

June 2011

Dear Fellow Followers of Christ:

We have had one of the longest Epiphany and latest Lent and Easter seasons that the church year allows us to have. During this extra long time we have also had some wonderfully full experiences that have given us the opportunity to draw closer to one another and Christ. I will not recap all of Lent, especially since you can visit the Lent in Review to recall the rich experiences of those 40 days.

I do want to turn my sites to the work of the Bishop's Committee and some of the work they have been doing to define more of who we are as the Body of Christ. First, after many months of conversations the Bishop's Committee moved toward a new vision statement for our congregation. Our vision for our life is Restoring all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. This vision came out of our many conversations together which ultimately led us back to the Book of Common Prayer.

As part of the work of this restoration, we also developed four program areas – Celebrate, Strengthen, Gather, and Connect. This Bishop's Committee and I strongly feel that as we live into these four ministry areas that restoration of all people to unity with God and each other in Christ will occur. You will begin to see this vision statement more and more around the church as well as these four program areas.

There has also recently been a surge of energy and interest around developing smaller groups within our church. Growing from a Lenten study one small group is learning more about Islam and will soon move on to studying Buddhism. Another group, which is still in the planning stages, will focus on conversations about church history. Then, in the fall, another group will learn more about financial stewardship as the Church of the Holy Spirit sponsors Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University. These are only a few of the newly developing group studies in our life together.

In the beginning of June I will go on private retreat for three days to pray for you, our church, and to spend some intentional time in conversation with our Lord. Many folks from our community have responded to my request to sent prayer requests and thanksgivings that I can offer up specifically while also giving thanks for your presence at the Church of the Holy Spirit. It is a privilege to have this opportunity and I am grateful to have so much support while on retreat.

Thank you for all that each of you do to allow our community to be a community of restoration for all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Faithfully,

Jason

*And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect [my disciples] in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.*

- John 17:11