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March 31, 2025

Dear Parishioner:

Last July Epiphany held a parish-wide forum, inviting parishioners to join in community to share their thoughts about what we do well and what we could do better. Almost 200 members participated!

In the eight months since the forum, much work has been done in response to the forum's findings. Epiphany's clergy, the pastoral ministry team, the PPC, and various ministry leaders have made tremendous progress toward addressing many of the suggested improvements. Below is a summary of the forum's outcomes and steps taken to address the seven most commonly raised areas for improvement.

While it is appropriate to celebrate our achievements to date, we also recognize there is more work to do. Toward that end, we look forward to continuing our work in these areas. We also look forward to our next parish forum on **July 13, 2025, after the 9 a.m. Mass**. Please save the date and plan to attend!

If you have any questions about the following summary, please talk with one of the clergy or a PPC member.

With blessings,

Father Toan Do, S.T.D., Ph.D.
Pastor

2024 PARISH FORUM FEEDBACK SUMMARY

In 2024, the parish held what we hope to be the first of many community forums between the 9:00 a.m. Mass and the 11:30 a.m. Mass. We gathered the comments and suggestions from the forum and wanted to share some feedback on numerous activities already in the works, or being considered. Many of the suggestions offered at the parish forum are included as action steps in the long-range parish plan adopted in 2020 through 2024 and were accomplished as part of that plan. The PPC will begin developing a new long-range plan this year.

1. Engage youth and children

*A new full-time Director of Youth Ministry, Noah McDonell, began part time work this January 2025, and will be working full time at Epiphany beginning later this spring.

*Gather the Children began meeting once a month in October. Katie Duvall is leading.

*Fr. Toan has directed that once per month at the 11:30 a.m. Sunday mass, homilies will be directed toward and tailored to youth issues.

*A new playground was installed. The community will celebrate the new structure soon when the weather is warmer.

*A group of parents with children under 4 has begun to gather at the parish to create a community of families in this time of life.

*NEED: Increase activities for young adults and young married couples.

2. Better Communication

*The parish communicates with parishioners via multiple media, including social media, email, website, bulletin, and end-of-mass announcements.

*An ad hoc committee worked on the improving communication between PPC and other parish members. A Comment/Suggestion Box was placed in the Connector.

*PPC members wear name badges with a red ribbon and stand in the Connector after each liturgy to be available to other parishioners for discussion of concerns and comments.

*The PPC agenda is published prior to each monthly meeting. Minutes are published after each meeting, available to the whole parish.

*Highlights from each PPC meeting are placed in the parish Bulletin.

*Fr. Toan and the staff continue to develop interoffice communication patterns and adjust job responsibilities. Changes in pastors require significant adjustments and take time to implement.

*Plans are to add 15 minutes to the PPC agenda for parishioners who want to speak to the PPC at their meeting.

3. Be More Welcoming

*The welcome ministry has multiple ministers serving each mass to greet people, and greeters warmly welcome people to Epiphany.

*An example of beautiful connection and welcoming efforts can be witnessed through the bereavement ministry for families during funerals at Epiphany.

*Frs. Toan and Emmanuel regularly make note of visitors during mass, and Fr. Toan greets people as they come and go to and from the worship center. Dn. Randy also is present before and after masses to greet people.

4. More Social Events

*After-mass coffee/donut events and participation have increased over the past six months. The Feast of Epiphany was highly attended, including a community-wide meal.

*Fr. Toan is committed to offering more parish-wide community-building events, and parishioners are encouraged to offer specific suggestions and to oversee their happening.

*Parish groups provide many social opportunities.

*The parish celebrates its birthday in June and its Feast Day in January each year.

*We discussed the possibility of developing an Epiphany event that would be similar to a parish picnic or fall festival.

5. Ecumenism

*Blood drives, Bible Times, CLOUT and EACM are all examples of our current involvement in ecumenical activities.

*Fr. Toan meets bimonthly with the other pastors in the EACM, and is encouraged with the similarities of worship of our God in these churches.

* Fr. Toan and the worship committee are looking for other opportunities to gather together with our Anchorage covenant churches, including worship services(mass) as was done in the past.

*Full synodality, which is part of Fr. Toan's vision, includes strong ecumenism; and the parish will increase ecumenical activities. Parishioners are encouraged to seek out opportunities for the parish to become more ecumenical.

*Synodality and holy spirit conversations were also the focus of our 3-day parish mission in March. This may provide more opportunities to reach these other Christian churches.

6. Get back to Vatican II Roots

*The PPC is unaware of any current practices that fall outside what is allowed by Vatican II. In addition, Father Tony presented Vatican II teachings to the parish in 4 separate events.

7. Bringing Back Breadmaking

*Fr. Toan and the worship committee are reviewing this opportunity and will present a proposal to the PPC.

*Any specific suggestions would be considered.

8. Placing our Values Statement on the glass walls in the Worship Center

* The PPC thoroughly discussed and considered this issue after installation of the new glass walls in the Worship Center. All parties were provided with various opportunities to present their views. Through this detailed and lengthy evaluation, a decision was made to not install the statement on the new windows.

*Other methods of making the values statement and the mission statement more visible in ways other than placing them on the worship space windows are being considered.

*The Mission, Vision, and Values statements now appear in every bulletin.

PPC Report on Forum Feedback
(3/31/25)