

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

St Giles' church at Shipbourne, Kent, an impressive, richly decorated building. Little changed since it was built in 1881, it is at least the third church on this site. These churches have had a close connection with the occupants of Fairlawne (sometimes Fairlawn) House, a mile to the north of St Giles', since the 16th Century. The house, rebuilt by Sir Henry Vane the elder in the 17th century and extended in the 18th century, was acquired by Edward Cazalet in 1871. The church contains memorials to Cazalet's three grandsons. Lt Edward Cazalet, killed on the Somme in 1916, Lionel, MC, MP, who died in mysterious circumstances in the second war and Peter, an all round sportsman, who trained horses for the Queen Mother.



To learn more about St Giles', the Cazalets and the Vanes, scan the adjacent QR Code.

1. FONT

The stone base of the font has **8 sides**. It is **octagonal**. The font is used for **BAPTISMS**. People are baptised as a sign that they have become members of the Church. (The priest dips his fingers into the blessed water in the font and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of people being baptized while saying the words of baptism).

2. BEHIND THE FONT

Sir Harry/Henry Vane, a supporter of Cromwell, was **beheaded at Tower Hill** in 1662 on the orders of Charles II. He was considered too dangerous to live. His coffin, together with other members of his family, is buried in a vault underneath the church. The present church was built in 1881, the foundation stone, visible on the outside of the church having been laid by Mrs Edward Cazalet on 24 October 1879. It was dedicated by Archibald Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury on 3 August 1881

3. THE WEST WINDOW

The bird at the top of the window on the left, above the font, is a **Dove**. It is a universal symbol of peace and purity. The dove represents the Holy Spirit present at Jesus' baptism. According to an inscription on the window, the glass was **destroyed by enemy action in the 1939-1945 war**. A bomb fell in the churchyard on 14 December 1940, causing extensive damage to the nave roof and windows.

4. THE NAVE



The seats in the Nave are **Pews**. Some take the view that the seats should be referred to as *benches*, reserving the term pew for seating which is enclosed, e.g. by a door. Others refer to these as *box pews*. The **congregation** sit in the pews. A small brass plate indicates that the front seat on the left used to be reserved for people from **Fairlawne(e)**, the home of the Cazalets who built the church. However, following the sale of Fairlawne in the 1970s following the death of Peter, the seat is no longer reserved. A striking feature of the nave are the sgraffito wall decorations, made by scratching through a top layer of plaster to reveal a different coloured plaster below.

5. LECTERN

The book usually found on the lectern is the **Holy Bible**. From the Holy Bible the words of God are read. The lectern is in the form of an **Eagle**. Eagles are thought to be the birds that can fly highest and so nearer to the heavens.

6. NORTH WINDOW

The **Preacher** - often the Rector or the Priest in charge - uses the pulpit to address the congregation, for example when giving a sermon, a talk on a religious or moral subject, especially one given during a church service and based on a passage from the Bible. It is high **so that preacher can be seen by everyone in the church. S/he can be heard easily and s/he can see everyone too!**

7. CORBEL

Corbels hold up **the roof** of the church. The word corbel comes from Old French and derives from the Latin *corbellus*, a diminutive of *corvus* ("raven"), which refers to the beak-like appearance. The creature depicted in the corbel is probably a **lizard** or a **salamander** but could possibly be a **dragon**.

8. TOWER

There is a **circular opening in the middle of the vaulted ceiling** through which the bells were raised into the tower. hole in the centre of the ceiling under the tower, through the bells were installed. The bells were cast by the same firm that made the organ – T C Lewis of Brixton. The bells are rung immediately **before Sunday services, to summon people to the church**. They might also be rung immediately before and after weddings, and at funerals.

9. THE ORGAN

There are **9** pipes on the left, **15** in middle and **9** pipes on the right - 33 in total – which can be seen when standing in the aisle and looking at the organ. There are many more pipes which can't be seen! The organ was given by Mrs Marshall, Edward Cazalet's mother-in-law and has had few if any modifications since it was first installed. The organ is played **at the beginning and end of services, including weddings and to accompany the choir and congregation in the singing of hymns and psalms**.

10. CHANCEL

This is the **ALTAR** table. It is the focal point of the church. It is used for the main Christian act of the Eucharist (Holy Communion). It is also called "The Lords Table", "The Holy Table", or "The Communion Table". The cloth that covers it will be **cream, purple, red or green**. The seasons of the Church's year are marked by using different colours for the priest's vestments, altar frontals and other hangings: White or cream for festivals, Christmas, Easter, and patron saints, 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) and martyrs, and green for all other periods (known as Ordinary Time).

11. EAST WINDOW

The bird at the very top of the window is a **PELICAN** which is **feeding its young**. The pelican was believed to pierce its own breast with its beak and feed its young with its own blood. It became a symbol of Christ sacrificing himself for man. The belief probably came about because of the pelican's red-tipped beak and very white feathers, and because long-beaked birds such as the pelican are often to be found standing with their beaks resting on their breasts.

12. MEMORIAL PLAQUE



The plaque commemorates the life of **Peter Cazalet**, race horse trainer to the Queen Mother. A tiny bronze on the plaque suggests he enjoyed playing **Cricket, Tennis and Croquet** (as well as badminton and real tennis). Peter's father, William, represented Great Britain at real tennis – *jeu de paume* – at the 1908 Olympics. The real tennis court built for him at Fairlawne is still in use.

13. LADY VANE CHAPEL

Lord Barnard erected the monument. He was married to **Elizabeth**. His father was **Sir Henry Vane**. The monument was erected in the newly constructed second church, before Lord Barnard's death – possibly because he thought his son would not put up the monument afterwards. The inscription was left blank until the 1930s!

14. THE CHOIR STALLS

Creatures include **geese, swans, a tortoiseshell butterfly, a red admiral butterfly, a dragonfly, a large white butterfly, a mallard duck and drake**. This seat cushion was embroidered some 15 years ago, by Yvonne Young and is one of four inspired by the hymn, "**All things bright and beautiful**", first published by Cecil Frances Alexander in her *Hymns for Little Children* in 1848, the first line of which is given on the side of the cushion.