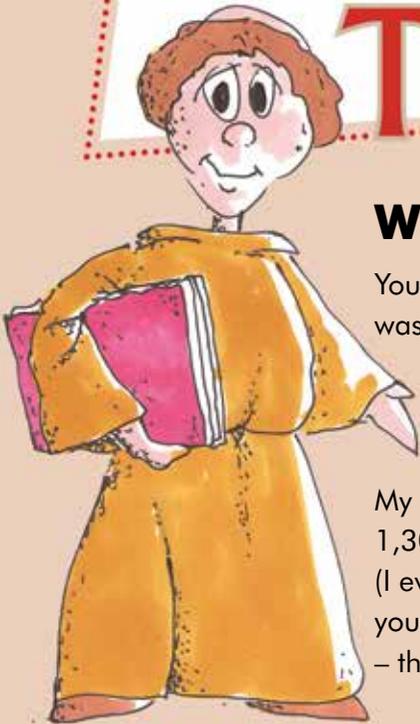




CHURCH EXPLORER TRAIL



Welcome to this church.

You are standing in a really special building that was built for Christians to worship God. Lots of the churches in North East England are really old – in fact some of them were built over 1000 years ago when Christianity first came to Britain.

My name is Bede and I lived round here about 1,300 years ago. I like finding out about things (I even wrote a history book) so I thought I'd help you explore. We'll need to have our eyes peeled – there are lots of things to see.

SHALL WE HAVE A LOOK?



LET'S LOOK HIGH AND LOW

OK, before you start exploring just stand still for a moment:

How does this church make you feel?

What can you see?

What can you smell?

Close your eyes - what can you hear?

Remember to look up:

What is the roof made of?

Are there any faces or angels?

(the faces are called grotesques "grow-tesks" and were supposed to scare away evil spirits)

Sometimes the roof is painted, like the one in the picture. It's one of our Spirit in Stone churches in Sunderland so try to visit it – it's amazing!

Sit down for a minute.

Are you sitting on a seat or a pew?

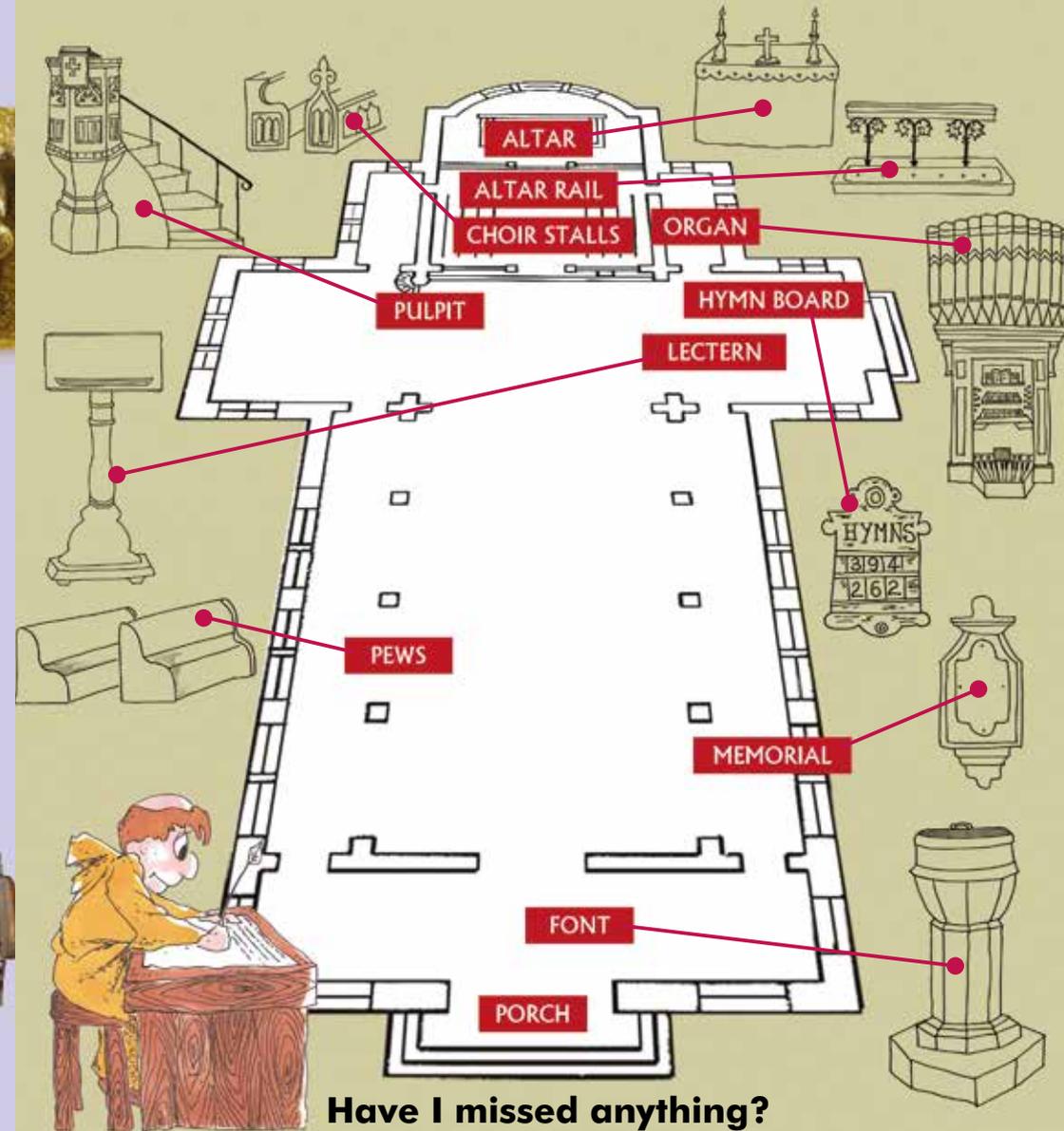
Pews often have carvings on them like this angel.

Sometimes there are even carvings underneath so have a good look. You might spot an animal or a strange creature. Like this funny looking lion:

If you came to church 700 years ago you'd have to stand because there weren't any seats. Old and sick people might sit on ledges carved, or fastened, on to walls. It's probably where the phrase "going to the wall" comes from.

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND

Churches are all sorts of shapes and sizes and sometimes it's tricky to work out what's what, so I've drawn you a plan. I've labelled the things you might see inside; see how many you can find (they might be in a different place on the plan). Look on the next page to learn more about them.



Have I missed anything?

Draw it on the outline if I have.

WORDS, WORDS, WORDS...

The bits and pieces inside a church all have special names and jobs – and it can be a bit confusing! Here's what some of them mean:



Priest, vicar or minister: the leader of the church.

Altar: a table made of wood, stone or marble. Bread and wine is blessed here during the most important part of the service, which remembers the Last Supper.

Altar rail: people kneel here when they are given bread and wine.

Organ: can you see the organ pipes (they are a bit like giant recorders) – all different sizes to make different notes.

Choir stalls: where the choir sit and sing.

Lectern: the Bible is read from the lectern.

Pulpit: the priest speaks and teaches from here.

Pews: where people sit during services.

Nave: the main part of the church. It's from a Latin word and means boat. See if the roof looks like the bottom of a boat.

Memorials: long ago, memorials were paid for by important families. Some have statues of the dead person or marble slabs with words about them.



Font: babies (and sometimes adults) are baptised here. It's usually near the entrance to church because it shows the beginning of a Christian's journey of faith. It's another Latin word and means spring of water.



WONDERFUL WINDOWS

Lots of churches have stained glass windows.

Did you know the pictures aren't just for decoration? Long ago, most people couldn't read so the windows told stories, mostly from the Bible.

One of our churches has a window that's 1,300 years old but some windows are younger than you!

Have a good look at the windows in this church, you might find:



Bible stories



Amazing angels



Hidden creatures



Musical angels



Sometimes the window has clues to other stories too. This window shows an Anglo-Saxon saint, called King Oswald.

But look behind him - that looks like a modern house doesn't it? There's a story hidden there! See if you can find any hidden stories in the windows in this church.



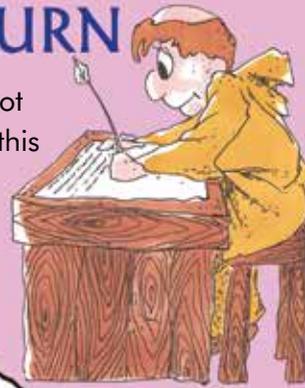
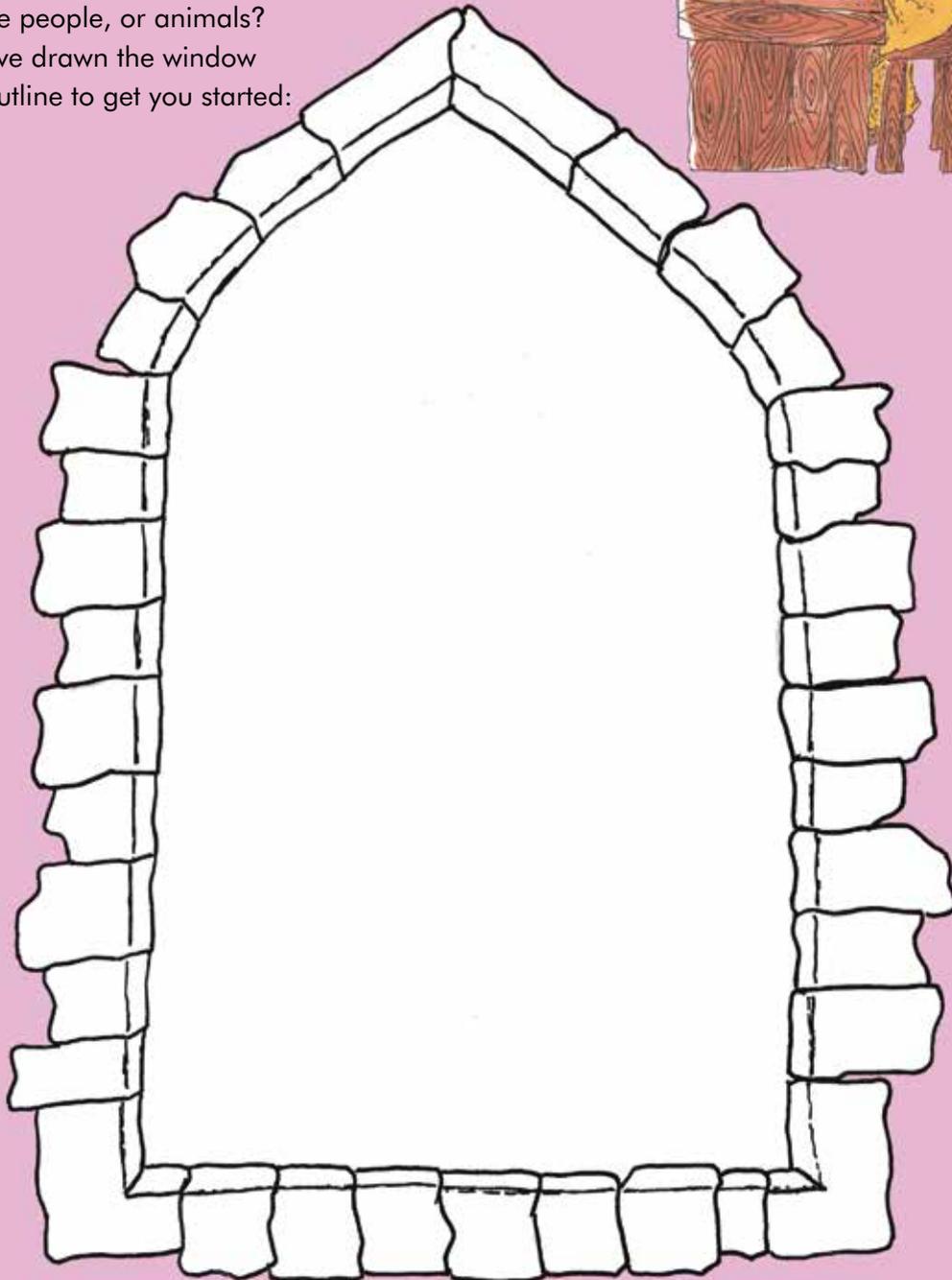
Church windows don't need stained glass to be beautiful though. Some have clear glass so you can see outside - then the beauty of the world is the picture.

Pretty amazing I think!

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

I hope you've had a really good look round. Now I've got a challenge for you. Can you design a new window for this church? Think about what it might have in it – will there be people, or animals?

I've drawn the window outline to get you started:



DON'T FORGET TO LOOK OUTSIDE

Remember to have a look at the outside of the church and see if you can be a detective:



Can you spot any blocked up doors and windows?

These are clues that the church has changed over the years – it might be older than it seems.

Are you being watched?

Can you spot any faces near the roof?

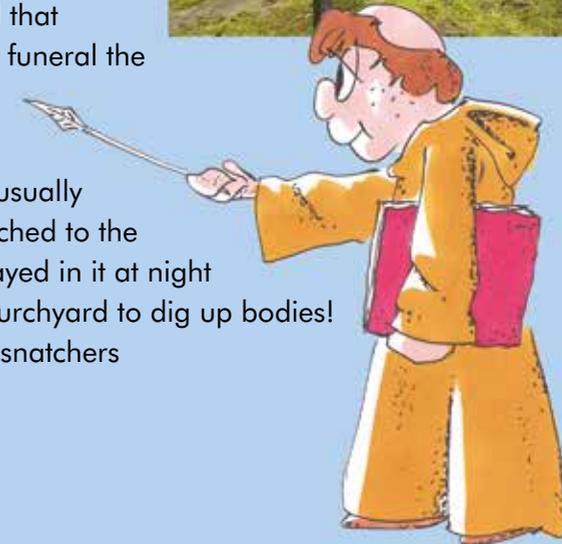
If they've got drainpipes coming out of their mouths they're called gargoyles (*it's from a French word meaning "gurgle"*). Don't stand under them if it's raining!

Is there a porch?

People used to gather there to process into church. The porch in this picture has a carving above the door – a good reminder to always look up.

There might be a lych-gate (a gate with a roof). Lych is an old English word that means "body" and when there is a funeral the coffin stops there to meet the vicar who will lead the service.

There might even be a watch box (usually made of stone and sometimes attached to the church). 200 years ago a guard stayed in it at night to stop people creeping into the churchyard to dig up bodies! See if you can find out about body snatchers – it's a spooky tale.



MARVELLOUS MEMORIALS

Is there a churchyard?

Go and have a look at the gravestones – but be careful not to fall!

Gravestones tell you all sorts of information: how old someone was when they died; who their family were; what job they did. Gravestones come in different shapes and sizes – with lots of interesting designs.

Can you find any like these?



I hope you've enjoyed exploring this church. There are lots more to discover – from Bamburgh right down to Darlington. To find them have a look on our website:

www.spiritinstone.info

Remember, all churches are full of things to find and interesting stories waiting to be discovered.

See you next time!

TEXT: ELIZABETH BAKER | CARTOONS: PHIL KNOWLING

B&W ILLUSTRATIONS: ELIZABETH & HELEN BAKER | PHOTOS: JOHN GRUNDY

Photos used in this trail were taken in Spirit in Stone project churches: see website for more information.



THE LINDISFARNE LEGACY

This trail/booklet has been created as part of the Spirit In Stone project, with the support of the Church of England Diocese of Durham, Diocese of Newcastle and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

