

Averham St Michael and All Angels Carved heads



heritage learning welcome

Aim: To recognise that everyone is different and special

Objective: Pupils will find and look at some of the carved heads in the church and recognise that they are all different. They will explore how people are different.

Curriculum links:
KS1 Myself and Belonging

Activity: The children will begin by looking for some of the sculpted heads and then make their own heads, thinking about how it might feel to have a model of your head in church.

Resources: Air dry modelling clay, water, soap and towels, trays for the completed faces



Information for Leader

This session is based on the stone corbels found at the base of the arches. They portray faces and angels and foliage. We are focussing on those which portray faces. The figures on the monuments will also be mentioned.

Introduction (5 mins)

- Start with the children sitting in the pews. After they have taken off their coats and settled down, tell them you have some 'friends' hiding in the church, but they ran away and hid when they heard the children come in. Can the children help you find your friends? Allow the children three minutes to look around and see how many faces they can find in church. (You may need to remind them about not running in church and the need to be quiet, so as not to frighten the friends.)
- Call the children back together. As they tell you where your 'friends' are hiding, thank the children for their help. Ask all the children to keep watching and see if they can find any more 'friends'.

Activity (30 mins)

- The children will have found human heads on the corbels, but also angels and the green man. They will also have found the figures on the monuments. We are going to concentrate on the faces on the corbels.
- Explain that the 'friends' were put there to decorate the church. We do know who the figures on the monuments represent, but we don't have names for the friends whose faces are on the corbels, we don't know who they are meant to represent. They may have been based on the stonemasons who carved them, or they may have been made up people. What might the stonemasons and their families have thought and felt when they looked at their faces in the church?
- What might it have felt like to have your face in church on the corbels, or to have a monument with one of your ancestors on? (Encourage answers around feeling important, valued, that you belonged, being special in the community).
- If you were making models of faces to go in church now, who would you include? (With younger children this is most likely to be people they know – encourage them to say why they would have that person.)
- Give each child a piece of clay (about the size of a satsuma) and ask them to make a head. You could quickly demonstrate this so they realise they only need the front of the face and how to make a hole in the back so they can be hung on a nail. As the children make their heads, talk to them about who they are making and what that person is like.
- When they are finished make sure each has a hole for hanging and the child's initials on the back. Have plenty of bowls of warm water and towels for washing hands. Keep the finished heads on trays for transporting back to school later.

Plenary (5 mins)

- Ask if anyone has found any new 'friends' while they have been working.
- Pause to look at the heads the children have made and to appreciate the variety there is in them, each one is unique. If appropriate say a prayer together:
 - Dear God, Thank you for the men who made the faces in church a long time ago, and that we can still enjoy them. Thank you for making each one of us different and special. Help us to remember that everyone we meet is special to you. Amen

Extension

- The heads could be kept in church for the congregation to see on Sunday, before being returned to school.
- Look at other examples of faces in churches. The best nationally are at Kilpeck in Herefordshire (<http://www.britainexpress.com/counties/hereford/Kilpeck.htm>).
- In Southwell and Nottingham Diocese look at:
 - Holme (<http://southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk/holme/hfitting.php#extcarvings>) for some carvings of unusual beasts and people outside the church
 - Edwinstowe (<http://southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk/edwinstowe/hpics.php>) for clear pictures of heads
 - Headon (<http://southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk/headon-cum-upton/hpics.php>) for named carvings – Edward I and his wife Eleanor