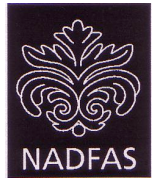


**ROYAL CHAPEL of St. JOHN the BAPTIST,
St. JOHN'S, ISLE of MAN.**

Trail Answers and Explanatory Notes
for Parents and Teachers

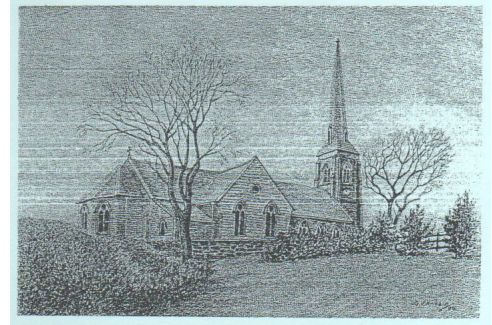


All information given is referenced from the Church Record made by IOM DFAS Church Recorders, now held by Manx National Heritage in the Manx Museum under access number MS 11165.

1. **THE BUILDING:** The main differences are the **SPIRE, WINDOWS** and the **DIFFERENT SHAPED PLAN**, but there may be other differences which will be noticed by people doing the trail, especially children.

The three main differences between the old and the present church are:

- The present church has a tall spire that the old one did not have.
- The windows of the new church are Gothic arches, whereas the ones in the old church were rectangular.
- The new church is cruciform shaped, with an elongated nave, chancel and sanctuary crossed by shorter north and south transepts. The older church was also cross-shaped but all arms were of a similar length.



See the illuminated painting on the east wall of the south transept. There is a central drawing of the present church in light brown above a darker brown image of the church before 1847. The older church, built in 1699, became a ruin and was re-built several times until it was finally demolished in 1847 so that the present church could be built. The sides and bottom of the illumination are framed with multi-coloured images of the saints depicted in the windows of various Manx churches.

2. **MANX GOVERNMENT:** Special seats are for **MEMBERS of the HOUSE of KEYS.**

The present Royal Chapel of St. John the Baptist lies in the geographical centre of the Island and was consecrated on 8 March, 1849. The Chapel has two distinct roles:

- a. To be the Parish church to St. John's.
- b. To be the Court for Tynwald, the Manx Legislature.

Tynwald is the oldest continuous parliament worldwide. The Queen is acknowledged as Lord of Man and she or her representative presides over the Tynwald Service and court sessions in the Chapel every year in July on Tynwald Day, when residents of the Isle of Man gather at the adjacent Tynwald Hill, as we have done so for over 1,000 years, to hear the laws of our land announced publicly in Manx Gaelic and English, as well as to declare any complaints. As the 'Government Chapel', St. John's Chapel is maintained by government funds.

The open benches and stalls are labelled for the twenty-four elected **MEMBERS of the HOUSE of KEYS** who represent their constituents' interests within the Manx Government.

3. **COUNCIL SEATS:** The seats in the chancel are reserved for **MEMBERS of the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**, which is the upper house of Tynwald. The Bishop sits with this Council and the other eight members are elected by the Members of the Keys.

4. **THE SANCTUARY:** On top of the back of the Queen's chair is a coloured **CROWN**. On the chair opposite is a Bishop's mitre.



5. **EAST WINDOW:**
ANGEL VISITING MARY (The Annunciation).
CHRIST'S DEATH (The Crucifixion).
EMPTY TOMB (The Resurrection when Christ rose from the dead).

The east windows consist of three recessed Gothic two-light panels, each below a central quatrefoil.

The north-most pane shows the Annunciation: A dove of peace descends in a shaft of light above the kneeling Mary. The angel Gabriel, dressed in purple and with gold-coloured wings faces the Virgin Mary with his right hand held towards her thus signifying both giving and receiving.

The middle panel depicts the Crucifixion: The Virgin Mary kneels at the foot of the cross with St. John standing behind her. Behind them both is a Roman soldier in traditional uniform. On the right, Christ is crucified. Kneeling at His left is Mary Magdalene. Another Roman soldier stands behind them.

The third panel portrays the Resurrection: Two women stand before the empty tomb. On the ground is an empty wrapping cloth and the crown of thorns. A gold-winged angel is seated on a stone slab beside the tomb with his right hand raised and his index finger pointing upwards towards heaven.

6. GOSPEL WRITERS: (Gospel = good news). St. John's sign is an **EAGLE**. The floor in the sanctuary is made up of Minton terracotta tiles. Centrally a pelican feeds four babies from her bleeding breast, surrounded by the signs of the authors of the four gospels (the Evangelists).



7. MANX COAT OF ARMS: A **RAVEN** and a **PEREGRINE FALCON** are the supporters to the Manx coat of Arms, which is painted in relief on a cream background. A crown is above the shield. The three legs of man appear in gold on a red shield. Heraldry has its own language. The gold would be described as OR and the red GULES, from old French. The Coat of Arms was granted to the Isle of Man by Her Majesty in 1996. The falcon and peregrine falcon are significant in Manx history. In 1405 Henry IV gave the Isle of Man to Sir John Stanley on condition that two falcons would be presented to every future king on his Coronation Day. The raven represents the strong Viking element in the Island's history.

8. THE PULPIT: the **PRIEST** or **MINISTER** gives his talk (or sermon) from the pulpit so that he or she **CAN BE SEEN AND HEARD EASILY**. The pulpit dates from the mid-nineteenth century.
9. THE LECTERN: The **HOLY BIBLE** is read from the Lectern. The lectern was presented to St. John's in 1959 in memory of the Rev. Vincent Stockwood, who became the first vicar of this church when it became a parish church in 1947. Before that there was a chaplain, who was appointed by Tynwald.
10. THE NORTH & SOUTH TRANSEPTS: The **ORGAN** is situated at the north end of the north transept. It was originally on the west gallery from 1852 and was moved to its present position in 1907. The original organ, built by R. Jackson & Sons of Liverpool cost £150. Part way up the white casing are four crowned heads. It is not clear who they represent.

Opposite the organ, in the windows at the south end of the south transept, several musical instruments are shown in the left-hand windows:

- i. In the upper quatrefoil the angel Gabriel holds a **HANDBELL**.
- ii. In the lower left-hand window St. Cecilia holds a **PORTABLE ORGAN**.
- iii. In the right-hand window King David plucks a **HARP**.



11. VIKING SHIP: The Isle of Man was once ruled by the **VIKINGS**. It was under Norse rule from before 1079 until 1266 and the structure of the present Tynwald continues to be largely based on the Scandinavian rather than the English model.
12. FONT: **WOOD AND STAINLESS STEEL** have been used to make this font. The present font, made of **SIXTEEN** wooden Panels replaced a stone font in 1980. Inside is a stainless steel bowl. **WATER** is put into the font when people are baptised (christened) as a sign that they have become Christians. A sixteen-sided shape is called a **HEXADECAGON** or a **HEXAKAIDECAGON**.
13. JESUS AND THE CHILDREN: There are **SEVEN** children in the window (EIGHT if you count the cherub in the quatrefoil). In the foreground is a **WAGON** and a **DOLL**. This window used to overlook the previous stone font before the staircase was built up to the gallery in 1979.

14. SOUTH PORCH: **THE STONE IN THE PORCH IS THE SHAFT OF A NORSE CROSS**. The face shows a vertical interweaving pattern.

