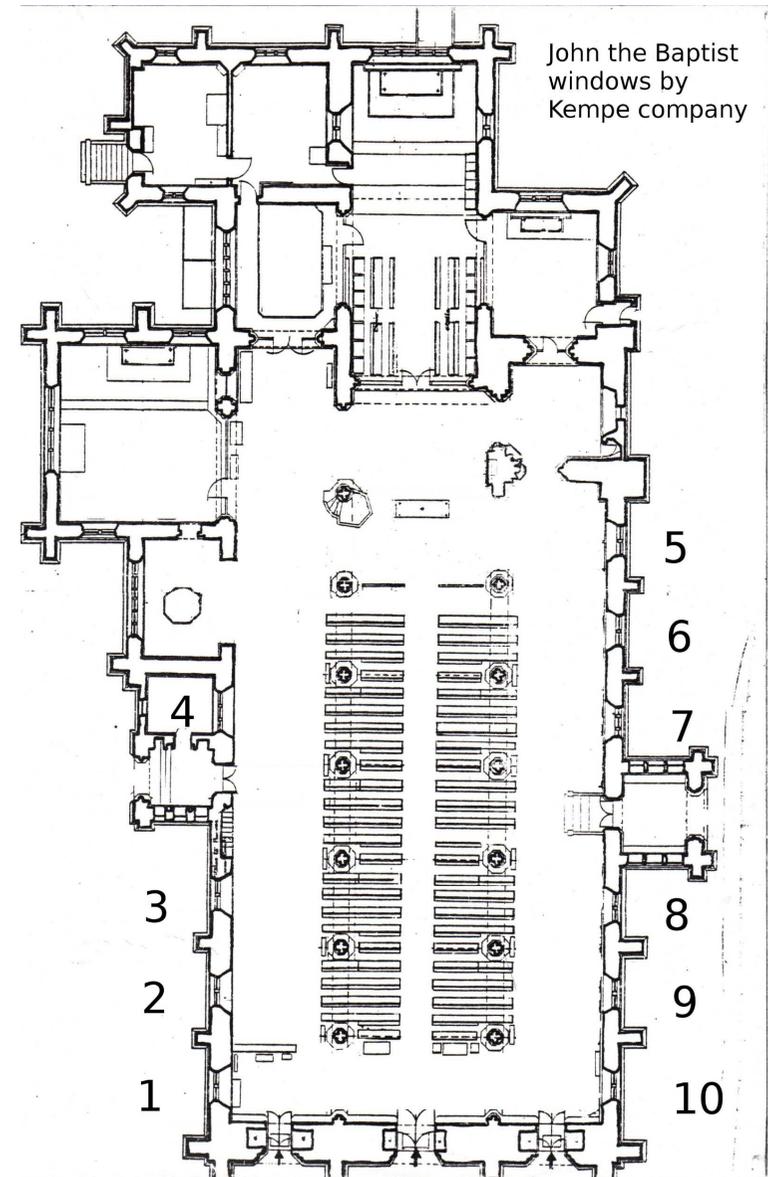


The story of St John the Baptist in stained glass

Amongst the stained glass introduced into the parish church of St John the Baptist in the 1860's was a series of windows made by Hardman's of Birmingham.

These windows were replaced in the 1920's with glass made by the Kempe company but following closely the designs of the 1860's Hardman windows.

Starting by the entrance at the North West corner of the church, there are ten windows in the sequence - four along the North wall and then a further six returning along the South Wall of the church.



Like comic strips or cartoons, the sequence of images taken together with the words included in them, tell the story of John the Baptist's life.

The scene to the right represents the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth, her cousin, just as the medieval wall painting at St Thomas' church in Salisbury does.





Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard

Zechariah, a priest, and his wife, Elizabeth, were childless.

An angel appeared to him, standing at the side of the altar. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

But the angel said to him:

"Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. He will be a joy and delight to you..."

Zechariah was so shocked that he no longer able to speak.

Blessed art thou among women

Elizabeth greeted her cousin Mary saying:
*“Blessed are you among women, and
blessed is the child you will bear!”*

And Mary replied:
*“My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour ...”* –
the words used daily in churches in evening
prayer as the ‘Magnificat’.

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three
months and then returned home.





His name is John
He shall be called John

When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. Her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.

On the eighth day they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, but his mother spoke up and said, *“No! He is to be called John.”*

They said to her, *“There is no one among your relatives who has that name.”*

Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone’s astonishment he wrote, *“His name is John.”* Immediately, Zechariah was able to speak again.

The Word was made
flesh





In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judaea

People from Jerusalem and the whole Judean countryside went out to see and hear John the Baptist. They were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord'

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him

When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven:

“You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”





John before Herod

But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of his marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done, Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison.

John calling unto him two of his disciples
sendeth them to Jesus

And they said unto him 'Art Thou he that
should come or look we for another'





Herod the King sendeth an executioner, and he went and beheaded him in prison

On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and the leading men of Galilee. The daughter of Herodias danced for the guests and pleased Herod and his dinner guests. The king said to the girl,

“Ask me for anything you want, and I’ll give it to you.”

Prompted by her mother, she said,

“Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.”

The king was distressed, but he ordered that her request be granted and had John beheaded in the prison. His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother.

And his head was brought in a charger and given to the damsel and she brought it to her mother - Herodias

John's disciples came and took his body and buried it.

Then they went and told Jesus.

John's disciples take his body to burial

