

Parish Pastoral Council Surgery feedback

If you have any questions, complaints or suggestions, please email them to parishcouncil@stthomaswoodford.org

Date/ REF#	Point raised	Response	Followup
<i>11:30, 3rd December; Patricia and Donna</i>			
44	Hymn books are sticky.	Many of them might need to be replaced at about £7 each. The newly formed Liturgy Committee will consider this, and will also will look again at having screens to complement the books. They need more members!!!! Please contact Parish Office if you can help.	
43	Sound system still hit and miss; more speakers at the back of church	The new system was installed 16 months ago. Several technical issues have arisen and been dealt with, and that will always happen (recently, there has been 'noise' on the video recordings, and once with a lapel microphone – the supplier is soon coming back to investigate and for a maintenance and re-tuning visit. Recent interference from a service held in Trinity that is using our frequency is being dealt with. There are no problems anywhere in church when the speaker/reader is clear – reception is inevitably patchier when they are not, regardless of the technology.	
42	Bible Study Group	We should have such a group(s). Usual problem. No one to lead it. If you might like to help with that, please contact the parish office.	
41	Prayer Groups (name given)	Ditto	
40	Why are we overlooking beggars outside church? The son is here this week in place of his father. It is illegal.	This was fully considered a year ago and reported in earlier PPC Surgery feedback. But the PPC has revisited the question, prompted by this comment. We have unanimously decided, albeit with reservations, that we will no longer allow begging on Church property. This conclusion arose partly because the person who regularly appears has caused offense to a few people and regularly pushed the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. It was also because giving to those begging is widely accepted as not being an effective way of supporting the poor – those begging often have links with crime, and/or use the proceeds in ways that are damaging to themselves. Parishioners should give to recognised charities to fulfil their obligations to the needy.	
39	We need a social committee	Absolutely, yes. See point 33 below. But we need people who are willing to help manage such a committee. If you might like to help with that, please contact the parish office.	

38	Relaunch a weekly get-together on the back of / continued from Lenten Lunches	We have been looking for a way to get people together informally, over coffee and cake maybe, but there was no response to meeting set up a couple of months ago. Maybe the timing or the communication were the problem, because we are sure that there is a need, despite the many activities open to people locally. Again, these things don't happen by themselves – they need organisers and volunteers. PLEASE make yourself known if you are able to assist, or just want to know more.	
37	We need to target young people, including use of Facebook	<i>To be added</i>	
36	Encourage more young people; forge more connections with school	<i>To be added</i>	
35	More activities for the young; examples are Charitable work, a football team.	<i>To be added</i>	
34	When mass is said for an intention, that intention should be announced during mass	<i>To be added</i>	
<i>10am, 23rd March; Martin and Damian</i>			
33	Why are there fewer social events than before (eg International evening)	Such events only happen because someone takes the initiative and organises it, pulling in others to help as required. However, we will look out for parishioners who might like to join a social committee to promote more activity (as 39 above).	
32	Who/how are the bidding prayers generated? Can they be published sooner to help readers?	There is a rota of about 5 who craft the bidding prayers. We will see if it is possible to make them available for readers to look at before the actual services.	

<i>6pm, 08:30 and Chigwell masses:</i>		No points raised	
THE FOLLOWING ARE FROM 2023 SURGERIES			
<i>11:30, 3rd December; Mike, Donna</i>			
31	Can the ushers be more identifiable	Sashes will be purchased for ushers, and also for parish council members when they are present for feedback. Silly hats to follow if that's not enough 😊	PPC
<i>10:00, 3rd December;</i>		No feedback	
<i>08:30, 3rd December; Michelle, Rob</i>		No feedback	
<i>6pm, 2nd December;</i>			
30	Church temperature is just about acceptable	We are still getting used to managing our heating system; it is continually monitored and adjusted, but do please continue to comment.	YOU
<i>11:30, 19th November; Lorna</i>		No feedback	
<i>10:00, 19th November; Peter</i>			
29	We have done very little on the Synodal process	True. And in addition to other synodal activity, from Pope Francis we have the Year of Prayer in 2024 in preparation for the Jubilee Year (The Year of Hope) in 2025. If anyone would like to be involved or merely participate, do please get in touch.	PPC YOU
28	The habitual beggar should not be allowed outside the church; he has declined SVP help	A tricky question. It is good to be reminded of people in need, but there is a risk that he is actually being exploited by others. Even if not, there may be reasons for his declining SVP support. He might also be being exploited by others. We will consult about this and update this entry.	PPC
27	The new sound system should be tested by people with hearing problems	The system is now in place, and being refined/tuned week by week. We will seek feedback from all once it is stable, and have it adjusted or enhanced if problems remain.	Sound team, YOU
<i>08:30, 19th November; Michelle, Mike</i>			
26	Can we have more in-depth knowledge of parish organisations in newsletter, explaining what help is needed and why	Newsletter space is in great demand and does not lend itself readily to the sort of descriptions and explanations suggested. Nonetheless, we might be able to do more (all organisers please note). A lot of effort is going into beefing up our website, and we have free rein there to go into detail. We will increasingly promote that among organisers (to feed the beast) and parishioners (for information)	PPC, Organisers

25	Hoover for church cleaning not working properly	The cleaning team know to report such matters to the parish office. They in turn get help from the fabric team to repair where possible, and if not they purchase a replacement (which is what has happened in this case. This system seems to work well.	None
24	Can we be told who mass is being said for at the start	Practice varies between parishes on this. The suggestion should be addressed by our Liturgy committee – except that we don't have one. That is a major shortcoming – we need a group of interested people to think about and plan all aspects of our liturgy – please shout if you would like to be involved. In the meantime, the Friars' view is that to do so would be undesirable, being a distraction in our preparation for the mass.	YOU
23	New sound system only 1 lock on the door	No sure what this means – can the contributor please let us know.	YOU
<i>6pm, 18th Nov; Rob</i>			
22	No Repository opened for the last three weeks (made by 3 people)	There is a rota, but sometimes the person 'on duty' cannot attend. 3 weeks is unfortunate though, caused this time by the actual rota being wrong. Sorry. More people on the rota would help (hint hint!!). We will also try to keep better track of 'missed sessions' and spot problems	
21	What is done about the lack of youth attending services?	A lot of effort by many volunteers goes into the sacramental programmes (Communion, Confirmation). But, beyond that, nothing. And apart from 'bums on seats', we should be focussing on helping our young people in their personal development at the crucial point in their lives. Again, sorry to harp on, we badly need someone with the time and ability to lead in this area.	PPC YOU
<i>11:30, 12th November; Bernard, Donna</i>			
20	Bible study group wanted	A parishioner asked to be put in touch with anyone who runs such a group; contacted by the prayer group leader.	none
19	Could the priest swop sides at communion occasionally	Most understand that it is the Eucharist that matters, not the person distributing it. Nonetheless, there are some who welcome that small contact with the priest, and others who are very conservative. A better solution if this is important to you is to arrange to be in the priest's queue.	none
18	Can we do more to attract people to our community	Parishioner suggested coffee mornings (maybe with guitar music or some other feature).	PPC

		YES. ABSOLUTELY. But (recurring theme here) it is up to parishioners to make these things happen, and the PPC will offer every support including money if needed.	
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17	Can we have a listening and guiding service for those who need someone to talk to, maybe with trained volunteers.	This sounds like an excellent idea. PPC will consider it, but it would require volunteers to make it work.	PPC, YOU
	11:30, 5 th November; Bernard, Donna	No feedback	
	10:00, 5 th November; Bernard		
16	Son doing DofE would like to help in the Parish as part of his 'work in society' element – any ideas?	Suggestions provided (ushering, assistance with Brownies)	none
	08:30, 5 th November; Mike		
15	What is the 1yr, 5yr, 10yr plan for the parish?	<p>What a good question. Right now, these do not exist, and they should. Having said that, very many people are active in the parish in ways small and large. But more volunteers are ALWAYS required. Otherwise, nothing gets done. The PPC will first produce a statement of what we consider our parish is for (that might seem obvious, but isn't!). We can then move to a parish 'vision' or 'mission statement' or 'strategy' and develop plans from there. All of this will be done openly and with full consultation. But nothing will happen without more volunteers! It is not just the PPC's parish, it is your parish.</p> <p>Key elements that have to be recognised are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of priests. - How poorly we provide for many of our young people, and indeed other groups. - The general reduction in numbers attending and active in the parish, and their increasing age! <p>There is an outline diocesan plan involving ourselves, St Anne Line and Our Lady of Lourdes working much more closely together and sharing resources, but it is up to us to make that happen and little progress has been made to date. In the next few months, we will try to reinvigorate that initiative.</p>	<p>PPC YOU</p> <p>PPC</p>

14	The church belongs to the Friars. If they leave, what will happen	It has been the Franciscans' practice to GIVE a Church to the diocese when they can no longer serve it. Also, the Church and grounds are held in trust by the Friars (OFM – Order of Friars Minor), having been given by Henrietta, Dowager Duchess of Newcastle in 1894 for the support of the local catholic community. Whatever happens would have to continue to support that objective.	none
13	We get few and infrequent updates on projects	Minutes of PPC meetings are published on the website, but we could do far better. We will maintain a list of projects and plans on the PPC page of the website and tell you when that is available.	PPC
n/a	Heating needs to be on earlier	See ref.11 below	
12	Church organisation do not publish enough on what they do	There is information on the parish website about many of our organisations, but it could be far better. We currently have someone working on improving the website (suggestions welcome!) And as part of that we will chase for contributions to meet the need you have identified.	???
<i>6pm, 4th Nov; Sarah, Andrew and Peter</i>			
11	Heating on earlier to warm the church	Currently, the heating is programmed to come on in time to have the church properly heated before each mass. Settings are being reviewed now. Please keep feeding back to help us fine tune the system.	Parish Office
10	Padded kneelers	The kneelers in the main body of the church are padded. Those in the side aisles merely have a cloth covering. Since those who need some support can sit in the main part of the nave, the expense of padding the side aisle benches would seem not to be worthwhile. However, if there is a demand, we will revisit this issue. Over to you!	YOU
9	Evenly spaced pews	We will measure distances and try to adjust. Constrained somewhat by the pillars and necessary location of the shorter pews. We will report back here once investigated.	Fabric team

8	Clean high cobwebs	Someone has eagle eyes! We'll look for them and see what can be done.	Fabric team
7	Would like communion under both kinds	This is up to individual parishes, and some do offer it. For now, our Parish Health and Safety team still consider this to be an unsafe practice, not least for the celebrant who has to clean the chalice at the end. But they are keeping the issue under review.	H&S cttee
6	Would like a Latin mass – think about a range of masses to suit all	Pope Francis is against this request for Latin Masses as damaging the unity of the church. In this matter, unity of worship is a vital characteristic of the Catholic community. The reception of the Eucharist at a common celebration is one of the traditional marks of the Church i.e. One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. For that reason, any new Latin mass requires the permission of the bishop, and a priest who is able to lead it of course. Latin mass is authorised elsewhere and we will consider advertising where and when on our website; we will inform you if that happens. Having said all that, we agree that we should seek to cater for different preferences regarding the 'style' of our services. That is evident in the different characteristics of our masses, but we are open to new ideas too, subject to the capacity of our priests.	PPC
5	Artwork in the church – multicultural	An interesting suggestion. It would requires someone to drive it forward and manage it, identifying and agreeing what sort of artwork and where to put it, sourcing material etc - any volunteers?	YOU
<i>6pm, 28th Oct; Sarah</i>			
4	Question about the sound system; not always audible	After many delays caused by a previously selected contractor, a completely new system is due to be in place by 2 nd December (this year ☺)	PPC
3	Can we have a suggestion box?	We are trialling surgeries to make parish council members available and solicit views and questions. This sounds like a good extension of that and is being considered.	PPC
2	"I'm happy with what you are doing"	Thank you – but as a parish we feel we should be doing far more.	
1	We need better buildings – they can be a little tired.	Something more specific would be helpful. Driven by maintenance and repair needs we already do a lot, and the scout hut and Henrietta Suite are on the list for urgent attention.	YOU