

## ST ANDREW'S, STAPLEFORD CAMBRIDGESHIRE, CB22 5SY

Trail Answers and Explanatory Notes  
for Parents, Teachers and Accompanying Adults

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

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this lovely church, the foundation of which goes back to a grant of land by King Aedred in the year 955. The evidence we have shows that there was a Saxon stone church, which, after the Norman Conquest in 1066, was rebuilt in the new style brought over from the continent. In the 14th century this earlier church was added to and again substantially rebuilt in the newer styles of the time but incorporating parts of the earlier building. Further alterations were made during a Victorian restoration. The periods over which the various parts of the church were built are shown in the plan on the Question Sheet.

#### 1 FONT

- **Water** is put in the font when a person is christened/baptised. A font is a large bowl, usually of stone with a lead lining, in which people are baptised with water as a sign that they have become members of the Church.
- This font has **8** sides so it is an **octagon**. A circle, the perfect shape, is the symbol of God. A square or cube is the symbol of the Earth and an octagon is halfway between a circle and a square and symbolises Jesus unifying God and Earth.

Baptism or christening signifies the washing clean of the participants. The font is usually at the rear of the church or near the entrance, signifying the start of a Christian's journey through life.

The font cover has a quotation from '*Little Gidding*' by T.S. Eliot, "*We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time*".

#### 2 PARISH CHEST

- The chest would have been used to store village **records, money and valuables**. It is probably from the early 15<sup>th</sup> century.
- The chest has **five** keyholes.
- There being so many locks provided a **special precaution against theft**. Each key was held by a different person so that the chest could not be opened unless all were present.

#### 3 'MUSICAL' CUSHIONS

The cushions show ten different instruments: -

- |                      |                  |                              |                 |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| • <b>Castanets</b>   | • <b>Harp</b>    | • <b>Trombone</b>            | • <b>Violin</b> |
| • <b>Cello</b>       | • <b>Lute</b>    | • <b>Trumpet (valveless)</b> |                 |
| • <b>French horn</b> | • <b>Serpent</b> | • <b>Viola</b>               |                 |

#### 4 SAINT ANDREW

- The net that Andrew is holding symbolises his career as **fisherman**. He and his brother Simon (later called Peter) both worked as fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, a large lake on the River Jordan.

After the crucifixion of Jesus, Andrew spread the gospel (good news) through Greece into Russia, founding the Greek Orthodox Church. Legend has it that some of his remains were brought to St Andrews in Scotland by missionaries in the eighth century, hence making him the patron saint of that country.

Andrew is said to have been crucified on an X shaped cross which forms the basis of the saltire, the national flag of Scotland which hangs above the statue.

#### 5 SIGN OF FRIENDSHIP



The sign of friendship in a carving on the altar is in the form of two clasped hands, one English and the other African.

In the 1940s Nachingwea in Tanzania was the centre of the ill-fated ground-nuts scheme. Following the failure of this scheme, the town went into decline. The airstrip, railway and hospital, built for the scheme, fell into disrepair. In 1981 a relationship developed between the parishes of St Andrew in Nachingwea and Stapleford. Stapleford has helped the people of Nachingwea in many ways, funding the purchase of agricultural equipment, sewing machines, bicycles, books, etc. By way of thanks, the people of Nachingwea have given St Andrew's, Stapleford the delightful carvings that can be seen in this chapel.

- The children were asked to use their imaginations and suggest items that they might give to the people of Nachingwea as representing themselves or life where they live.

## 6 THE LAST SUPPER

On the altar here there is a beautiful carving of the Last Supper, given by the people of Nachingwea to St Andrew's, Stapleford. If you turn it over you see:-

- **Thirteen pairs of feet**
- They are the feet of **Jesus** and **his twelve disciples**

## 7 SQUINTS (sometimes called hagioscopes from the Greek ágios (holy) and skopós (to see)).

- In medieval times church attendance was compulsory. No seats were provided and the church would have been crowded with standing parishioners. Communion was celebrated simultaneously at all three altars. Squints enabled priests at the side altars to co-ordinate with the celebrant at the main altar at the east end of the chancel during the service. They also allowed more of the congregation in the crowded transepts, choir and nave to see what was happening at the main altar.

## 8 DOUBLE PISCINA

- A Piscina (Latin for fishpond) is a '**washing-up bowl**' for **rinsing communion vessels** (cup and plate) during a communion service.
- This church has **two** other piscinas making four in all (one double and two single).

The piscina allowed the 'holy' water to drain directly to the consecrated ground of the Churchyard.

## 9 FAMOUS QUOTATION

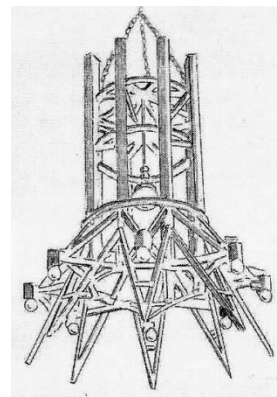
- The quotation is "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by **so many to so few**".
- The many were the **people of Britain** and the few were the **fighter pilots** of the Battle of Britain.
- The Prime Minister who said these words in a speech on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1940 was **Winston Churchill**.

## 10 LADY CHAPEL ALTAR

An altar is a table at which offerings, sacrifices and worship are made.

- The lady for whom the chapel is named is Mary and the carving is of **Mary** with her son **Jesus**.

There is an interesting chandelier in the Lady Chapel. The wooden frame, made for an exhibition, is a model of the hidden structure of the octagonal lantern of the central tower of Ely Cathedral. St Andrew's is in the Diocese of Ely. The frame was later converted into a chandelier.



## 11 SACRED MONOGRAM

- IHS can be seen above the **War Memorial** on the north wall and on a number of **kneelers**.

IHS is a diminutive of the Greek word IHΣΟΥΣ meaning JESUS. In Greek capitals it is IHΣ and in lower case it is ιησ. IHΣ has become IHS and ιησ has become ihc. IHS is known as the sacred monogram.

## 12 CREW OF A WELLINGTON BOMBER

This small memorial starts with the first line of a sonnet, *High Flight* by John Magee, "Oh I have slipped the surly bonds of earth". Magee served in the Royal Canadian Air Force and died in a mid-air collision over Lincolnshire in 1941. The Wellington commemorated here was from 57 Squadron, RAF, then based at Wyton in Huntingdonshire. It crashed near the village school about 200 yards from the church

- Its crew comprised 6 sergeants, 2 RAF (**British**), 1 RAAF (**Australian**) and 3 RCAF (**Canadian**).

## 13 GLASS ENTRANCE DOORS

The doors were installed to mark the millennium of the church's foundation

- The engraving is a quotation from Verse 4 of the 90<sup>th</sup> Psalm and reads '**In thy sight a thousand years are as yesterday. They are like a dream at daybreak. AD MCMLXX** (1970). Thus the church was founded in **970**.

## 14 LYCHGATE

- Carved on one side of the gate are the **names of the men from Stapleford who lost their lives in the Second World War**.
- On the other side are carved **verses in memory of their sacrifice**.

The word lych derives from the Old English or Saxon word for corpse. Lych gates were so called because they lay on the path along which a corpse was carried to burial. In the Middle Ages when most people were buried just in shrouds rather than coffins, the dead were carried to the lych gate and placed on a bier, where the priest conducted the first part of the funeral service under its temporary shelter.