

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

The first part of the church to be built was the chancel (the area where the altar is and beyond the rood screen dividing the building into two distinct sections). This was built during the 1300's, and the remainder was built about a century later. Local stone was used on the outside. In 1869-70, changes were made making the church look very much like it does today. More recently some pews were removed to make an area for children. There are plans to remove some pews at the front of the nave (near the pulpit and lectern) to make more space for weddings and funerals and activities during worship.

### 1 FONT

The base of the font has **8** sides and is therefore an **Octagon**. **Water** is poured into the font and blessed on the day of a baptism. Our font is unusually upside down, because it is alleged that a baby, John Venn, was baptised in it, and he became a notorious Roundhead and was one of the signatories on King Charles 1<sup>st</sup>'s death warrant. The parishioners did not want their children baptised in it, and so up-ended the font.



### 2 LECTERN

An **Eagle** is holding the book and it is standing on a **ball** or **sphere** representing the world. The lectern is a bookstand in either metal or wood to hold the Holy Bible, from which the lessons are read. The Bible contains the inspired writing of all Christian churches, divided into the Old Testament, largely inherited from the Jewish Scriptures, and the New Testament written since the death of Christ.

### 3 NAVE BENCH ENDS

It is a **face of a Chinaman**. It is debatable whether this is a 'Green Man', a common depiction on bench ends, but our 'Chinaman' does not have foliage coming from his mouth. This area of Somerset is renowned for skilled woodcarvers, and teams would go around local churches.



### 4 ROOD SCREEN

There are **5** arches. The flowers are **roses**. The Rood Screen divides the congregation from the Priests and choir in old churches. It is so called because originally it was topped by a Rood (Olde English 'Rod' = a cross), a large carving of Christ on the cross with the figures of Virgin Mary on one side and St John on the other. At the Reformation churches were ordered to remove the cross and figures.

### 5 PISCINA

This is an arched niche near the altar with a basin and a drain going straight into the ground for **ricing** the communion vessels.

### 6 ALTAR & EAST WINDOW

The central figure in the East window is **Jesus**. The altar is the focal point of the Church where the main Christian act of the Eucharist (Holy Communion or mass) is performed. It may also be called The Lord's Table, The Holy Table or the Communion Table. The seasons of the Church's year are marked by using different colours for the priest's vestments, altar frontals and other hangings.

**White** for festivals, Christmas, Easter, and Saints who were not martyred.

**Purple** for Advent (the 4 weeks before Christmas) and Lent (the 40 days before Easter)

**Red** for Pentecost, also called Whitsun (the coming of the Holy Spirit), Holy Week and martyrs.

**Green** for all other periods (known as Ordinary Time).



### 7 PULPIT

The **Priest** or Vicar stands in the Pulpit. The pulpit is raised so that the Priest can be **seen and heard** more clearly. The Pulpit is a raised and enclosed platform, reached by steps and used by the Priest to deliver the sermon or talk during the service.

## 8 SQUINT

You can see the **Altar** through the Squint. This opening in the wall, also known as an hagioSCOPE, allowed the priest at a side Altar to see the priest at the High (main or parish) Altar and avoid elevating the Host (raising the holy bread), the central point of the Mass, before the Parish priest. Before the Reformation the congregation very rarely shared the bread and wine. The moment when the Host was raised was the high point of the Mass for them. At the elevation a small bell was rung.

## 9 MYSTERY DOOR

The blocked-up doorway led to a spiral staircase up to the 'rood loft' or walkway which enabled someone to attend to the light which was kept burning before the cross.

## 10 LADY CHAPEL

There are **horses**, a **bird** and a **serpent** or **snake** in the stained-glass window.



It is worth viewing the top of the screen from in here where part of Romans Chapter13, Verse13 can be read.

## 11 RECTORS' BOARD

The first listed Rector was in **1270** and his name is **Thomas of Newton**. The shields have **three feathers, a crown and three lions**. A thistle and a rose can also be seen. These have historical connections with the Prince of Wales (feathers) and James 1<sup>st</sup>.



## 12 PILLARS

A **fox** and a **goose** are on the last pillar on west wall. There are some intricate stone carvings on the tops of the pillars (capitals). There are four angels, the heads of which are thought to represent Henry V (reigned 1485-1509) Margaret Beaufort (his Mother), the Bishop of Winchester (facing the door), and an unidentified face. There are four more angels above the organ

## 13 BELL FRAME

There are **five** clappers and the bells are rung in the **Tower** or **Belfry**.

## 14 BIER

This was used for **carrying coffins**. Traditionally a bier was a stand on which the coffin or casket was placed and then wheeled or carried to the grave. This one was rescued from the South Porch and restored by a team of enthusiastic bell ringers.



**St Lawrence the Martyr** was one of seven deacons (or leaders) of the Christian community in Rome, with responsibility for the funds and its distribution to the poor.

The Roman authorities persecuted the Christians and he was arrested. Because he would not surrender the funds of the community to the Romans he was martyred – killed for his faith.

Tradition has it that he was roasted on a gridiron. This was in the year 238 AD.

It is not known why the church is dedicated to St Lawrence.