

St Philip & St James Church, Chilton Polden
Report to the Parish Council

Over the past year we have been in Interregnum without a priest, however we have managed to keep up the regular services averaging two per month at 10:30 in the Morning.

We are now pleased to announce that a new priest has been appointed, Richard Tweedy, and will be licensed in St Edwards on Saturday 21st May at 3:30. We are very much looking forward to hosting that event in St Edwards. Cream Teas will be served in the garden of West Cottage after the service with the opportunity for all to meet Bishop Ruth who will be conducting the Licensing.

You are aware of the problems we are having with the movement and subsequent cracking of the Church, this has continued to get worse. We appointed a company of civil engineers to help us find the cause of the problem, they recommended that a ground survey be conducted around the north east corner of the Church, this was done and the conclusion was that the Blue Cedar Tree planted in the churchyard in that corner was drawing all the moisture out of the ground, causing the Clay subsoil to shrink and the Church to move.

The Cedar has now been removed and we have to wait two to three years for the ground to stabilise before any remedial action can be taken.

Last November we had our Quinquennial Inspection of the Church which identified that we had a problem with the church roof leaking, this is because some of the lead sheets have moved and as a consequence of poor workmanship in the past. We also have a drainage problem from the gutter downpipes. We have applied for a grant from the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund to cover all of this work and are now just waiting until June when we get the decision from them if we have been awarded the grant.

This all means that over the next few years we are going to have to raise a considerable sum of money just to keep the church together and safe. We would of course be very gratefull if the Parish Council can help us in any way.

I would like to thank the Parish Council for their kind donation towards the upkeep of the Churchyard the grass seems to grow faster every year, but we do have a beautiful Churchyard with many graves regularly tended and without your help I am sure we could not afford to maintain it to such a high standard. Thank you very much.

Yours Sincerely

Anne Lush
Churchwarden.