

Christ Church Oakworth

1846 - 1996

This booklet is has been compiled to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Christ Church Oakworth.

The first part is a reprint of the booklet compiled by Frank Harwood to celebrate the 100th anniversary in 1946.

We are grateful to Audrey Butterfield for her work in compiling an account of the last fifty years of Christ Church.

Oakworth Parish Church

Centenary

18th November 1846 to 18th November 1946

Victoria had been Queen of England for eight years. It was thirty-one years since the latest European War had ended with the defeat of Napoleon. A peace had been constructed which was to last (except for distant disturbances) for sixty-eight years. The Revival of Catholic teaching in the Church of England had begun at Oxford in 1833. For more than fifty years the kind of prosperity connected with the textile industry had been bringing work into the Worth Valley. Population had increased, chapels and meeting houses in ever increasing number and size served the thriving congregations of Methodists, Independents and Baptists. For twenty-five years Patrick Bronte had been parson at Haworth. His daughters were weaving those works which were to make his parish famous. Charlotte noticed the Revd. J C Bradley, parson at Oakworth and used him for "David" while Mr. Grant of Oxenhope, was the unpleasant "Donne" - curates in "Shirley". They were evidently much misrepresented.

In May 1844, Oakworth had been made a Parochial District. On Monday 28th June of the next year, Mr. James Mitchell of Oldfield House laid the foundation stone of the new church at half past ten in the morning, and the Revd. William Busfield Rector of Keighley, had delivered himself of a sermon on the occasion. A procession headed by a band and including masons, joiners and subscribers had left Keighley National School for Oakworth at 9 a.m.

The ground for the new church at Oakworth, and for the churchyard, was a gift of the Lady of the Manor, Mrs. Sarah Ferrand, of St. Ives, Bingley. The architect was Mr. Walley of Huddersfield. The cost of building the church was about £2,000, including £150 invested in 3% consols for repairs. According to the wise custom of those days the Church Day School was already built and working.

The church was consecrated under the title of Christ Church on 18th November 1846 by the Bishop of Ripon (in which diocese Oakworth then lay). The Bishop was Dr. Charles Thomas Longley. Lord Melbourne had nominated him for the new See of Ripon in 1836. Going via Durham and York, Dr. Longley became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1862. He died of bronchitis just six years later.

Fred Greenwood, Joseph Greenwood, James Mitchell, Benjamin Flesher Marriner, Joseph Smith, Edward Brown and divers others, aided by grants and donations had raised the money for the church building at Oakworth.

The outside appearance of the church was as it is now, except that the clock was added in 1865 and the choir vestry in 1886. No permanent house for the vicar was built until 1856. Then what is described as "a handsome parsonage in Elizabethan style" was erected at Sykes Head, on land given by the Rt. Hon. William, Earl of Burlington. This survived until 1927 when the present bungalow in Station Road was taken over.

The first Vicars of Oakworth are said to have lodged in one of the old houses in Goodley.

On 12th July 1844, the Prime Minister, Robert Peel had written to **the Revd. James Chesterton Bradley**, "I am induced by the report which I have received from the Bishop of Ripon, of your character and qualifications, to offer you the nomination to the district of Oakworth in the Parish of Keighley."

James Chesterton Bradley was born on 2nd August 1818 at Reading. Educated at Valpy's School in that town he passed to Queen's College, Oxford, taking his BA degree in 1841. Ordained for Keighley at Ripon in the next year, he was placed at once in charge of the Oakworth district.

He resigned in December 1846 "on account of a severe and protracted illness", probably rheumatic fever. The Rector of Keighley wrote to him - "we, and indeed all your friends in Keighley deeply sympathise with you under this visitation we had had anxious apprehensions whether you would be able to encounter again the rough blasts from the high moorlands of Oakworth during the winter seasons, with the harassing duties of a

Mountain Pastor, almost like another Felim Neff In a more genial climate may you enjoy a longer term of years as usefully spent, while you will be consoled and encouraged by knowing that the spiritual seed sown by you in not very promising ground has been far from lost.” The Rector’s hopes were not in vain. Bradley was curate of All Saint’s, Paddington till 1854. From 1856 he served at Corfe Castle, Dorset, until 1862, when, his first wife having died, he became Rector of Sutton near Brailes. There he stayed until 1903. He died ten years later at the age of 93 at Richmond, Surrey, where his retirement was spent. Mr. Bradley was married three times, his third wife being still living in 1938.

The Revd. George Alexander Hamilton, MA of Trinity College, Dublin (1832) became Vicar of Oakworth in 1847, after having ministered in Wilsden for some years. He left Oakworth in 1850 to become Chaplain of the Infant Orphan Asylum at Wanstead. And there he stayed until 1856. He published a number of sermons, one of which called “Opportunity” was preached by him when visiting Leamington. A copy is now at Oakworth Church.

The Revd. John Smith, BA of Christ’s College Cambridge, came as Vicar after Easter, 1851, and continued until his death on 11th December, 1874. His body lies in the churchyard.

On Christmas Day 1851, the Baptism Register records that 91 persons -babies, children and adults were baptized by him. Did he really spend his first Christmas Day in Oakworth baptizing such a number?

The first burials in the churchyard and for many years, were of young children in great numbers - 14 children were buried in the first few months of 1847.

In 1852 curtains costing 36 shillings were hung across the church.

On 26th October, 1865, “a new clock which had been made for the tower of Oakworth Church by Mr. Cryer of Bingley was formally set agoing at noon by Mrs. J. Haggas of Greenfield House and Mrs. J. Smith of The Parsonage it has three handsome dials of seven feet in diameter looking north, south and west; in strikes the hours on a clear, deep-toned cast steel bell, by Messrs. Naylor, Vickers & Co. of Sheffield every stroke of the hammer has been clearly counted at the distance of two miles. The people of Oakworth intend to have the bell rung regularly at half-past five o’clock in the morning to call them forth to their labour and again in the evening to remind them of their approaching hour of rest.”

On Sunday 27th October, 1865, “the church was re-opened after having been closed for some months to allow for the erection of the clock, and to carry out other alterations.

The nave, previously filled with forms, was now fitted up with pews. The pews had doors and were enriched with some amount of ornamentation, not thought to be necessary on the free seats. Pew rents were charged to occupiers.

The walls had been wainscoted throughout, nearly as high as the windows, with nicely polished wood. A great improvement on the late bare and somewhat damp walls. The gallery at the west end had been thrown open. A pleasing and sacred effect was produced by the beautiful inscription “Glory to God in the highest” painted in large letters over the arch that leads to the chancel.

Mr. W. Duxbury of St. Thomas’, Lancaster, was at the organ on this Sunday. Haworth bellringers came to ring the new church bell. The Revd. W. Crane, of Rylstone, preached sermons at the morning and afternoon services, the weather being wet and stormy, the morning congregation was very meagre one, but in the afternoon more numerous. £14 was collected.

On 9th November the same year, the bell was rung by mistake at 4-30 a.m. Many who hurried to the mills found that they would escape the fine for being late.

The work on the Worth Valley railway line was nearing completion at this time.

Many “Penny Readings” and other gatherings of the kind were held during Mr. Smith’s time as Vicar. Excitement over “high church practices” at Wilsden church had repercussions in Oakworth. In September, 1874,

speeches were made at a Wesleyan Soiree in Oakworth warning those present about the “Dangers of Ritualism, Popery and Drink.”

In November, 1867, a meeting was held at the Church School with Mr. J. Haggas in the chair, to form a Church Institute.

On 4th December, 1869, the church was re-opened for Divine Worship - the pews having been repainted, and the church was for the first time lighted with gas. The burners were antler shaped and arranged down each side-aisle giving abundance of light.

On 11th September, 1870 £7:10:6 was collected in church for aiding the sick and wounded in the Franco-Prussian War.

“On Good Friday, 1871, Mr. Nathan Green, the Oakworth postman, appeared for the first time in a handsome blue suit of clothes and elegant cap, in style and fashion something like a railway station master’s costume, having many large silver buttons on the coat, and white silver lace edged with scarlet on the collar. The dress had been raised by subscription amongst the gentlemen of Oakworth postal district.” (*Keighley News*)

In December, 1874, £11 was paid to Mr. Wright & Co. for wooden Lectern, Cocoa matting and carpet, at the church. Mr. Wright was also paid 19/4½ for putting the church in mourning for the late Vicar, the Revd. J. Smith.

At about this time the late Sir James Haggas supplied copies of “Hymns Ancient and Modern” in place of Mercer’s Hymn books. The new books contained (in addition to the 386 hymns) Introits for the Communion Service on Sundays and Holy Days; the liturgical Advent Anthems, the Reproaches for Good Friday, and the Easter Sequence.

Sir James Haggas had very much to do with providing the new east window in memory of the Revd. J. Smith. The window came from York. The centre light shows the Ascension of Christ, the light on the left the Birth of Christ, and the light on the right, the Crucifixion of Christ.

The Revd. William Henry Brigg was instituted as Vicar by the Bishop of Ripon on 5th February, 1875. He had been ordained in 1871 to the assistant curacy at St. Augustine’s, Leeds, and he was at Bolton near Calverley, as curate from 1873 to 1875. In October, 1875, a new communion carpet was bought and cost £7.

In September, 1877, £11 was collected for the Indian Famine Fund. Mr. Brigg died at Oakworth in 1878.

The Revd. John William Pendleton (St. Mary’s Hall, Oxford) was instituted on 17th December 1878, having been ordained in 1876 as assistant curate to the Revd. John Wade, at Haworth. Mr. Pendleton was a Bradford man and a member of the congregation of St. Jude’s, Bradford, a church specially famous as a pioneer in Bradford of the Catholic Revival in the Church of England which had begun in Oxford in 1833. Mr. Pendleton remained as Vicar of Oakworth until his retirement on 2nd November, 1925. After his death at Prittlewell, 14th October, 1930, his body was brought to St. Jude’s for the funeral services.

In 1883 began George Hewitt’s long years of service as Verger, which continued until 1918.

Mr. Seth Laycock’s connection with the choir and music of the church began in 1885 and went on until 1926.

In 1886 the Organ was rebuilt, choir stalls were set up, the choir vestry was built, the pulpit was moved to the north side and the font was placed near the south door. The whole church was re-seated, so as to produce a central gangway and two aisles. The work cost £300.

Mr. James Hartley (People’s Warden) gave the present Lectern, and the Vicar gave a new Altar. (The old altar was moved into the nave. In later years it was re-conditioned, and set near the statue of Our Lady, the curtains around being given in memory of Dorothy Parker, who died in 1933).

In 1889, it was resolved to remodel and widen the arch before the sanctuary, to its present imposing proportions. Mr. Sunderland gave directions for the very fine carvings of the Ark, the Lamb, candles, vine and corn, on the lower portions of the arch. The cost of all this work was £65. In the same year the gallery “being very seldom or

hardly ever used by parishioners attending divine service and being therefore of no use and unsightly" was taken down and done away. The cost being borne by the sale of the material.

The present wooden ceiling was added to the nave, which, whatever its advantages, cuts across the proportions of the church.

On 25th January, 1890, Miss Haggas of Broomhill presented the Lectern Bible and two bound Service Books to the church.

Mr. F. Williamson (People's Warden at this time) gave the two chairs which stand within the sanctuary, and also the oak chest in the Vicar's Vestry. In later years Mr. E. Rouse gave a bookcase (with valuable ecclesiastical books within) to the church.

In December, 1894, the jubilee of the formation of the parish was the occasion of a great Bazaar. £600 was raised in order to extinguish a long standing debt of £200 upon the church: to rebuild and improve the organ: to put the school buildings into proper order by the erection of an infant's room.

At this time Revd. J. C. Bradley wrote from Sutton, and recalled how that when he first came to Oakworth services were held in two schoolrooms - one at Newsholme and the other at Harehills. When the School was built in 1844 services were held there until the church was completed. The two very fine silver chalices and silver paten were given to the church in 1846. In 1900 £20 was collected and given to the Mayor of Keighley's War Fund (Boer War, this time).

Mr. William Hartley's 30 year's service as Superintendent of the Sunday School was commemorated by the erection of the new inlaid stone font carrying the symbols of the Four Evangelists, which stands at the west end of the church. Mr. Hartley died 6th March, 1912.

In 1913 a bazaar was held and the money raised was spent on making the present parish room and the room beneath in the School building.

The National Mission of Repentance and Hope during 1916 was preached in Oakworth by the Revd. C. S. Forsyth of St. Andrew's, Yeadon, Leeds.

The stained glass to the east of the south wall, which shows Christ bestowing the Crown of Life was put up in memory of Mr. James Henry Haggas, who died on 6th April, 1917.

In October, 1923 a Mission of Grace was preached at the church by the Revd. C. R. S. Finch, of St. James', Clacton.

The Reredos and oak panelling in the Sanctuary were set up in 1925 - the gift of Miss A. J. Field of Greenfield. Mr. Alex Smith, the Keighley artist, who did the work on the Reredos describes it as of "late decorated style of Gothic architecture in oak and richly carved".

The centre niche contains a finely worked crucifix, with figures on either side of the Blessed Virgin and St. John the Evangelist. The four remaining niches (reading from north to south) carry the images - of St. Oswald, King of Northumbria (7th century) holding his sceptre in his right hand and with his left hand resting on his shield of arms, - of St. Hilda, Abbess of Whitby (7th century) who has a Rosary of unusual design in one hand and a book in the other and is standing on a snake, - of St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland (11th century) holding a sceptre in her right hand and a cross in her left, - of St. Aidan, Bishop of Lindisfarne (7th century) having a stag's head in his right hand and a cross-headed staff in his left.

In the pilasters are heads of animals and birds mentioned in various parts of Holy Scripture. The buttressed posts are surmounted by two angels, and there are fixed on to the posts the arms of St. George and St. Andrew.

The panelling has a cornice band on the vine and linen fold panels below.

The whole work was in memory of Mr. Arthur Haggas, a generous benefactor of the church, and Jenny, his wife.

The new red carpet around the altar and steps was given by Mr. Joseph Hill.

On All Saints' Day, 1925, Mrs. S. A. Cousens and Miss E. J. King gave a Service book for use in the church. At Easter, 1944 Mr. and Mrs. E. Mudd gave another Service book (1940 edition of the English Missal).

On 6th February, 1926, **The Revd. Robert Tindall** (College of the Resurrection, Mirfield) was instituted as Vicar by the first Bishop of Bradford (the diocese having been formed in 1920).

Daily Morning and Evening Prayer were begun, and an early celebration of the Holy Communion every Sunday. The Sung Eucharist on at least every other Sunday had long been the custom through Mr. Pendleton's time and this was continued. In addition to the already existing C.E.M.S. branch, the M.U. and the G.F.S. began to function. The G.F.S. soon procured a banner which hangs on the north side of the chancel. Nativity Plays and similar productions came into use and visits were made by parties of parishioners to the Nativity Plays given by the Community of St. Peter at Horbury at Christmastime. A flourishing company of Boy Scouts existed for a time. The numbers of communicants greatly increased as did also the amount of money in the collections. The Holy Communion was frequently celebrated on week-days, as well as Sundays, and in later years daily Holy Communion became possible, and arrangements were made so that the Sacrament should be available for the sick and others at all times.

Father Paul Bull, C.R. and many others of the Mirfield Community, came often from now onwards to preach at the church, as did also, as years went by, priests from other English Religious Communities, e.g., Fr. Bede Frost and Fr. Gregory Dix of the Nashdom Benedictines; Fr. Bedale from the Society of the Sacred Mission at Kelham, and Fr. Manson, of the Society of St. John the Evangelist at Oxford.

In April, 1927 silverplated candlesticks, the gift of Mrs. Terry, were added to the altar furniture (their number was increased in later years). In 1928 the Church Army sent Captain Conder and Cadet Conelly to hold a Mission in the parish. Eight years later Captain Dearden of the Church Army conducted another Mission.

In November of 1928 a Three Days Bazaar was held and raised £550 for the purchase of the new Vicarage house. Mr. Joseph Hill did much for providing new altar frontals at about this time.

The Processional Cross was given in 1929 by L. and T. Helliwell. In January, 1929 Mr. Gordon Wildman was licensed as Parochial Lay Reader and continues his devoted service to the church in every possible way.

The new painted window on the north side of the choir, picturing the Good Samaritan and Christ at the home of Mary and Martha, was set up in 1930 - in memory of John Newsholme, Hannah Newsholme and Mary Anne Newsholme.

The use of the appropriate vestments, by the priest celebrating the Holy Communion, as directed by the Church of England Prayer Book, was begun in 1931.

The Revd. R. Tindall became the vicar of Lidget Green in the summer of 1932 and later became Vicar of St. Andrew's Yeadon, near Leeds.

On 11th June, 1932 **The Revd. Frank Harwood**, M.A. (Keble College Oxford) was instituted to the Vicarage of Oakworth by Dr. Blunt, second Bishop of Bradford.

Early in 1933 a hanging Sanctuary Lamp which had been subscribed for by the people, was placed before the High Altar in memory of the Revd. J. W. Pendleton.

A wooden font cover, executed by Mr. Alex Smith, and carrying a statue of Christ the King was set up around and above the Font. And a window, on the south side of the nave, showing Christ blessing the children, with a small light of the Birth of Christ, above and one of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, below (designed by Paul Woodroffe) was put in position - all in memory of Jane Judson, John William Hartley and Sarah Ann Hartley his wife.

The Bishop of Bradford blessed these gifts after His Lordship had sung Pontifical High Mass (i.e. a solemn celebration of Holy Communion with a Bishop as celebrant), with Revd. F. Harwood assisting as Deacon and the Revd. R. Tindall acting as Sub Deacon. This was on Sunday, 22nd January, 1933.

In October, 1934, the Revd. Brother Edward gave a Fortnight's Mission in the Parish, which was very well received, parishioners providing meals and beds and crowding to the Mission Services. The Parish Communion

on Sundays, followed by the Parish Breakfast in the School, began at this time and has continued ever since. At Michaelmas 1946 a Mission took place led by the Revd. Michael Dean, of Pasey House, Oxford, assisted by Brother James, of the Cerne Abbas Franciscans and 9 undergraduates from Oxford.

In 1935 the church walls were cleaned and painted, the labour being given by Messrs. F. Butterfield and S. Rowe.

In November of the same year electric lighting was installed in the church; the 14 stations of the cross were placed around the walls (these pictures showing Christ's journey from Pilate's Judgement Hall to Calvary, were the gift of the Revd. Miles Stapylton, Vicar of Clifford and were framed by members of Oakworth congregation in memory of those whose names they bear); a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary carrying the Infant Christ was also set on a pedestal (made by Messrs. Helliwell) on the south side of the chancel steps and near to the old altar. The statue was partly given by the late Mr. Norman Green and partly by subscriptions from the parish. A Mother's Union banner of the Holy Family was given at the same time by Mrs. C. Bayliss.

The picture of Christ on the wall opposite to the south door was given by the executors of the late Mrs. J. Smith, and is a copy of a picture in the Monastery Church at Einsiedeln, Switzerland. Dr. and Mrs. Sledge gave the pictures by Margaret Tarrant which hang near the Lady Altar. The painting hanging between them is of Slavonic origin. St. Joseph, beside the pulpit, came just at the beginning of the 1939 war. The gong at the High Altar was given by Mr. E. Humphreys when he joined the R.A.F.

The silver ciborium and silver wafer box were presented by Mr. A. Bland in memory of John Bland killed at sea in the 1939 war.

On 18th November, 1937, the 91st anniversary of the church's consecration, the renewed organ was dedicated, and carries a small statue of St. Cecilia.

A new Junior School having been built by the State in the parish, the Church Day School and the Methodist Day School, most unfortunately, were forced to close at this time.

Pilgrimages to the revived Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham were made by members of the congregation at every Whitsuntide throughout the 1930's, and these were resumed in 1946. It was in February, 1934 that the Revd. A. Hope Patten, Vicar of Walsingham gave a Lantern Lecture in the Church School, about the Shrine.

The Midnight Mass at Christmas was begun in 1932 and was continued even in the most difficult years of the 1939 war. As in the 1914-18 war so in the 1939-45 war, members of the congregation were away on war service, and those remaining were taken up with war work.

The Parochial Church Council determined to celebrate as worthily as possible the Centenary of the Consecration of the Parish Church, and this record is a small contribution to that great event.

Oakworth Parish Church

18th November 1946 to 1st January 1996

Revd. F. Harwood moved to Radwinter & Saffron Walden in April 1949. Both he and his wife died within a few months of each other in 1981. Their ashes are interred in the churchyard, just to the right of the porch and the plot is marked by a simple stone bearing their initials.

He was succeeded in July by **Revd. Charles Haydn Knapp**, a married man, with three children, who had spent some time as an Army chaplain.

In the early 1950s, dry rot was discovered and the pine panelling which lined the walls for the lower 4 feet, had to be stripped out, along with that lining the wall around the main door. This panelling had to be destroyed and the wall left bare for a year before being plastered. The oak panelling around the sanctuary was taken off and treated, along with the wall, but fortunately the oak was not affected and was replaced a year later.

Charles Knapp left Oakworth for the Norwich area in 1956 and was succeeded in August of that year by **Revd. James Philip Stringer**. Philip Stringer was originally an engineer in Huddersfield who moved into the Ministry in middle life. Oakworth was his first parish of his own, following a curacy at Holy Trinity, Skipton. A bachelor when he arrived he subsequently married Miss Violet Richardson, the Bradford Diocese Sunday Schools' Adviser. They stayed in Oakworth until May 1964 when they moved to Hubberholme and then Horton-in-Ribblesdale. On retirement they moved to Mrs. Stringer's home town of Whitby, where Philip Stringer remained active in the church ministry until shortly before his death on 3rd April 1995, aged 90.

During Philip Stringer's incumbency there were several events worthy of note. A Stewardship Mission resulted in the concept of direct giving being introduced (in 1957), coupled with the annual Gift Day when parishioners (non-churchgoers as well as attenders) were encouraged to hold a gift box and put in it one 1/- a week (5p in decimal currency). These boxes were returned on Gift Day when Mr. Stringer sat in the Choir Vestry (now the kitchen) all day to receive them and any other gifts.

In 1959 the interior of the church was repainted, the ceiling washed and the gold leaf and red and blue paint applied. This was a major exercise undertaken by a Huddersfield firm specialising in ecclesiastical work.

By applying his engineering skills, Philip Stringer was able to effect the repair of the church clock which had not worked for some years. The striking mechanism was used to repair the time function. The work was undertaken in the engineer's workshop at the nearby textile company of Wm. Haggas & Sons Ltd. where the engineer, Bertie Allan, joined in the enterprise. Although manually wound at the time it was converted to electric in 1966 and the three dials were renovated and painted blue with the figures in gold. The cost of £259 was met almost entirely by public subscription.

Mr. Stringer was instrumental in recruiting about 12 young boys to enlarge the choir. The use of the English Hymnal hymn book (introduced by Charles Knapp) was discontinued and Hymns Ancient and Modern (Revised) introduced.

Mr. Stringer was succeeded in September 1964 by **Revd. Frederick Guy Harrison**, a married man with three children. He came to Oakworth after a spell in British Honduras and stayed until January 1970 when he moved to Appleton Roebuck, York.

During Mr. Harrison's incumbency there were several events of note. At the Annual Meeting in 1965 the first lady churchwarden for Oakworth was elected. Mrs. Edith Rhodes, a well liked and respected lady served two years in that capacity. In November of the same year St. John's Church, Newsholme, passed to Oakworth from the care of the United Benefice of Keighley, for a one-year experimental period. The "experiment" lasted until 1974 when the arrangement was officially confirmed. Another innovation, still in 1965, was for Gordon Wildman, a reader from 1929, to be authorised to assist with the chalice at Holy Communion.

During 1966, tentative steps were taken to introduce United Services with the other denominations in the village, the first such service being the Carol Service. This "village" service is still hosted by Christ Church. The following year a united service was held at Slack Lane Baptist Church in Holy Week.

Following restoration work in 1966 there was a need to re-build financial reserves and that year the Gift Day was moved to the summer to coincide with the annual Flower Service. This service was discontinued a few years later, but that year the Gift Day "got off to a flying start", said the magazine, with a £20 donation from the Diocese. At that time Sunday Collections averaged a total of £15 per week and the treasurer asked if they could be increased by a sixth; that was 2 (old) pence in the shilling.

Another notable year followed with Tom Hewitt, already a licensed Reader, moving into the village from the Ripon Diocese in February and being a very active member of the church until he left in 1972. A further Stewardship Mission was held in 1967 and in March, a plaque was unveiled in the school to mark the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lund who had, by giving £50 each January for 10 years, bought the school for us. This was a requirement if we wished to continue to have the use of the building. Various improvements were made in both the main hall of the school and the smaller meeting/breakfast room during the following two years with the cost, £236, being raised by various events.

Around this time the old coke-fired boiler was replaced by a gas-burning one, but utilising the same pipes. This work was funded largely by a legacy from Miss Jane Shuttleworth with the deficit being raised by special efforts and donations. In 1968 plans were made to have a new Vicarage built nearer to the church to replace the house in Station Road which had served for 40 years.

In 1968 following the death of his wife, Mr. Lund paid for a beautiful stained glass window in modern design, in her memory. The window was sited at the back of the church on the south side, near the font, with the idea of turning that area into a Baptistry. Following the major re-ordering of the church some 17 years later the window was moved to the partitioning wall.

In May 1969 the old font was cleaned and a new purple brocade funeral pall edged with gold was provided by the Mothers Union. A new gold altar frontal was provided during the 1960s in memory of Mrs. Emily Sharp who died in 1964 and in October 1969 a set of green vestments was given by the family of Trevor Ashford who died in May.

In April 1970 **Revd. Henry John Joseph Bird** became Vicar. Before becoming a clergyman he had been a teacher and, like Mr. Stringer, he was a bachelor who had served as a curate at Skipton. An accomplished organist John Bird did a great deal to encourage the musical life of the church.

November of 1970 saw the move to the new Vicarage in Sunhurst Drive, a two minute walk from the church. The sale of the Station Road Vicarage and money from the Church Commissioners ensured that there was very little cost to the parish.

Replacement of the old organ became a major feature in 1971-72 and an organ from a redundant chapel at Laycock was bought for £65. Larger than the old organ, it was sited at the west end of the church on a platform reached by 6 steps. A gallery 18 feet wide and 6½ feet high was built in grey stone in front of it. The platform cost £700 and the casing, in Canadian pine, was paid for by Mrs. Desema Simpson in memory of her husband, a long-time treasurer and churchwarden. All the west end of the church had to be cleared to accommodate the organ and the newer, ornate, font was redundant and was sold to a Bradford church, bringing the old font back into use. The old organ was disposed of and the chancel opened up with more natural light from the hitherto covered south window. The choir stalls were repositioned leaving a wider aisle. The cost of rebuilding the organ and the associated work was met by individuals and groups organising fund-raising events and not by the PCC.

The restored organ was dedicated on 18th November 1972 by the Archdeacon of Craven and John Bird gave a short organ recital. There were several recitals in the following few years by different organists, including Dr. Francis Jackson of York Minster.

The organ casing was dedicated on 3rd June 1973 when Revd. J. P. Stringer returned for the occasion. Just prior to that an organist of many years standing at Oakworth, Wilfred Riley, died and the wrought iron flower stand in the Sanctuary was given by Mr. and Mrs. F Tatham in his memory.

During 1973, work started on clearing the churchyard. Edging stones had been removed several years earlier to facilitate grass cutting. A few requests for preservation of graves were respected without argument, after extensive efforts to trace the families of persons interred. Grants were available for the work to be undertaken, subject to various conditions and the cost to the PCC. was £100. Keighley Corporation paid £300 and the Department of the Environment £900. Some small trees, mostly flowering varieties were planted as part of the agreement.

More dry rot was discovered the following year in the woodwork around the main door. Following treatment, at a cost of £400, it was stopped before it reached the ceiling. The surrounding wall was later re-plastered and the floor in the Baptistry area (south-west corner) restored.

In June 1974 Grace Attersoll retired as Sacristan after something like 30 years service. She died in May 1978.

On Advent Sunday, 1975, a new violet altar frontal and matching vestments were dedicated by John Bird in the memory of Isabella Butterfield who died in January of that year. They were paid for by her family and by donations in lieu of flowers at her funeral. Around the same time Mrs. Joyce Hague (later Mrs. Randell) paid for the repair and renovation of other vestments and frontals.

By 1975 it became obvious that the Hall next door needed an excessive amount of money spending on it if it was to continue in use. As it was under-utilised, it was decided to sell it and invest the money towards the provision of other more suitable facilities adjacent to the church. Meantime the church hired rooms and private homes were used instead. The sale was completed in 1977 and over the following years many plans were discussed and discarded and it was 9 years before a new meeting room was completed and in use.

On Lady Day 1977 (25th March) new gold vestments were dedicated in memory of Mrs. Beatrice Wood, a long time member of the M.U., and given by her son Jack Wood.

December 1977 saw the retirement, through failing eyesight, of Gordon Wildman who had been a Licensed Reader for 48 years. In lieu of a gift to himself to mark the occasion he requested the donations be used to renovate the sanctuary lamp which was in memory of Revd. J. W. Pendleton. This was done on the 3rd Sunday in Advent 1978 which marked the 100th anniversary of Mr. Pendleton's institution. Special thanks were given for his life and work. Mr. Wildman had also been a server, churchwarden and Sunday-School teacher as well as serving on the PCC. He died on 1st September 1993, just short of his 93rd birthday.

A new processional cross was dedicated in January 1978 in memory of both sets of parents of Arthur and Marion Simpson, who had donated the cross.

On 25th April 1981, Derek Parker was admitted as a Licensed Reader and also was given the Bishop's authority to assist with the chalice at Holy Communion.

John Bird left Oakworth in April 1981 to take up a post at Abingdon school as chaplain/teacher. He was succeeded in September by **Revd. Calvin Ward**, a married man with four children, who had previously been Vicar of Esholt. During his incumbency a major re-ordering of the church was undertaken. At the beginning of 1983 the PCC decided to set in motion a full programme of repairs and alterations rather than continuing piecemeal work. Emergency repairs had cost £1000 in the previous four years and the roof was still not watertight. The plan included making the roof watertight; re-wiring; improving the west end of the church; installing a new heating system, toilets and a kitchen; re-decorating; replacing worn furnishings.

A stewardship mission was held in April/May and a major appeal started to raise the necessary money. A loan was obtained from the Diocese at a later date. As plans to build a meeting room outside the main building had not proved practical it was decided to build inside the church as part of the larger re-ordering which was set in motion in the mid 1980s. The slates were removed from the roof, the whole roof felted, any worn timber replaced and the slates re-fitted. Fortunately almost all the wood was in good condition and apart from felt little new material was needed. There was good weather throughout the exercise which cost around £5000.

During 1985 and 1986 the major re-ordering was undertaken. When the church was out of use services were held at the Methodist Church and at Newsholme. Apart from the specialised work of installing a new heating system and moving the organ the main work was undertaken by VOLSEC a government sponsored scheme for young, unemployed persons with skilled supervisors/trainers in charge. The "customer" paid only material costs. Being able to use this scheme kept the costs down and enabled the work to be done. The new heating system of gas heaters, each with its own flue, cost nearly £1000.

Dismantling the organ was an early job, whilst rebuilding it on the south side of the church opposite the main door was a late job. This work cost £1782 and was necessary in order to provide a meeting room at the back of the church. A wall was built across the back of the church with a central doorway and the "Lund Memorial Baptistry Window" was moved into the wall, above the door and lit from behind. An upstairs room - later divided into two small meeting rooms and a store room - was also made. A way was opened into this area from the tower stairs by re-opening the doorway which existed when there was a gallery. A similar doorway was made downstairs.

Two toilets were made in the base of the tower. The toilets and washbasins were provided by the Spring Bathroom Company at Sowerby Bridge for £143. The choir vestry was turned into a kitchen and the fitted units and two stainless steel sinks were provided by Gower Furniture Ltd. of Halifax, also for £143. One of the upstairs meeting rooms was then used to accommodate choir robes.

Interior walls were painted throughout, the main meeting room and kitchen floors laid with vinyl tiles and the church re-carpeted. This "striped" carpet in several tones of dark red, covered sanctuary, chancel, front of nave and centre aisle, with heavy duty "doormat" carpet from the main door to centre aisle. The cost of the floor covering and fitting was £2,471. By November 1987 the total cost of the whole re-ordering was in the region of £30,000 which was met from the invested money from the sale of the school, a diocesan loan (repaid in full), fund-raising activities over several years and donations. The re-furbishment was blessed by the Bishop of Bradford, the Right Revd. Roy Williamson on 23rd November 1986.

In the Autumn of 1986 a £1000 bequest was received from the will of Norman Butterfield, who as a young man, was a churchwarden and chorister. After discussion with his relatives £860 of this money was used for cupboards and bookshelves in Canadian pine to match the organ casing. The work was undertaken at a Day Centre for the disabled in Mirfield. As with Volsec, only material costs were paid and the work was under the control of a fully skilled cabinet maker. The remainder of the money, along with a gift of £50 from Mr. Butterfield's relatives, was used subsequently to pay for one of the two matching Sanctuary chairs to replace the two old ones which were riddled with wood-worm and had become unsafe. These old chairs were sold to a furniture restorer for £800.

On 7th May 1988 Mrs. Noeline Sharp was commissioned and licensed as a Reader and also given the Bishop's authority to assist with the chalice. Mrs. Sharp, a member of Newsholme congregation, still undertakes most of her work at that church, but is available throughout the parish and elsewhere.

Mrs. Marjorie Ward, wife of Revd. Calvin Ward, also became a licensed Reader and then was ordained deaconess. After being attached to Keighley Parish for a time she became a part-time, non-stipendary deaconess at Oakworth. They left Oakworth to undertake joint work at St. Peter's Church, Allerton, Bradford.

There then followed a 15 month interregnum, the longest ever experienced at Oakworth. During this period several clergy officiated at the Eucharist services with the two Readers assisting and undertaking many duties including officiating at funerals. Regular visiting celebrants were two retired vicars who became great friends to the parish; the Revd. Leonard Hardaker and Revd. Herbert Watkins. Sadly, Leonard Hardaker died suddenly in December 1995.

A major project during the interregnum was the re-pointing and re-roofing of the tower in 1991 at a cost of more than £14,000. The money was raised via donations, a loan from the diocese, interest free loans from Newsholme Church and from individuals, as well as fund-raising activities. These included a sponsored reading of the New Testament one Saturday taking 15 hours. All the loans were repaid in full.

March 13th 1992 saw the institution of the **Revd. David James Swales** as Vicar. David, a married man with 3 children, had served as a curate in Bradford before moving to Prenton, Birkenhead. Like two vicars before him, Oakworth was his first "own parish".

More repair work was required in 1992, this time to the south face of the clock which was becoming unsafe. The cost, £1165, was raised by fund-raising and a public appeal. Gifts were received from the Oakworth Village Society and the Bradford Council Community Chest, whilst Eric Sunderland, who had attended church as a boy, ran a sponsored half-marathon.

In January 1994, Pam Aston, a tireless church worker, was appointed one of the very first Lay Canons of Bradford Cathedral for her services to the Diocese.

September 1994 saw the dilapidated and ancient pew runners replaced at a cost of £542; all the money being given by individuals "buying" covering at £2 per seat or £12 per pew. Late in 1995, choir stalls at the south side were moved to form an open square and the area was carpeted to provide a more suitable area for the Music Group - Living Waters - now well established.

Over the years the pattern of services has changed. From two Eucharists on Sunday mornings with Breakfast between the two there is now only one with the children joining the service at "The Peace". Prior to this change a few different variations were tried with varying degrees of success. A monthly mid-morning Family Service in place of the second Eucharist was one such variation whilst Matins on a monthly basis was another. Sunday School moved from afternoon to late morning and eventually to earlier in the morning to coincide with the single Eucharist. Numbers in Sunday School - now known as "Trail Blazers", have fluctuated over the years and currently there are three main groups, with ages ranging from 3 years to 12 years.

The early morning weekday Holy Communion service gradually dwindled from 5 a week until only a Tuesday one remained. The timing moved to 9:30am thus changing the make-up of persons attending from those going before work to persons who could not easily get to a Sunday morning service without the availability of public transport or those wishing to attend another Eucharist in addition to the Sunday one. A Thursday afternoon service for mothers and toddlers - "Toddler Praise" - has also been shown to meet a very real need.

During the 1980s the Sunday Evensong moved to late afternoon (4:15pm) but was eventually discontinued, being replaced by an informal service of praise and worship firstly at 5:00pm, later at 7:00pm. In 1994 a regular pattern of Sunday evening worship was established. A monthly Healing Service was introduced by David Swales who, in 1995, was appointed Bishop's adviser on the Healing Ministry. Informal prayer and praise services are held on other Sunday evenings whilst, also on a monthly basis, a small group of people visit the nearby Oakworth Manor Residential Home for the Elderly to hold a short, informal service. Groups from the Methodist Church also visit monthly.

Over the years a pattern of United Services with the local Methodist and Baptist Churches, as well as St. John's Newsholme, has evolved. Three united Holy Communion services are held each year, using each church in turn and there are united services in Holy Week and a now traditional, Village Carol Service at Christ Church, a few days before Christmas.

As well as the times and frequencies of services changing, the format has been modified over the years with new versions of services, especially the Holy Communion, being introduced and coming together in the Alternative Service Book. The newer Communion Service has led to greater lay participation in lesson reading and leading intercessions as well as a very small number of especially authorised persons assisting with the chalice.

At Christ Church, Oakworth, the music has changed with some of the more modern hymns and tunes being introduced to complement the older, more traditional ones. A music group, formed and led by Roy Aston in the 1980s and now incorporating guitars, keyboard, violin, clarinet and saxophone, as well as vocalists, shares with the organ and choir in leading the singing at some services, in particular the monthly Family Eucharist and major "special" services.

Changes in hymn books used have occurred over the years with the English Hymnal being supplemented first, in the 1980s, with an "in-house" loose-leaf collection called "God's Gift of Song" and then almost replaced by "Mission Praise", which comprises a collection of old and new hymns.

Over the years there has been an increase in "group work" and interaction between different groups and generations in church activities with home study groups (sometimes, as in Lent with the other churches) on a variety of subjects ranging from stewardship, through bible study to fellowship. Regular "working fellowships" have developed on Saturdays to undertake repair and maintenance work. Although the groups are invariably quite small a good deal of work has been effected through the arrangement resulting in the churchyard on the south and east sides being gradually reclaimed; a ramp for wheelchairs being laid, much painting being done and a multitude of other tasks.

Modern technology has helped to improve communications by the introduction of a sound system in church and improvements to written communication by the use of word processors and photocopier. These improvements

have enabled more written information especially to be given and in consequence a better understanding to be achieved on financial or similar matters, especially "The Share", that is, the amount of money to be paid to the Diocese each year for the upkeep of the church and its ministry. Although this amount has risen over the years the amount called for has always been paid, albeit with great difficulty in some years. Direct giving, introduced by Revd. Philip Stringer in the late 1950s, coupled with covenanting, has been the mainstay of the finances in recent years, although fund-raising, sometimes on a massive scale, has been continuous. As mentioned earlier, special appeals have been made for vital repairs (tower re-pointing, roof); alterations (organ, re-ordering the west end interior of the church); and improvements (carpet, seat runners, new service and hymn books). Always the necessary money has been raised by hard work, often sacrifice and great faith and dedication.

Fund raising has taken many forms from concerts in the old church hall to harvest suppers in the new one; garden parties at Oakworth Manor and the old Vicarage to theme fairs in the churchyard; sponsored runs and bike rides to sponsored bible readings; coffee mornings and evenings in the meeting room or people's houses. Stalls at the Oakworth Village Society Gala and Christmas Fair have become a regular feature of fund raising, as has a stall selling home-made cakes at the Keighley Show in September. Individuals have sold surplus plants, fruits, vegetables and preserves to raise money also.

In recent years it has become the custom to make a week-end of the November Dedication Festival, incorporating Gift Day. Various exhibitions have been held at this time and we have seen displays of old photographs, church records, paintings, examples of various church "tasks", a multitude of talents and a superb display of wedding and christening gowns covering many years.

There have been many visits by different clergy and preachers over the years, some during the periods when the living has been vacant and others for special occasions or to speak about specific organisations or places. All eight Bishops of Bradford have visited Oakworth, some on several occasions.

Throughout all this hard work and activity there have been generations of dedicated and hardworking people and we remember them with gratitude and admiration. Some have been mentioned earlier in this booklet, like Gordon Wildman who devoted a lifetime to Christ Church. Besides Gordon, who served as a Licensed Reader for so many years, other Readers were Tom Hewitt and Marjorie Ward and now Derek Parker and Noeline Sharp, though Noeline is more regularly concerned with Newsholme.

Two stalwarts of the choir for many years were Arthur Brooksbank and Ernest Humphreys, whilst Frank Wigglesworth has served for over 30 years and is still an active and enthusiastic chorister.

A long serving Sacristan, Miss Grace Attersoll was succeeded by Mrs. Ethel Parker who, in addition, held weekly whist drives at her home over several years to raise money. She was also a staunch Mothers' Union member, as was Mrs. Beatrice Wood who died in 1976 and in whose memory the white and gold vestments were donated. Mrs. Parker was succeeded as Sacristan by Mrs. Mary Holme, who in turn was succeeded by Mrs. Pat Pickles. Between them these four ladies have cared for the altar linen and vestments for over 40 years.

The Mothers' Union has worked hard throughout the years and still does on projects and fundraising as well as upholding the sacraments and beliefs of the Church.

Two "old boys" of Christ Church entered the Church Ministry. Raymond Harris left for University and Ministry training towards the end of the 1950s whilst Anthony Atkins went into the Ministry in the late 1980s after a spell in teaching. Mrs. Marjorie Ward, the wife of the Revd. Calvin Ward, trained first as a Reader and then for the Priesthood whilst they were at Oakworth in the 1980s.

Dennis Lancaster, who died in 1989 was a PCC member of long standing and also a churchwarden as was Arthur Simpson who died in 1995. Harold Simpson was Treasurer for several years and also served as a churchwarden. Also well known was long-time organist Wilfred Riley who retired in December 1952 and died 20 years later. Nancy and Richard (Dick) Wilson served as vergers for many years and Nancy continued to officiate at weddings and funerals, as well as being the key-holder, after Dick was no longer able to undertake the duties.

At the present time Christ Church is served by several people who have held their posts for a number of years - Paul Harris, Organist and Choirmaster for over fifteen years, Chris Cawood PCC Secretary, Danny Smith who, as Treasurer, has maintained our finances in good order in the face of regular increases in our Share, Roy Aston

Churchwarden and Audrey Butterfield who has been Churchwarden for fourteen years and has been a true and loyal servant throughout her life in Oakworth.

As we celebrate 150 years of worship in the church building, we give thanks for all these people and all the others too numerous to mention for their devotion and love and we turn with faith to the future as we play our part at Christ Church in bringing the joy of God's Kingdom to the people of Oakworth.

CHURCHWARDENS OF OAKWORTH

Vicar's Wardens		People's Wardens	
Joseph Greenwood	1847-1848	James Mitchell	1847-1848
Samuel Terry	1849-1850	Joseph Haggas	1849-1854
Charles Ireson	1851		
Robert Holmes	1852-1855	James Butterfield	1855
Harley Merrell	1856	William Craven	1856
Thomas Sugden Wright	1857-1861	Joseph Wade	1857
		John Wright	1858-1859
		John Greenwood	1860
John Haggas	1862-1871	Richard Hall	1861-1864
James E. Haggas	1872-1878	James Butterfield	1865-1877
		Thomas Sugden Wright	1878
Thomas Sugden Wright	1879-1889	John Hay	1879-1882
		James Hartley	1883-1889
William Binns	1890-1891	Francis Williamson	1890
Julian Feather	1892	John Henry Markey	1891-1892
James Henry Haggas	1893-1902	John Hay	1893-1899
		Joseph Lancaster	1900-1902
Joseph Lancaster	1903-1905	Charles King	1903-1905
Charles Reuben Wright	1906-1914	Veniah Sugden	1906-1909
		Joseph Petyt	1910-1915
William Cocks	1915-1917	James Holden	1916-1917
Jabez Craven	1918-1919	Harry Craven	1918-1919
Percy Hull	1920-1922	Jabez Lancaster	1920-1922
Joseph Hill	1923-1929	Harry Craven	1923
		Gordon Wildman	1924-1930
Percy Hull	1930-1933	John Murfitt	1931-1933
Norman Butterfield	1934-1938	John Linstead	1934-1940
Harold Simpson	1939-1945	Gordon Wildman	1941-1958
Herbert Butterfield	1946-1950		
Harold Simpson	1950-1961	Dennis Lancaster	1958-1965
Arthur Simson	1961-1964		
Donald Mitchell	1964-1966	Mrs. Ethel Rhodes	1965-1967
Gordon Wildman	1966-1969	Clifford Conyers	1968-1970
Dennis Lancaster	1969-1973	William Smith	1968-1970
		Arthur Simpson	1970-1974
Fred Bradshaw	1973-1976	Douglas Frogbrook	1974-1975
		Arthur Simpson	1975-1976
Mrs. Kathleen Pullich	1976-1980	Dennis Lancaster	1976-1978
		Thomas Barling	1978-1980
None elected	1980-1981	None elected	1980-1981
Mrs. Joanna Hutton	1981-1982	Ralph Brunskill	1981-1983
Miss Audrey Butterfield	1982-	Frank Wigglesworth	1983-1985
		Anthony Atkins	1985-1986
		Danny Smith	1986-1988
		Phil Bates	1988-1989
		Roy Aston	1989-