

= St Caian 's Church , Tregaian =

St Caian 's Church , Tregaian , also known as St Caean 's Church , Tregaeian , is a small medieval church dating from the 14th century in Anglesey , north Wales . It is dedicated to St Caian , a Christian from the 5th or 6th century about whom little is known . The building contains a late 14th @-@ century east window and a late 15th @-@ century doorway . The churchyard contains the grave of William ap Howel , who died in 1581 at the age of 105 , leaving over forty children between the ages of 8 and 89 and over three hundred living descendants .

The church is still used for worship by the Church in Wales , and is one of three churches in a combined parish . It is a Grade II * listed building , a national designation given to " particularly important buildings of more than special interest " , in particular because it is regarded as " an excellent late Medieval rural church " .

= = History and location = =

The date of construction of the first Christian building on this site is unknown . The church is dedicated to St Caian , a Christian from the 5th or 6th century , about whom little is known . One manuscript says that his father was St Caw , a king in northern Britain who lost his lands and sought safety in Anglesey , where the ruler Maelgwn Gwynedd gave him land in the north @-@ east of the island , the district known as Twrcelyn . If Caian was a son of St Caw , then his sisters included St Cwyllog , who established the nearby church of St Cwyllog , Llangwyllog , in the 6th century . Other manuscripts say that he was active in the 5th century and was a son or grandson of Brychan , a king from south Wales .

Caian gives his name to the hamlet of Tregaian in which the church is situated : the Welsh word tref (shortened here to tre) means " settlement " , and " ? gaian " is a modified form of the saint 's name ? i.e. " Caian 's settlement " . Tregaian is about 2 @.@ 5 miles (4 @.@ 0 km) north of Llangefni , the county town of Anglesey , and the church is in the countryside by a small road .

The present church is medieval , dating from the latter part of the 14th century , which is the period given to the east window . The doorway is from the late 15th century , the roof from the end of the 16th or beginning of the 17th century , and the nave windows and the panelling of the pulpit are from the 17th century . It is still used for worship by the Church in Wales , as one of three churches in the combined benefice of Llangefni with Tregaeian with Llanddyfnan (Talwrn) . It is within the deanery of Malltraeth , the archdeaconry of Bangor and the Diocese of Bangor . As of 2013 , the priest in charge of the parish is the Reverend J Ashley @-@ Roberts .

= = Architecture and fittings = =

The church is built from rubble masonry . The roof , which is made from slate , has a stone bellcote at the west end . Entrance is through the doorway on the south side , from the late 15th century ; it has decorated surrounds and a square frame . There is no structural division between the nave (where the congregation sit) and the chancel (where the altar is located) apart from a single step up into the chancel . The church is about 40 feet 6 inches (12 @.@ 3 m) long by 14 feet 6 inches (4 @.@ 4 m) wide . The east window , from the late 14th century , is set in a pointed arch with decorative edging . It has stained glass from 1916 depicting Christ crowning a knight with the words " Well done thou good and faithful servant / Take unto you the whole armour of God . " There are two pairs of square @-@ headed windows in the south wall , dating from the 17th century . On the north side of the church , a second entrance was blocked up in the late 19th century , and there is one pair of square @-@ headed windows , also from the 17th century ; there is also a small window at the west end of the church , from the 17th or 18th century . The beams of the roof can be seen from inside the church . Behind the altar is a panelled reredos from the 19th century .

The church has a 12th @-@ century circular font , decorated with an irregular pattern of chevrons on the side . The bell is dated 1717 , whilst the pews are from the 19th century . There are memorials tablets from the 18th , 19th and 20th centuries on the walls , some of which

commemorate the Lloyd family from a nearby house , Plas Tregaian . A 1937 survey by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire noted a plain silver cup dated 1714 ? 15 . The churchyard contains the grave of William ap Howel , who died at the age of 105 in 1581 . Married three times , he fathered 42 or 43 children in and out of wedlock , and more than 300 of his descendants attended his funeral . His children at his death ranged in age from 8 to 89 .

= = Assessment = =

The church has national recognition and statutory protection from alteration as it has been designated as a Grade II * listed building ? the second @-@ highest of the three grades of listing , designating " particularly important buildings of more than special interest " . It was given this status on 12 May 1970 , and has been listed because it is " an excellent late Medieval rural church " . Cadw (the Welsh Assembly Government body responsible for the built heritage of Wales and the inclusion of Welsh buildings on the statutory lists) also states that it " retains a strong simple character in the retention of many early features and its original plan , with structurally undivided nave and chancel . "

The 19th @-@ century antiquarian Angharad Llwyd described the church as " a small but neat edifice " , and noted the " handsome " east window . The 19th @-@ century writer Samuel Lewis said that the church was " simple and primitive in its construction " . Writing in 1847 , the clergyman and antiquarian Harry Longueville Jones said that the font was " remarkable " for having no drain , and was " hardly large enough for immersion . " He added that the east window was of " rather singular " design .

A 2006 guide to the churches of Anglesey notes the " unusually wide " east window . A 2009 guide to the buildings of the region says that the church " gives an impression of what the Anglesey parish churches were like before so many were reassembled in the 19th century " ? partly because the walls lean , it adds . The east window has also been compared to that of St Ceidio 's Church , Rhodogeidio , also on Anglesey .