

All Saints' Church in Rayne, Essex

Trail Answers and Explanatory Notes for Parents and Teachers

Children's Answers are in Bold. Further information is for interest and discussion.

There is a lot of detail here. You do not need it all if you are showing children round but it does give you everything you might need to help them in their learning.

We do not think that all the exact detail matters too much. Much of the work here is structured around children being encouraged to explore, examine and use their imaginations.

It is useful to recognise the layout of the church:

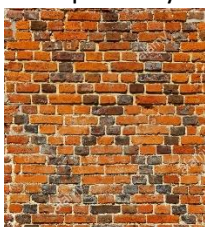
1. The Tudor Tower through which we walk when we enter the church.
2. The Nave – which is the biggest part of the church and where all the main seating is placed. This is Victorian and was built in the 1840's.
3. The Chancel – this is the 'choir area' where the organ is located.
4. The Sanctuary - the Holy area where the altar stands with the communion rail in front of it.

1. The Tower

It is best to view this from outside. This is the oldest part of the existing church and it was built in the early 16th century during the reign of Henry VIII at the initiative of Sir William Capel who lived in Rayne Hall to the north of the church.

It is a good idea to get the children to step back and take a good, clear look at the tower from top to bottom. Here are some of the things they might notice:

1. **Diaper patterned black brickwork** at various points lower down the tower and higher up with a gap in between. They could draw a record of this as a zig-zag design. The blackened bricks may have been on the outside edge of the kiln when they were baked. These bricks were probably manufactured on site.



2. **A 'rampant' lion carving - to the left of the entrance door.** This is quite time-worn; you may need to help the children recognise it. You can show the children other lions in the church: the coat of arms of the Earls of Essex above the toilet door and on the ledger stone in the sanctuary. The lion was the symbol of the Capel Family. You could ask the children what a lion might symbolise: Bravery? Courage? Fierceness? Strength?



3. **An anchor - to the right of the entrance door.** This was also a symbol of the Capel family. It is also quite eroded. This is something to discuss: how weather, rainfall, hot sun and frost can wear out and erode physical objects. If you look round the tower to the right you can show children some carving which has been recently restored. You could explore the symbolism of anchors with the children: keeping us safe and in place during a storm, perhaps. Solid? Dependable? The anchor was also a popular Christian symbol; it represented hope.



4. **The Clock.** It is quite distinctive with its blue face. It is designed to use only one (hour) hand. You could point out to the children that something else is very unusual: the divisions are in 4 sections between each marker instead of the 5 which we are used to. Does that mean that each 'minute' would have had 75 seconds instead of 60?

The tower is 85 feet high/ 25 m approx..

2. The Capel Helmet

This is hung on the wall up on the left as you enter the church. It belonged to **Sir Giles Capel**, the man who ordered the building of the tower. This is a copy: the real one is on display in New York in the Metropolitan museum. The sword and candelabrum (also copies) were donated by a modern descendant to be placed above Giles' grave which used to be in the church.

It was designed for **protection in armed combat** and would have been part of his armour. It was very common for gentlemen in those days to take part in jousts and armed combat. This could be dangerous but was really a kind of sport. These items could have been used by Giles at a famous meeting between Henry the VIII and the King of France. This friendly meeting for jousting was called the 'Field of the Cloth of Gold'. Of course, real wars took place as well so a helmet like this could help you keep your head on your shoulders. The holes in the visor would have helped Giles look out to see what his opponent was up to!

3. The Seat and the Table

The seat is called a pew. This is a kind of long bench which lots of people can sit on at the same time. The church used to have 20 pews like this which people could sit on if they were worshipping. In very olden times churches had no chairs or pews at all: people used to stand or they could sit on the floor like children do in assemblies in Rayne School.

The pew is made from 'pitch pine' wood which originally came from North America about 150 years ago.

The table is used as a Communion Table and it is very important in the church. It is used to prepare and serve ('consecrate') the bread and wine in church services of worship and this is to remember when Jesus gave bread and wine to his friends and followers many years ago. We still remember this.

Brave and enterprising children could be encouraged to lie on their backs and take a look under the pew and then under the table. They might notice that:

- 1. The pew and Communion Table are made of exactly the same kind of wood with the same marks and holes underneath.**
- 2. The table has in fact been made out of two pews.**

The pews were put into the church in 1886.

The table was made in 2020/2021 from wood dating from 1886.

Teaching Point: Sometimes items can be 'repurposed' or changed. Things around us often change their uses. Everything is changing all the time. Just like children growing up and getting taller or cleverer!

4. The Font

Help the children to examine the font: how high they think it is. What it is made of? How do they think it was made? What carvings they can see on it? How many sides does it have?

This font is really a kind of very tall sink like what they have seen in their family kitchens or bathrooms. It has a heavy wooden cover which goes over the top to protect it. It has a chain and a plug just like any sink. It can be filled with water and the water can drain out down the plug hole.

With any luck you should be able to show them a tall jug (sometimes called a 'ewer') and a scallop shell. These are big clues to its usage and importance.

It is quite possible that this Font is the very oldest thing in this entire church and may go back to the 14th Century, more than 600 years ago.

You could show the children the stained-glass window nearby to the south of the church where there is a picture of the baptism of Jesus Christ by his cousin John the Baptist. See if they notice that Jesus is standing in water (in the River Jordan) and that John is pouring water over Jesus from a

scallop shell. Baptism or Christening is just the same thing: when water is poured on babies or adults so that they can join God's family.

You could point out the dove on the font. This is a sign of the Holy Spirit which Christians believe comes into our lives when we are Christened.

So, Simple answers:

1. The font is filled with **WATER**
2. The water is used **to put on babies or other people when they are Christened or Baptised.**

The water is a sign of washing or of new life and forgiveness.

5. Direction

Children could be helped by getting them to consider which way most of the chairs face and by using a directional compass to orient themselves. In fact, the map on the worksheet indicates the direction of NORTH. Some children may know about the points of the compass (especially if they are members of the Guide or Scout associations).

This church is oriented to the **EAST**. This is true for most old churches but other churches can be different.

They might come up with lots of good reasons why this is but here are some good ones:

1. **Christians like the early morning sun to come into the church through the east windows because they say that "Jesus is the Light of the World".**
2. **Some people say that Jerusalem is in the East and that is where Jesus lived and died.**
3. **Some Christians believe that when Jesus comes back to earth one day he will come from the East.**

(There is not really a "Right Answer" to this one!)

6. Bible

This Bible is as big as this because Bibles are **the most important books** in existence for Christian people. It is read out loud when Christians meet to worship and people like to see it right across the church. The big letters make it easy for people to read clearly and loudly. Now that we have a projector and a screen, we can also put the words up high just like the words for your assembly songs.

It is put up high on this brass metal stand (a 'lectern') so that **everyone can see it clearly** and so that the reader's voice can be easily heard. That is why there is a microphone in front of it.

Christians say that the Bible is the "Word of God".

This particular Bible is about 50 years old.

7. Bosses

A Boss is a decoration in wood or stone where the cross members of a roof or ceiling intersect.

These are made of wood.

This can be fun. I recommend that the youngsters lie on the floor on the carpet between the choir stalls using torches and binoculars to get a close look at these beautiful items on the chancel ceiling.

Most of these designs are based on foliage. But there are two angels up there and a shield design. The all have leaf designs around them.

The main colours are red and green with some details in gold.

- They are mainly **based on foliage** (flowers and plants)
- **They are nearly all different.** Some look similar but if the children look carefully, they should see the differences.

Why are they here? Because the chancel is one of the holiest, most special parts of the church. So the best, most colourful decorations should be shown here.

8. Saints

Saints are especially good and holy people. This church is called ALL SAINTS' CHURCH.

In pictures, saints are often shown with a bright ring or disc around or behind their heads. These are called 'halos'.

These two pictures are on the South side of the Chancel above the choir seating. The children will get a good view if they use binoculars. The stained glass pictures have the names of the two saints.

- **Saint Peter – He is holding a set of keys** (Jesus told Peter that he would give him the “keys to the kingdom of heaven”).
- **Saint Paul – Holding a sword and a book with the letter 'P'.** (Paul wrote lots of things, many of which are included in the Bible).

At the east end of the church – in the holy Sanctuary -there are lots of saints shown high up in the glass:

4 Women: Etheldreda and Ethelburga, Frideswide and Winifred

4 Men: King Edmund, King Edward the Confessor, St Alban, King Charles I

And you can see Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke and John lower down. They have writing equipment because they wrote the Gospels which are the stories about Jesus. They also carry palm branches which are signs of Victory.

9. Creatures

A creature is a created living thing. Some people say that God is the Creator – that he created every creature. These four creatures are here in this Sanctuary for the children to find:

- **A baby dragon** (or is it a snake with wings) in a chalice/cup held by St John.
- **Two Dogs or Hounds – on ends of the special bench under Saint John**
- **A Peacock** – a Christian symbol of eternal life – on the wall at the north end of the sanctuary
- **A lion** holding a cross – near the peacock

There are quite a few other animals around the church if the children have time to look.

e.g. two little doves in a basket at the SW window at feet of Mary standing holding Jesus as a baby.

Why so many animals? We say that God created all creatures and that He loves them all.

10. The Prayer Corner

Prayer is when **we talk to God and listen out for God talking to us.**

There is an old story that once a woman living nearby was dangerously ill when she was giving birth. Servants were sent into the church to pray near this area. They said that they saw Jesus' mother, Mary in the church and that the woman then became safe and well. From that time it is said that people came into the church to pray. We do not know if that is a true story.

Over the years, people have probably prayed for many things so most answers the children give will be correct:

- **To be made well**
- **For people they loved**
- **When they were in danger. For example, in times of war.**
- **When someone died**
- **When they were worried or sad about things**
- **When they were getting married**
- **To say thank you to God**
- **If they were hungry**

11. The Cherubs or Angels

These two fellows look as if they have come from some kind of big building or furniture. They are a bit of a mystery. They seem to be a couple of God's servants.

Encourage the children to look carefully at the 'body language' of the cherubs and to make suggestions based on what they see. There are no 'right answers' to this, really.

- One cherub has his eyes closed and appears to be kneeling on one leg. His hands are held together at the palms. **He looks as if he is praying.**
- The other Cherub looks like he is flying higher up. His eyes are open. One hand is on his chest and the other one held out to the side. **Is he singing a hymn perhaps?**
- Perhaps they are both **praising God** in their own way.

12. Now you have finished.

This is an opportunity for the children to reflect on what they have seen and learned and to express their reactions as they prepare to leave the building. It is important to give them a bit of time for thought and contemplation before writing a few things.