Living and Loving Like Jesus so that Lives are Transformed and Hope Restored
Welcome to this Parish Profile and Role Description…and welcome to the Diocese of Winchester!

At the heart of our life here is the desire to be always *Living the Mission of Jesus*. We are engaged in a strategic process to deliver a mission-shaped Diocese, in which parochial, pastoral and new forms of pioneering and radical ministry all flourish. Infused with God’s missionary Spirit we want three character traits to be clearly visible in how we live:

- Passionate personal spirituality;
- Pioneering faith communities;
- Prophetic global citizens.

The Diocese of Winchester is an exciting place to be right now. With a grant of £4.3m from the Strategic Development Fund, we are investing in missional projects across the diocese which are aimed at *strategic growth for the common good*. We pray that, if God is calling you to join us in his mission here, he will reveal this to you clearly as you consider this post.


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**Basingstoke Deanery**

Basingstoke is ranked 11th best place to live in the country. The major town of Basingstoke has a population of 105,000 and around it lies some of the most beautiful villages and countryside in Hampshire. The town is planning to increase its population by 30,000 in the next 15 years. Employment is amongst the highest in the country. Different communities get on well together. Basingstoke and its environs is a good place to live.

The Deanery chapter is amongst the largest in the Diocese with 17 parishes and chaplains from the Town Centre Chaplaincy, hospital and hospice. We are working on a Deanery Mission Action Plan that will see us sharing mission amongst young people, and pioneering ways of sharing the Good News of Jesus on new housing estates as well as in the older settlements. We have great ecumenical networks, and growing partnerships with other churches.

We seek enterprising clergy, who are team players, to join our chapter. We offer a rich depth of experienced leaders, great lay leadership, ecumenical prayer networks and a generous and diverse spiritual life. We have challenging times ahead, but a strong willingness to support our clergy and their families in the demands of ministry.
Our Parish Profile has been written to help you understand who we are, how we work, where we have been, what we believe God is calling us to do and the opportunities that exist to build His kingdom here.

Our website will provide more details about all the different areas of mission and our church life.

www.oakleywithwootton.org.uk

You will also see how we interact with our community if you visit our Facebook site.

www.facebook.com/Stleonardsoakley

“Come set Your rule and reign
In our hearts again.
Increase in us we pray.
Unveil why we're made”
Our mission statement is “Living and Loving like Jesus so that Lives are Transformed and Hope Restored”. It continually reminds us that He has called us to follow Him and His teaching. When we do what we are responsible for, He will do what only He can do.

Oakley with Wootton is a busy Parish with a distinct identity. There is a lot going on and there are huge opportunities to grow the church and build His Kingdom across our Parish. God has blessed us with resources and talents and we believe we are being called to make the most of these assets and grow our church in terms of numbers, individual discipleship, impact and relevance to the communities we serve:

- We believe God has a desire for us to engage and connect more with our communities so we make a difference to the lives people lead and provide obvious bridges to the church through enquirers courses, social events and pastoral outreach

- Our church has Life Groups with a ‘cell’ structure to encourage discipleship and strengthen pastoral connections. We believe we are being called to re-invigorate and re-imagine the concept of Life Groups and strengthen them as a foundation for personal and corporate growth, pastoral support and evangelism

- In the past, our youth have developed and progressed into missionaries, evangelists and ordained ministry. This ministry has declined over the past 10 years and so a priority is to reach out again and engage teenagers and young adults in the Parish by providing spiritual and pastoral support. We believe God wants us to build on our children’s ministry, Messy Church and The Gap Youth Club, so we can offer continuous support for children and young people to discover Jesus, develop their faith and fulfil His plans for their lives

- We are welcomed into our local schools, including Oakley Church of England Junior School and play an active role on the Governing Body, supporting Prayer Spaces, collective worship and festival celebrations. We believe we are being called to build on these foundations and establish stronger connections between the schools and our children, family and youth ministries

- We are excited that the ‘Men’s Shed’ has successfully built a bridge between the Church and men’s ministry with older men and our vision is to go further and introduce more young men and fathers to Jesus

- Charismatic spirit-led worship is prioritised in our church and an immediate priority is to progress ‘A Church for Our Time’ to re-order and extend St Leonard’s Church so we have a flexible, welcoming and inviting worship space that respects our heritage and keeps us relevant as our communities change.

Our Vision and Priorities

“We are Your church.
We need Your power in us”
Our congregation and leadership have considered different aspects of our church. While all the things we do in Church are important and have Kingdom value, we sought to discern the relative priorities and what is working well and less well as we build His Kingdom in our Parish. We hope it gives you a feel for our church and what you can expect.

“We are Your Church and we need Your power in us.”
Role Description

This Role Description should be read in conjunction with the vision, aims and priorities set out in this profile. The role is for a Rector who will lead, support and nurture the people of this diverse parish and build on recent achievements to develop the mission of the Church in the community and ensure pastoral needs are met. It is for an capable leader who will carry significant oversight and strategic development responsibilities. As our Rector we are seeking someone who will:

Spirituality:
- maintain a personal discipline of prayer, actively listen to God and lead the congregations in this area
- work with, and encourage gifts of the Spirit to enable growth across all our services of worship and every aspect of the church
- commit to pursuing personal wholeness and healing
- ensure future teaching builds on the foundations of the Living Free and Freedom in Christ programmes

Worship and Preaching:
- continue to develop the charismatic and accessible spirit-led worship that will inspire all ages at the main service
- preach and teach in a way that inspires and engages all ages and present and interpret the Christian message in a modern context

Leadership and Collaboration:
- give strong leadership to build a clear, exciting and ambitious strategy for church growth and inspire us through its implementation
- be committed to building strong leaders and effective teams through coaching, encouragement, delegation and empowerment
- use an effective, collaborative and consistent model of leadership, working with Churchwardens, Licenced Lay Ministers, and lay leaders

Discipleship, Learning and Nurture:
- be approachable, able to motivate self and others and model effective discipleship
- provide guidance, encouragement and training to lay people taking roles in the church
- reinvigorate Life Groups so they support individual and congregational growth
- reach out to all target groups but prioritise discipleship for young people, the under 35s and ministry to men

Evangelism and Engagement with Social Justice:
- be energetic, enthusiastic and adventurous, keep up with cultural trends and new ideas and new models of church and equip the church to grow by helping us step out of our comfort zone
- Inspire and engage communities through fresh expressions of Church and regular enquirers courses that respond to the changing patterns of life
- use personal connection with the schools and Playschool, Messy Church, toddler groups, baptisms, weddings, and funerals as evangelistic opportunities to build faith and commitment
- build a team to give support with assemblies and schools ministry

Pastoral Care:
- be a good listener with effective interpersonal skills and a heart for all generations and the diversity of our congregations and communities
- build our existing pastoral teams and prayer teams to create a more comprehensive pastoral system to address the needs of the congregations and communities

Stewardship, Finances and Parish Organisation:
- provide regular and challenging teaching so the congregations connect discipleship to financial stewardship to increase the level of giving
- build, motivate and encourage individual and team gifts and talents to grow individual ministries and the Church

Ecumenism and links with others
- maintain our excellent ecumenical links with other churches in Oakley and Basingstoke to support our strategies for growth
- build on our links with local schools, build effective bridges with community groups, and use vehicles such as ‘Oakley Who Cares?’ to reach out into the community
- fully participate in, and contribute to the life of the deanery (including synod and chapter) and diocese

This role description should always be read in conjunction with the Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy.
Oakley is not a typical Hampshire village. What was Church Oakley and East Oakley in the 1950s with a population of about 400 is now a village of around 5100 with approximately 2200 houses and plans for a further 150 houses. Manydown, a major development area of 3500 houses, will be built on land between Oakley and Wootton and Basingstoke, just beyond the parish boundary, starting in 2019.

Oakley village is a friendly place with a strong community spirit and once people move here, they tend to stay. It is surrounded by countryside and 5 miles from the modern shopping and leisure facilities of the town of Basingstoke. The village schools enjoy a good reputation, but for secondary and further education students go to Basingstoke, Whitchurch or Winchester. The majority of the population are home owners and those of working age are primarily either professionals or managers. There are a few small businesses and a number of home-based cottage industries in the village that provide some employment, however most work outside either in the Basingstoke area or commute to London or other places of work.

Wootton St Lawrence is a small rural village, with St Lawrence Church at its heart. There are 70 houses surrounding the church, and a further 18 spread along 3 miles of country lanes. The village was established in the 10th Century as a settlement of workers who farmed the land and served at the Manor of Wootton. Over the centuries fewer workers have been needed on the land so most people now work in businesses in the area. Some residents have lived in the village all their lives and many have lived here for over 10 years, but also a number of families rent cottages for a couple of years, before moving on. St Lawrence Church is the only community building in the village, so is a natural place for residents to gather for services, coffee mornings and meetings.
Leadership

We are very open to new models of leadership which allow us to focus on the daily, annual and long term opportunities and challenges associated with our Parish.

During our Vacancy, we have been using the following Leadership structures:

- On a weekly basis, the Church Wardens and Administrator meet to briefly review the previous Sunday and ensure the plans are in place for the week ahead.

- Fortnightly, the Wardens meet to discuss priorities across all aspects of the church, plan for PCC meetings and ensure visibility of issues across both their portfolios.

- A Vacancy Team meets six weekly and the fortnight before the PCC to ‘take the temperature’ of the church across Pastoral, Worship, Children and Youth, Life Groups, Finance and strategic issues such as Alpha and ‘A Church for Our Time’ and make any operational decisions or recommendations to the PCC.

- The Standing Committee meets as required following the Vacancy Team to address emergency items.

- The PCC considers strategic priorities, makes decisions against those priorities, confirms progress and addresses mission challenges and opportunities.

- PCC Committees are used to focus work on ‘Mission and Growth’, ‘Finance’ and ‘Buildings and Maintenance’.

We are blessed to have the support of two Licenced Lay Ministers, three Bishop’s Commission for Mission (BCM) Service Leaders and a BCM Pastoral.

Rev’d Sue Colman is a self-supporting Minister who lives in the Parish. She is part of the clergy team at Holy Trinity Brompton and a chaplain at St Mellitus Theological College. Sue has provided some prayer ministry training and been hugely encouraging and helpful through our vacancy.

Sheila Compton. Church Warden
Sheila has lived in the Parish for over 50 years and married husband Mike in St Leonards Church. Sheila has taken various roles and is now Churchwarden and Pastoral Co-ordinator. “It gives me great joy to see people grow in their faith and take hold of the freedom Jesus won for them on the cross. In my spare time I enjoy ballroom dancing, off road biking, walking and learning Spanish.”

Derek Felton. Church Warden
Married to Shirley with two daughters, Alice and Emma, Derek is a Church Warden and Healthcare Management Consultant. “I lead the work on improving St Leonard’s Church, enjoy being a host and question-master of regular quizzes and I’m a passionate supporter of mission work in the Copperbelt of Zambia”

Barnaby Rosevear. Treasurer
Barnaby is married to Claire and has two daughters Louisa 13 and Harriet 12 and a son Dominic, 10. “My day job is a Chartered Accountant working as Commercial Manager on Outsource accounts with IBM. In my spare time I organise sponsored cycle expeditions in the wider community.”

Penny Brown. Church Administrator
Penny has lived in Oakley for 3 years and been the Administrator for 2. “I love the variety the role brings and it’s a real privilege to serve and represent the Parish. I spent 18 years as a Registrar, ran a small catering business and have worked for a group of churches as a Volunteer Co-ordinator - all ideal training for the office. I enjoy cooking, pub quizzes, coastal yomping and bobbing feet first in the waves.”
Helen is a mummy to 3 young children and works part time as a nurse. She spends lots of time in the local schools and helps to run a lunch club for mums and children in the village. She is a PCC member and currently coordinates children, youth and family ministry in our church. “I love this community and feel passionately about reaching out to mums, children and youth. I believe we are called in fellowship to show kindness, to live and love like Jesus in our everyday lives”

Di was Licensed as a Lay Minister 15 years ago. “I am delighted to work together with the leadership seeking God’s direction for His church. I have been privileged to be part of the renewal movement here since coming to faith in the late 1970’s. I have had many roles in the church and currently am Life Group Co-ordinator and Deanery Synod Rep. I’m a keen swimmer, belong to the Walking for Health group and a local choir”

Rodney and Marilyn arrived in Oakley in 1979 and since that time have held many positions of responsibility in the Parish. “18 years ago we started Oakley Evergreen Fellowship Group for people living on their own or housebound. Currently Rodney is Chair of the Centre Management Committee, Treasurer for the Play School and an active member of Money Lifeline”.

When he’s not playing his fiddle for morris dancers, John spends much of his ‘retired’ time working for young people and networking across churches and Christian projects in the area. “I am passionate about Christians coming together to pray and worship. As a Licensed Lay Minister I also enjoy being involved in many areas of church life and leadership”

Christine has been attending St Leonard’s Church since 1990 with husband Mark. “I am the Baptism co-ordinator, helping to prepare parents for their children’s baptisms. For several years I have also been part of a team that plans the monthly All-In services. I’m a member of the St Leonard’s Schools Team – helping regularly in Oakley Infant School and I support activities at Pippins; Stars and Messy Church. I am also a Facilitator for a Life Group and a member of the Pastoral Team”

Rosemary has lived here for over 40 years and has three daughters. “I enjoy walking (no hills), reading murder mysteries and pottering in the garden. I’ve had various roles in the church and in 2016 became Treasurer for the Centre. Although I have other ‘hats’, it’s the one that probably takes up the most time but is also the most enjoyable and rewarding.”

We hunger and we thirst. Refuse to waste our lives for You’re our joy and prize.
Even More People!

Gillian took over management of St Leonard’s Playschool in 1990, the Playschool is a social enterprise under the umbrella of the church. “I view this as part of my Christian ministry and feel privileged to have worked in the centre of the community for a long time. My hobbies are also child orientated - I have been an Oakley Guider for over 30 years, I volunteer in the Youth cafe in town and help with Stars some Sundays”

Joan is in her 90s and still makes a huge contribution through her enthusiasm and range of talents. “I produce song sheets for all the services, organise the rota for laptop operators (of which I am one), organise the brass cleaning rota and take my turn, help to wash and iron the church linen and support the coffee rota! My desire is to serve the Lord wherever He needs me - to bloom where I am planted”

Linda provides administrative support for St Leonard’s Centre room hire bookings. “I am so pleased to be part of this Church family. In two years I have become involved with activities and roles such as: steward, welcomer, Life Group, Messy Church, ECO Church, and Who Cares? My work provides opportunities to get to know Church members better and welcome visitors to the Centre. I am active in the U3A as a committee member plus belong to the dancing, mahjong, table tennis, walking and cycling groups”

Silvia brings energy, music, baking, painting, enthusiasm and a touch of craziness to the 10 O’Clock Club, Messy Church and the Worship Team! “God has been good to me and this is my prayer: Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked... ...but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law... That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.”

Sue has been a Street Pastor for 5 years and a Response Pastor. “I “Walk” once a month on a Friday showing the love of Jesus by listening and caring for those in the night economy in Basingstoke. I am also a trustee of Basingstoke Dial A Ride and an amateur author. I have spent last 5 years on a children’s novel (but you can’t hurry these things)!”

Tim has been worshiping at St Leonards for a little over 10 years and has recently become more involved in the running of services. “I lead worship and also work a lot with the Children’s groups; those are my 2 passions and I love it when they come together in ‘All In’ services. I feel my calling in the Church is youth work - having 2 children of my own I realise how important ‘father figures’ are within the Church”

You made us for much more than this
Awake the kingdom seed in us
Fill us with the strength and love of Christ
We are...

...Christians first, Anglicans second
...a community-minded church with an exciting future
...the body of Christ
...perhaps a bit too comfortable and complacent
...a seven-day active community
...supportive of one another and those in need
...called to be different. In the community but not ‘of’ the community
...welcoming caring and friendly
...a worshipping community with a heart for our villages
...building His Kingdom here
...seeking to make a difference in our communities
...a family of believers
...Channels of God’s love
...supportive of one another and those in need
Since studying Saints Alive in the 1980s, the Church has sought to move in the power of the Holy Spirit. Weekly house groups were established after studying ‘Called to Serve’ in the late 1980s and have been an important part of church life facilitating individual spiritual growth and supporting the life of the wider church. Since the 80s, church members have been going to Spring Harvest and New Wine with youth also visiting Soul Survivor, Momentum and Greenbelt.

**Timeline of our Mission**

- **1980s**
  - Since studying Saints Alive in the 1980s, the Church has sought to move in the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - Weekly house groups were established after studying ‘Called to Serve’ in the late 1980s and have been an important part of church life facilitating individual spiritual growth and supporting the life of the wider church.
  - Since the 80s, church members have been going to Spring Harvest and New Wine with youth also visiting Soul Survivor, Momentum and Greenbelt.

- **1990s**
  - Around 10 years later, Life Groups were formed based on Cell Church principles each group being run by a Facilitator and an Assistant.

- **2000s**
  - Life Groups and Sunday teaching reinforced key themes from ‘Purpose Driven Life’
  - Jesus Ministry became the foundation for our discipleship.
  - Freedom in Christ and Living Free training showed us the authority we have in Christ, how to overcome strongholds and live in victory. The Living Free course also encouraged us to take time to listen to God and follow his leading.

- **2010s**
  - We used the 2017 ‘Who Cares?’ mission to ask the community the question “What hurts the most?” The analysed results were published and sermons preached on each category of hurt. Life Groups studied the Paraclesis course to give us the skills to come alongside people following the Mission.
  - In response:
    - A regular Drop-In was set up and relaunched as ‘The Hub’ offering a range of different activities to engage people.
    - An open evening to explore issues on Death and Bereavement.
    - A joint Church and community initiative - the ‘Men’s Shed’ - has been established and proving to be popular, it uses practical projects to reach men, and provide fellowship and a focus to those who are lonely.
    - An Alpha course is planned for Autumn 2018.

- **Prayer Ministry**
  - There is an opportunity to receive prayer after every morning service as well as longer times of ministry some Sunday evenings. Over the years a range of prayer ministry courses have been run in the parish to train people in this area. Also a number of church members are active in the leadership of outside organisations providing the opportunity for further training and deeper level ministry and prayer support.

“I've tried various activities since my wife died and Men's Shed is the best thing that's happened to me”

**WHO CARES?**
We appreciate the difference between thanksgiving, praise and worship and we understand that the whole of our lives is an act of worship when presented to the Lord as a living sacrifice. Our aim is to bring together all these aspects of worship when we corporately declare God’s praises.

We are mindful of visitors and try to make our services accessible to the unchurched and all ages, particularly in the opening greetings and song. We offer a range of services and use different expressions of worship to create opportunities and freedoms for people to meet with God and express their hearts to Him with honesty in a comfortable atmosphere of love and acceptance.

We have a team of five worship leaders with a pool of ten multi-gifted musicians, plus occasional students on holiday breaks. This enables us to assemble a worship band for Sunday morning services with guitars, keyboard, bass, melody instruments and vocalists. Words and liturgy are projected on screens, and printed for the few who prefer to read from paper. Our repertoire is a mixture of contemporary songs and traditional hymns, depending on the style of service. Organ music is used where this would be expected in a formal service.

Leaders meet monthly to review worship, consider the song list and regularly introduce new songs from sources such as Bethel, Hillsong, and Rend Collective, that we consider will work with our congregation and our music team.

When children are present we encourage them (and adults) to participate with expressive worship through flags and hand held percussion instruments.

We have a songbook to encourage worship within Life Groups and we often use YouTube or other recorded music to create creative and alternative expressions of worship.

Come set our hearts ablaze with hope
Like wildfire in our very souls.
Holy Spirit, come invade us now.
St Leonard’s: A Church for our Time

Through the ages, St Leonard’s has remained a focus for Christian worship in the village. Up to and through the Victorian period, the church changed its footprint and furniture to reflect worship styles of the day and changes in wider society.

Since 1870, when the last set of major improvements were carried out, even though worship styles and society have changed hugely, the building has largely remained the same.

‘A Church for our Time’ is the project that will make improvements to St Leonard’s Church and address fundamental problems with the building and its facilities, in a way that celebrates the beauty of the church, the significance of its historical features, and provides a greater contribution to our mission.

We believe these improvements will enable the building to be used as a community resource and provide a modern welcome for all who want to use it.

Through prayerful consultation and listening, we have heard from our congregation and community that:
- There is an acceptance that change is required
- There is a belief that the Church building is not ‘fit for purpose’ given His mission in our Parish
- The Church does not provide facilities that would be expected of a public building in the 21st century
- There is a desire for change and the congregation believe that ‘this is our time’ to make these changes
- We need more flexibility because we want to use the building differently on different days of the week
- We need to ensure that the physical welcome of the building attracts Christians and visitors of all ages and faculties.

A recent Gift Day has raised about half the cost of the church re-ordering and extension and we are currently consulting so we finalise the designs and gain permissions to proceed.

See the video at https://www.oakleywithwootton.org.uk/a-church-for-our-time-project
At the 10.00 am Sunday Service, there is an average of 85 worshippers in the congregation. The first Sunday of the month is a family service which typically attracts a further 18 children and young people. Three times a year this becomes a Parade Service involving uniformed groups.

Holy Communion is included on the second, fourth and fifth Sundays of the month.

A Book of Common Prayer Communion is held at 8.00am on the first and third Sundays.

Festival celebrations are popular with the community. Christingle and Crib Services attract many families and the Church is filled.

During 2017, there were 6 weddings, 8 baptisms and 5 funerals in church, a further 12 held at the Crematorium plus 7 internment of ashes.
St Lawrence Church

There has been a church in Wootton St Lawrence since 940 AD. The mediaeval church was rebuilt in 1864, retaining the 12th century north arcade and tower and some of the 14th century windows.

Charles Butler, sometimes called the Father of English Beekeeping, was Vicar of St Lawrence for 48 years until his death in 1647

A 6.00pm service is held each month at St Lawrence and there is a congregation of around 16 for these evening services.

Festival services attract larger congregations with approximately 90 worshippers attending Candlelit Carols
In addition to the churches of St Leonard’s and St Lawrence, the parish has two further buildings and a garden of remembrance in its portfolio.

St Leonards Centre is situated opposite St Leonards church and was redeveloped in 2010. Part of the building was the original Oakley village school to which a two story extension has been added. This has modern facilities including a well equipped kitchen, WiFi, the parish office and six meeting rooms of various sizes. The centre is a busy hub during the week and a valuable support to the mission of the Parish. It is used by church based groups, such as Pippins, The Gap, and St Leonards pre-school as well as by a wide range of community organisations.

The Parish also owns land in the St John’s area of Oakley, part of which is taken up by a garden of remembrance occupying the former site and graveyard of St John’s church. Also on this land is St John’s Centre which was originally built as a youth centre, but is now leased by an independent nursery.

A management committee is responsible for the letting and upkeep of these buildings.
Pre-School and Toddlers

St Leonard’s Playschool
The Playschool is a friendly, caring and well equipped pre-school run from St Leonard’s Centre by experienced, dedicated staff and overseen by a Management Committee on behalf of the PCC. Children enjoy a wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities every session. The staff aim to model Christian values and are able to signpost parents to other church activities. It was rated ‘Good’ in the most recent Ofsted inspection and the inspector commented: “The children are confident learners who are able to make their own play choices in a good learning environment. They are quickly learning the skills needed for the eventual move on to school.”

New Life, Pippins and Quackers
Three parent/carer and toddler groups run through the week at St Leonard’s Centre: New Life for babies up to 1 year, Quackers for 1-2 year olds and Pippins for toddlers up to school age. Together, they provide a warm, friendly, supportive and welcoming environment that builds friendships over a cup of tea and a biscuit. Sessions end with singing, rhymes and music.
Children and Youth

Children and young people are an important part of the church family in Oakley with Wootton. We believe that each person, whatever their age, is important to God and this is the basis for everything we do. There is a great team of people running a variety of groups.

Ark and Stars (Birth to Year 3) uses ROOTS material to begin a child’s faith journey using bible stories, craft, drama, games, toys, worship and prayer. They meet in one room with an area for the younger children to play with toys while the older ones take part in activities. The aim at this stage is for each child to feel safe and valued, have fun and enjoy their journey, to build a strong foundation and to know that Jesus is their friend who will always be there.

The 10 O’Clock Club welcomes children from school years 3-6. A typical session involves getting busy with prayer, worship and bible study interspersed with baking, art, music, dance, short films, food and the occasional walk in the fields and picnic! The purpose of the Club is to bring Bible stories and Jesus' teaching into the reality of our personal experience. We consider the questions: how does it apply to my life? How are these teachings relevant today? How can I live like Jesus?

B.O.B. is a friendly group of young people between school years 7-11 who meet up every Sunday morning in the Centre. We encourage the use of modern resources such as Bible Apps on their smartphones and this has proved an effective way of making scripture accessible for the whole group. We have weekends away and sleepovers and these experiences build relationships and mutual encouragement and support. Generally the morning comprises; worship in church with the congregation, food and catch up, bible study, application and discussion with prayer time.

Messy Church
A very successful monthly Messy church has been running for over 7 years with teams supporting lots of fun craft/art activities. There is informal worship in church followed by a meal in the Centre for 70-100 children and parents/carers. Messy Church is a significant outreach opportunity.
The Gap

The Gap is a free of charge youth group in the village for school years 6-8, hosted once a month by volunteers, most of whom are members of St Leonard’s church. The Gap was started 18 months ago in response to an identified need for activities for this age group. It is well supported by the community and 87 youth came to the September session.

Every meeting has a theme and includes craft and games. Table football, pool, ping pong, a tuckshop and an XBox are regular features with a quiet corner for mandala colouring and lounging on bean bags.

There are plans to run Christian focussed sessions or Youth Alpha in addition to The Gap.
Infant School
Although not a church school the Head Teacher runs it on Christian ethos and values and welcomes the spiritual and community connections with the church. She hopes the new Rector will continue the policy of visiting to build relationships with the staff and pupils. The church has been welcomed into the school to take assemblies, the Chair of Governors is a member of St Leonards and other church members are in the parent teacher association.

Oakley Junior School
The Junior School is a Voluntary Controlled CofE School with two church-appointed Foundation Governors in addition to the Rector. Our connections with the school have grown over the last 20 years with the Rector taking whole school assemblies two or three times a term. There are annual visits to explore the church building and hear a Christian message. Ecumenical teams run weekly ‘Open the Book’ assemblies for Years 3 and 4 joined by Year 2 Infants. More recently a team of parents, mainly from St Leonard’s have created very successful Prayer Spaces which every pupil visits. These give the opportunity to explain and encourage prayer in relevant and interesting ways. Church members are also very active in the Parent Teacher Association with one chairing the group.

Build Your kingdom here. Let the darkness fear.
Show Your mighty hand. Heal our streets and land.
Set Your church on fire. Win this nation back.
Change the atmosphere. Build Your kingdom here.
Pastoral Care

Life Groups are the first point for pastoral care in the Parish. They can be a place where people are accepted, encouraged, cared for and loved in a way that is not possible in a large meeting. The aim is for people to feel safe enough to share what is going on in their life, their hopes, fears, difficulties and anxieties and be supported by the other members both practically and through prayer.

Our BCM Pastoral Missioner has recently formed a visiting team who are available to visit those who are sick, bereaved or in need. One initiative has been to collect and support a parishioner who now has dementia, so she can attend church services and enjoy fellowship.

Home Communion is provided monthly for people who are housebound and no longer able to attend church and these people also benefit from pastoral visits from the visiting team.

There are opportunities to receive prayer after every morning service from the Prayer Ministry Team and longer times of prayer ministry are available two Sunday evenings a month. At this ‘Refreshing Prayer’ time the ministry team listen to God to bring his blessing and encouragement.

The newly formed ecumenical Cluster Groups pray for their geographical area and assess if there are any needs that could be met by the churches.

A couple from the church provide wedding preparation for those planning to marry in the Parish and a further team prepares parents requesting baptism for their children.

To see the captive hearts released
The hurt, the sick, the poor at peace
Ministry to the Elderly

The Oakley Evergreen Fellowship Group was started 18 years ago by church members to reach out to people in the community who are housebound or live alone.

Currently 35 people attend the monthly meeting which starts with some spiritual input and the birthday spot. This is followed by a speaker, entertainment or an activity, then finishes with afternoon tea and chat.

In addition to the meetings, three times a year they enjoy a home-cooked lunch; twice a year a Communion service; there is also a summer outing and in December entertainment is provided by local Junior School children.
There is a long history of churches in the parish and the wider Basingstoke area working together to serve the community.

We belong to ‘One Church’ Basingstoke, an ecumenical affiliation of church communities sponsoring, leading, and encouraging activities that seek to bless the welfare of the community in Basingstoke and the surrounding area. In addition churches have run Alpha, Christianity Explored and marriage courses for the community.

The unity and support expressed through ‘One Church’ has been reflected locally in Oakley through the Churches working closely together to present a sense of one church to our community. The Who Cares? mission involved 50 churches across North Hampshire and although led by St Leonard’s was run ecumenically in Oakley. ‘The Hub’ project is run by Church members in the Methodist Chapel due to its central location and this provides a schedule of activities designed to engage people who are lonely and feel trapped in their homes.

We are in the process of developing ecumenical clusters to cover the whole Parish in prayer and pastoral oversight, currently half the areas are up and running. An ecumenical core group, led by St Leonard’s meets on a Saturday morning to pray for the community and listen to God.

Twice a year a well supported joint worship service is held in the Junior school organised by St Leonard’s, Oakley Methodists and the Community Church.

“Ecumenism”

Church members are involved in the many ecumenical projects which operate across the Basingstoke area including:
- **Besom**: a bridge between those who want to give and those in need
- **Healing on the Streets**: passers-by are invited to receive prayer for healing or any other reason
- **Money Lifeline**: a team of trained volunteers offer friendly and confidential advice on money and debt
- **Night Shelter**: providing supper, bed and breakfast for the homeless in Basingstoke during the winter months
- **Oasis Café**: offering a friendly place to meet for coffee or a light lunch and providing opportunities for work experience for those unable to undertake paid employment
- **Youth Café**: a safe and fun environment in the Oasis Cafe for young people after school/college that models God’s care
- **The Safe**: a service for people facing an unintended pregnancy to think through their options and access support
- **Street Pastors**: in Basingstoke town centre to support people visiting the pubs and clubs

“I look forward to this unity in mission in Oakley continuing as we share resources and the opportunities we have to express God’s love to our community”
Oakley Methodist Pastor

“I have found One Church weekly leaders fellowship profoundly helpful in my role as pastor to Oakley Methodist Chapel”
Oakley Methodist Pastor
Global Mission

For many years, members of St Leonard’s Church have taken the Good News overseas through a range of short and long term mission projects.

As a church, we set aside a proportion of our income for outward giving and this has been used to support a wide range of local ecumenical initiatives in Oakley and Basingstoke as well as international programmes in places such as Senegal, Pakistan, Tanzania, Zambia and Uganda.

We aim to build strong and sustained relationships with these programmes so our congregations and wider community can understand the challenges and opportunities in the global church and how we can respond.
Finance

The latest accounts show net assets of £980,000, of which £740,000 is represented by the Church Centre and a small plot of land in the village. Of the remaining net cash of £240,000, £165,000 is in Restricted funds and £75,000 is unrestricted and available for the day to day running of the church, the costs of which are around £140,000 a year with a little over half represented by our Parish Share of £74,000.

In recent years the level of regular giving has decreased as our worshipping community has reduced slightly. At the same time expenditure has increased modestly resulting in a deficit of regular income over expenditure in our 2017 Accounts, and a reduction in our Unrestricted Reserves.

We have recently established a Finance Committee to support the Treasurer in the increasingly complex world of charity finances, and to address this shortfall in giving. We have taken a number of steps to review and reduce expenditure in certain areas and an appeal to the congregation in June of this year resulted in a number of individuals reviewing their giving. We expect to return to a position where income matches expenditure in the short term. We currently have five months of reserves and have had more than the recommended three months of reserves for many years. We expect to address the topic of church finances and giving regularly through preaching, teaching and discussion at church meetings.

Over the years, we have demonstrated a generous spirit towards specific projects to support the work in the Parish with £700,000 given over five years to enable the rebuilding and refurbishment of St Leonard’s Centre in 2007 and earlier this year, £350,000 was pledged on a single Gift Day in anticipation of the refurbishment of St Leonard’s Church and the building of an extension. This is likely to cost around £800,000 and we hope to complete the financing and work during 2020; a separate Project Treasurer has been appointed to oversee these finances.
St Leonard’s Rectory is a large four bedroom house that was extended at the rear to provide a larger living room and large dining room. It has a mature garden, including a selection of fruit trees.

The house is situated on The Drive, a popular road in the village, and is within walking distance of the village shops and Oakley schools. St Leonard’s Church is a 5 minute drive (20 min walk) and St Lawrence Church is a 10 minute drive away.