

“Preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace:
one body and one Spirit,
as you were also called to the one hope of your call;
one Lord, one faith, one baptism;
one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” Ephesians 4:1-6

On Sunday the 20th we have our Parish Family Picnic at Pickering Barn just off the freeway in Issaquah, with games and snacks and music, from 3-8PM. Dinner will be served between 5-7PM. There is extra parking adjacent at Costco Headquarters. We cancelled the normal summer events at the parishes to instead focus on celebrating together. It's an opportunity to hang out with old friends from your own parish, and make new ones from your current parish, or the other two parishes as well.

During my first year, one of the comments I heard a few times was that people used to occasionally attend Mass at one of the other parishes in the Family, but it didn't feel like home. Now, however, seeing one of the their own priests there, changed that feeling entirely, and it felt more like home. Since the inception of Partners in the Gospel, there has been more movement between parishes. I always love to see people willing to travel for Jesus and prioritizing the Mass and the Eucharist in the midst of a world pulling us in so many other directions. It's also the important gift of community. Our communities are undergoing a season of change. It is important that we commit to intentionally fostering those relationships with one another, and the Lord. So, I hope to see you at the picnic, as we gather, all together, and celebrate this blessing in our lives.

Last month, the members of our Parish Family Advisory Council (PFAC) and I held six Listening Sessions throughout the parishes as we conclude Phase 2 of our process. Phase 2 has been about “Who are We?” Thank you to the 132 people who filled out the survey this Spring about our charisms and gifts. Thank you to the roughly 125 people who participated in our Listening Sessions, including those who helped facilitate and take notes for small group discussions. It was a great opportunity to reflect on challenges in our wider region that we serve as well as within our parish communities, and the opportunities that lay before us. We also looked at a bunch of demographics and parish and school data. All of this information can be found at mqp.org/Partners. The summary of the Listening Sessions will be posted within the next three or four weeks, as the PFAC and I met this last week to begin reflecting on all this information and distilling it. This grounding in “Who we Are?” is a crucial step as we prepare for Phase 3 and the next question before us: “Who does God want us to become?” Key elements of this next phase will be a parish vision statement for our future one parish community, as well as some key initiatives or focus areas – objectives which will once again have opportunities for parishioners to engage with. Thank you for staying tuned in and staying connected!