

ST MARY'S CHURCH, WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK, IP12 4LP
Trail Answers and Explanatory Notes
for Parents and Teachers



1 FONT

The font is an **octagon** (8 sided). **Water** is placed in the bowl for Baptism when people are given their Christian names and welcomed into the Church.

This is a rare seven-sacrament font, of stone with a wooden font cover. The sacraments carved on the sides were deliberately damaged in the English Civil War. They are Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Ordination, Penance, Holy Communion and Extreme Unction. The Crucifixion is displayed in the extra panel.

The **14 picture panels** on the walls around the font are survivors from the original mediaeval Rood Screen. (See **10**)



2 NAVE

The Churchwardens' wands are badges of office, carried in processions. The two monograms are **IHS** which stands for Iesus Hominum Salvator in Latin, meaning Jesus Saviour of Mankind. The other is **AMR**, for Ave Maria Regina, Latin for Hail Mary Queen (of Heaven, note the crown).

The Nave refers to the main body of the church where the congregation sit. The roof is thought to look like the bottom of a **boat**.

A ship is carved on the pulpit/lectern, used for both preaching sermons and reading from the Bible.



3 EAST WINDOW

You are looking at **The Adoration of the Magi**, also known as kings or wise men. They followed a star to Bethlehem to find a newborn king, the baby Jesus. The gifts they gave were very precious: gold for a king; frankincense for a priest and myrrh for death and sacrifice. The hand of God is at the top showering golden rays. The crown at Mary's feet symbolises kingship for both Jesus and Mary. The emblem of St George is **a red cross on a white ground** and is on the first of four shields at the top of the main window. The **crown with arrows** is the badge of St Edmund king of East Anglia who was put to death by the Vikings. They tied him to a tree, and shot him with arrows.

4 ROYAL ARMS

During the Reformation and again at the Restoration of Charles II, it was compulsory for the Sovereign's Arms to be displayed in every church to reinforce the message that the Church of England was no longer under the authority of the Pope in Rome, but under that of the Monarch. **George**.(G III R) and **1774** can clearly be seen. The animals supporting the shield are the **Lion** of England and the **Unicorn** of Scotland. A **crowned lion** is the crest, the shield itself having **3 lions** (or **leopards**) of England and the Scottish **lion rampant**. The fourth quarter shows the arms of Hanover with a seated **black lion** and a **white horse**.

5 WALL MONUMENT

You are now at the memorial monument to the Pitman family on the East wall of the South Aisle. **Jeffrey Pitman** (died 1627) is at the top, then his two wives **Alice** (d. 1613) and **Anne**, and below them two of his sons **William** (d. 1615) and **Jeffrey** (d. 1622). From their dates of death and the fact that they were lawyers and therefore grown men we can deduce that they are from the elder Jeffrey's first marriage, to Alice. The second wife, Anne, survived them all, shown by the lack of an inscription.

6 ALTAR

The gospels (the good news) are about the life and teachings of Jesus. In Christian art the authors or Evangelists are often shown with winged creatures, mentioned in the bible, which helps to identify them; **Matthew** with an **angel** or **winged man**, **Mark** a **winged lion**, **Luke** a **winged ox** and **John** with an **eagle**.

7 SECKFORD TOMB

Sir Thomas Seckford was an important citizen and **Benefactor** of the town in the 16th century, at one time being Lord of the Manor and **Patron** of the Church. His name is associated, with the Seckford Almshouses on Seckford St., the Shire Hall and the Seckford Foundation, a charity that has many local outlets. The table tomb was reconstructed from the original in the NE chapel where the organ now is.

John Shorland was 7 years old when he died in 1601. Therefore he was born in **1594**.

8 CHURCH CHEST

The date on the chest is **1672**. There were no safes in those days and the churches stored their documents and valuables in chests like these. There are **3 locks**. The keys were held by the parish priest and two churchwardens. All three would have to be present whenever the chest was opened; it was their form of security.

9 MELLER MEMORIAL WINDOW

The anagrams spell out the following countries:- **CHINA INDIA AMERICA FIJI NEW ZEALAND**

Moses holds the **tablets of stone** on which are written the **Ten Commandments**. **King David** wears a **crown** and carries a **harp**; the Psalms in the Old Testament are attributed to him. **St Paul** holds a **book**; many of the Epistles, or letters, in the New Testament were written by him.

The window commemorates the lives of the Rev. **Thomas Meller** and his wife **Emma**. He translated the Bible into other languages, thus spreading the Word of God.

10 ROOD SCREEN PANELS

There are **14 mediaeval** picture panels around the font. The **Victorian** copies of these and others, behind the organ console and the piano, on opposite sides of the church, add up to **24**. The fate of the other 10 is unknown. They would have formed the lower part of the former Rood Screen. The 'Rood' (old English for a cross) usually had Mary, mother of Jesus, and St John on either side. The Rood stair entrance is at **10**; a statue of Mary stands in the exit above, which gave access to the rood loft. The Cross is a very important symbol to Christians because Jesus died on the cross. It is used for devotional purposes and seen widely in Christian Art. A cross bearing the body of Christ is known as a crucifix. **3 crosses** - on the **Altar**, the **Seckford Tomb**, and free standing in the **chancel**, can be seen easily from here. Many others can be seen around the church mainly on memorials. If you can see those too, well done!

11 DIAMOND JUBILEE WINDOW

The queen is **Victoria**. She came to the throne in **1837** and reigned for many years. The 60th year was celebrated as her Diamond Jubilee in **1897**. Her monogram is **VRI** which stands for Victoria Regina Imperatrix - Latin for Victoria Queen and Empress (of India)

The three patron saints represented are **Ireland - St Patrick England - St George Scotland - St Andrew**

12 HATCHMENTS

These black, diamond shaped, painted boards were hung outside the house when someone important died, for example the Lord of the Manor. They were carried in the funeral procession and afterwards left in the church. Churches keep them as historic and decorative items. There is a special code used for hatchments so that they can be 'read'. A hatchment with the left side black and the right side white shows the deceased was a married man with a surviving wife. The coats-of-arms display a variety of devices; some you can see here are lion, goose, spread eagle, scallop and star. The ship is on the hatchment of Admiral Carthew. A skull means death, at least two can be seen, one of which is winged. The mottoes are usually about death and resurrection, not family mottoes. The colours are known as tinctures in Heraldry.

13 MILLENNIUM FRIEZE

The frieze was made by local people, as a Millennium project in 2000, and hangs in the church, because it is a place open to everyone. It traces the history of Woodbridge from Roman times to 2000 highlighting buildings, rivercraft, local fauna & flora, events, people and their activities. The makers' names are all stitched in.

The significance of **rats** is that they were responsible for spreading the **plague** in the Middle Ages.

14 PORCH INTERIOR

As the notice explains, by a charitable bequest, **loaves of bread** were given by John Sayer to be distributed to the **poor of the parish** every Sunday. The charity still exists today to help the poor but is managed in a different way, not just with loaves of bread.

The surviving 15c bench has poppyheads on its ends. The name may come from French poupee for puppet or doll.

15 EXTERIOR

The Church is dedicated to St Mary the Virgin, mother of Jesus, so her statue is the **central** one. The flint and stone decoration is called flushwork and is common in East Anglia. Besides the crowned **AMR** symbol there is the **quatrefoil** (four-lobed) motif with curved daggers called **mouchettes**; also **wheel** designs, **chalices**, **monstrances** displaying the Sacred Host and **crowned IS**, therefore, **for Jesus**. On the East side above the base course are **St Edmund's crown and arrows** and other heraldic devices associated with the diocese and donor.

