Singing Stream Farm indicated that the current time is important for new and existing members to enroll or renew their commitments, insuring delivery of summer produce after the end of this initial 8-week period.

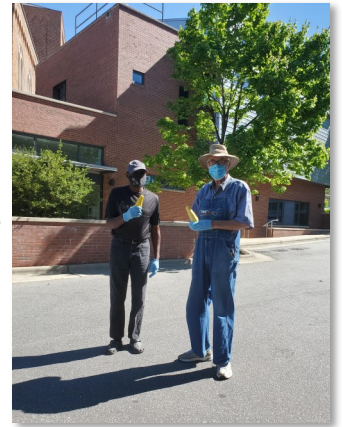
Would you like to sign up for the Summer CSA?

The delivery times are 10:00 A.M.-11:00 A.M. every Saturday for an 8 week period, with deliveries occurring in the church parking lot directly behind Finlator Hall. Shares are based on availability and a typical full share provides enough meal servings for 4 adults during the course of 1 meal, with a half share supplying half that amount. A delivery for each

participant is scheduled to offer 4 different vegetables each week, with the selections varying as the growing season progresses.

If a member misses a week without making provisions to have someone pick up their portions, what they would've received is added to the portions the other participants receive. If more information is required, please contact Greg Bruhn at bellcreek@nc.rr.com or (919) 790-0480. Interested parties need to mail their \$125 checks for 1/2 shares and \$250 for full shares to: Singing Stream Farm/ 2693 Horseshoe Road/ Creedmoor, NC 27522.

Our CSA partnership with Singing Stream Farm resulted from an outreach to faith communities in our area from RAFI (Rural Advancement Foundation International) based in Pittsboro and led by Jarred White. A primary objective of RAFI is to link interested communities of faith with local farmers of color seeking a reliable market for their produce within North and South Carolina and Virginia. Singing Stream Farm, Rocky Ridge Farm of Louisburg, and Soul City Farm of Norlina are the farms delivering produce to area churches which include Pullen, Church of the Nativity, West Raleigh Presbyterian, and the United Church of Christ.



More About Singing Stream Farm

Toward the end of the Depression, the Landis family was one of 10 Granville County families chosen by the Farm Security Administration to participate in a farm ownership program enabling the Landis family to purchase a 150-acre farm. This acquisition came at a time when relatively few black families in NC were farm owners.



Ken Daniel and his greenhouse

The matriarch of the Landis family in southern Granville County, Mrs. Bertha Mangum Landis was the person responsible for the origin for the title "Singing Stream" when during a conversation she commented that "my children had a singing stream from both sides of the family." In the mid-1950s members of the Landis family who were called "The Rising Stars" had several members drafted into the military as well as members from the Golden Echoes. The two groups merged and retained the name "[Golden Echoes](#)." They received recognition well beyond the local area as talented gospel singers and musicians. During the mid-1980s the Golden Echoes and members of the extended Landis family were documented in a film that was later entitled "The Singing Stream" and has aired on UNC-TV in recent years.

The land that is now Singing Stream Farm grew tobacco for generations as the main cash crop. Fields that were once cultivated by the Landis and Daniel families reverted to an untended condition after a generation pursued other livelihoods. Fortunately, Ken Daniel saw potential in those acres and has endeavored to grow crops on them after considerable effort to remove established trees, vines and briars. Today a greenhouse protects young vegetable seedlings

that will soon be transplanted into surrounding fields as weather conditions permit. Those transplants are symbolic of continuing a rich tradition at Singing Stream Farm.

-Greg Bruhn

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.

Education

The Education Team is reviewing the results of their recent listening campaign. At their April 27 meeting the Team broke into four subgroups to begin researching "Learning Loss," Mental Health, Teaching Conditions, and Access to Technology. Ultimately the Team will create and present proposals for issue campaigns to ONE Wake's Countywide Leaders Caucus which next meets on June 10.

Housing

On Tuesday night the Holly Springs Town Council voted YES (4-1) on approving rezoning for a 20 acre parcel of county-owned land identified by ONE Wake as a priority for the organization. With the rezoning in hand, DHIC will proceed with the construction of 124 affordable units for senior citizens and families.

Prior to the hearing Tuesday night 107 Holly Springs residents signed and delivered a petition to the Town Council in support of the rezoning through ONE Wake.

This is an important victory that demonstrates ONE Wake's ability to deliver large numbers of members in support of affordable housing development across the county.

Save the Date! ONE Wake Annual Meeting

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

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

Over 200 ONE Wake leaders have committed to attend IAF University this spring to build their capacity to organize and deliver the full power of their congregations and communities. During our June 10 Annual Meeting ONE Wake leaders will unveil a platform showing what this power is FOR: specific housing, jobs, and education issues that can be won in the next 12 - 18 months.

This meeting will kick off the second leg of ONE Wake's power strategy which will culminate in a series of large public actions in multiple municipalities this fall.

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

-Chalice Overy
covery@pullen.org



Join us for a Movie Night!

Saturday, May 8

7 PM

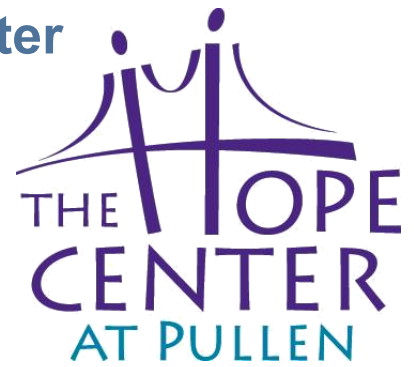
At the Cox Avenue Building Parking Lot



The youth and children, young adults, and their families will gather to watch a movie outside. Plenty of popcorn and drinks provided.

Join us as we gather together to enjoy a fun movie and visit with each other. Bring chairs and whatever you need to be comfortable. We'll have popcorn and drinks! Get in touch with Tommy or Bryan for more information. tcook@pullen.org or blee@pullen.org -Tommy Cook and Bryan Lee

Updates from The Hope Center



Raising Hope Recap

Thank you to everyone who came, sponsored and donated to HCP's 2021 Raising Hope. We are so grateful for the wonderful community of love and support surrounding our youth. Your support is foundational for us and continues to be life-changing for our youth. Your donations are already at work:

Just last week, Selina, who many of you met at Raising Hope, signed her lease on a new apartment. She worked with us to access a supportive housing voucher that allows her to raise her daughter in a comfy, stable home. She is the first recipient of this new type of voucher that we are administering to help youth experiencing homelessness move into long-term affordable housing. We're so grateful for your support that makes this work possible.



Summer Internships are BACK!

We are thrilled our Summer Internship program for foster teens can offer safe, socially distant options to explore potential careers! Over 20 teens have signed up to participate. They are busy preparing resumes. We need you to help make the summer successful.

One of our transportation options paused their business because of COVID and **we will be heavily reliant on volunteers to help us get our interns to and from their internship sites this summer.** 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 Joseph McNeill to find out how you can help: jmcneill@hopecenteratpullen.org.
-Erin Witcher



Join us for a Picnic!

Monday, May 17

On Monday, May 17, 6:00 -7:30 pm, the Pullen Women's group will be having an outdoor potluck at the home of Rita Rakestraw.

Main dish will be provided. Please bring a dish to share.

Please call or text Rita at 919-360-0975.

Newcomers welcome!

Please call us if you have any questions:

Janice Overman 919-985-1114 or Rita at 919-360-0975

Youth Corner

Wednesday Night Gatherings- 7:00-8:00 pm

Every Week through May 26

Youth grades 6-12 will gather IN PERSON at Pullen. Outside.

Masks. Distancing. Snacks and drinks provided!

Group Hikes at Umstead Park **Weather Dependent**

Meet at the Reedy Creek access 2100 N. Harrison Ave. Cary, NC 27513 at 9:15 am

- May 22
- June 19

Youth Sunday - June 6

Youth, parents, and families will be invited to sign up and join us for worship on Youth Sunday, live and in-person. If you are a graduate, Bryan needs your graduation photo ASAP.



Get in touch with Bryan for more information. Please make sure you are on the PYM email list for the latest Pullen Youth updates! blee@pullen.org *-Bryan Lee*

Now accepting applications for Pullen Scholarships

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 which 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.

We are hopeful that improving COVID conditions will allow a return to a more normal fall semester at colleges and universities. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns about this process. Contact Natalie Hampton, nhampton0725@gmail.com or Pat Thomas, dragonflyfiberarts@nc.rr.com



Pullen Speaking Truth About Climate Justice

People of Pullen Baptist have a long history of speaking truth about injustice. In this time of climate injustice, we are speaking on behalf of people suffering the worst effects of climate change and we're speaking for future generations who will suffer terribly. People from Pullen have signed up to testify at a NC Utility Commission hearing on the Duke Energy 15-year Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). Making their voices heard are:

- Nancy Petty
- Gail Powell
- Lynn Lyle



The Duke plan is not up to the challenges posed by the climate crisis. Duke Energy and Duke Progress are large emitters of the greenhouse gases that threaten a climate catastrophe if effective action is not taken now. The plan outlines how Duke will generate electric power for their customers. Among other inadequacies, the plan underestimates the cost of building new gas plants and overestimates the cost of installing solar and storage. It calls for building new gas plants in 2035, even though the numbers show gas is more expensive than renewables. It also sets a low bar for energy efficiency efforts.

Our personal testimony is important. Although the registrations for the speaking at the hearing are closed, we call on you to raise your voice for creation by signing a petition or sending your own comments to the utilities commission.

See more details about the plan and find links to the petition here:

<https://interfaithcreationcare.org/duke-energy-irp-hearing/>. Together we will be heard!

-Pullen's Earth Ministry

Earth Care Books in the Pullen Church Library



The Care of Creation group is 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. 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. - Ann Eller

Pullen.org/earthministry

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. Please watch for announcements in the newsletter and on social media.

-Adult Education Committee



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

