

= St Edern 's Church , Bodedern =

St Edern 's Church , Bodedern ( sometimes referred to as St Ederyn 's Church ) is a medieval parish church in the village of Bodedern , in Anglesey , north Wales . Although St Edern established a church in the area in the 6th century , the oldest parts of the present building date from the 14th century . Subsequent alterations include the addition of some windows in the 15th century , and a chancel , transept and porch in the 19th century , when the nave walls were largely rebuilt . Stained glass was also inserted into the windows of the chancel and transept .

The church contains a 6th @-@ century inscribed stone found near the village , a medieval font , and some 17th @-@ century decorated wooden panels from Jesus College , Oxford , which was formerly connected with the church . St Edern 's also owns three pieces of 19th @-@ century church silverware , but a silver chalice dated 1574 was lost some time during the 19th century . An 18th @-@ century gallery at the west end rests on two oak crossbeams , one of which was previously used to support the rood loft .

The church is still used for worship by the Church in Wales , one of nine in a combined parish , but as of 2013 there has not been a vicar in the parish since September 2009 . 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 " a good example of a late medieval church , its character maintained in the late 19th @-@ century restoration and rebuilding work , and retaining some of the medieval fabric and windows . "

= = History and location = =

Bodedern is a village in Anglesey , Wales , about 5 miles ( 8 km ) from the port town of Holyhead . " Aeternus " , known in Welsh as St Edern or sometimes in a variant spelling as " St Ederyn " , is recorded in the Welsh genealogies as the son or grandson of Beli ap Rhun ( a 6th @-@ century king of Gwynedd ) . He appears as " Edern ap Nudd " , one of the knights of King Arthur , in the Mabinogion ( a collection of medieval Welsh prose tales ) . He established a church in the area in the 6th century , perhaps at Pen Eglwys Edern , a site about half a mile away ( 800 m ) from the present building ( eglwys means " church " and pen means " head " or " top " ) . Excavations there in the early 1970s revealed a cemetery from the 5th or 6th century . The village takes its name from the saint ; the Welsh prefix bod means " dwelling of " . The present building stands in a churchyard in the centre of Bodedern , on the north side of Church Street .

St Edern 's is medieval in origin , with later additions and alterations . The oldest part is the nave , which has been described as " essentially 14th @-@ century " , although it was rebuilt in 1871 during restoration work under Henry Kennedy , architect of the Diocese of Bangor . It was one of many churches in Anglesey to be rebuilt or restored in the 19th century ? few remained untouched ? and Kennedy was responsible for much of the work carried out from the 1840s to the 1890s . The north wall was rebuilt above the tops of the windows , whereas only the bottom 2 to 3 feet ( 0 @. @ 6 to 0 @. @ 9 m ) of the south wall was left unaltered . During this work , some of the nave windows inserted in the 15th century were repositioned , and a chancel ( at the east end ) , a porch ( south @-@ west corner ) and a transept or side chapel ( north @-@ east corner of the nave ) were added . The " extensive " work cost about £ 1 @, @ 000 .

St Edern 's is still used for worship by the Church in Wales ( the Anglican church within Wales ) , as one of nine parish churches in the combined benefice of Bodedern with Llanfaethlu . The nine churches do not have an incumbent priest as of 2013 , and have not had one since September 2009 . The church is within the deanery of Llifon and Talybolion , the archdeaconry of Bangor , and the Diocese of Bangor .

The church was at one time an ecclesiastical dependency ( or " daughter church " ) of St Cybi 's , Holyhead . The right of patronage ( the power to appoint the rector of Holyhead and its associated churches and the right to receive income from the church ) was bequeathed to Jesus College , Oxford , in 1648 . The college was the patron of the parish until 1920 , when the Welsh Church Act 1914 came into force and the Church in Wales was disestablished . In 1849 , the writer Samuel

Lewis noted that the college and Queen Anne 's Bounty ( a fund to support poor clergy ) had recently each paid £ 400 for a new parsonage . He also recorded that the college received a rent charge of £ 476 and 8 shillings each year from the parish instead of receiving the tithes . The college donated £ 200 towards the restoration work in 1871 .

= = Architecture and fittings = =

= = = Construction and layout = = =

St Edern 's is built in the Perpendicular style using local stone , with blocks of cut sandstone as the external face . The roof is made from slate with stone copings and has a bellcote at the west end , with one bell ( dating probably from the 17th century ) . There is one external buttress to the south @-@ east of the nave to help support the weight of the building , and there are crosses on the roof of the porch and at the east end of the nave and chancel roofs .

The church 's entrance is an arched outer doorway in the porch , with a 15th @-@ century pointed inner door set in a square frame described by one architectural guide as " boldly moulded " . The roof of the porch reuses medieval wood . The nave , which has five bays , measures 59 feet 6 inches by 16 feet 9 inches ( 18 @.@ 1 by 5 @.@ 1 m ) . A gallery at the west end is supported by two oak crossbeams , one of which has the date of 1777 inscribed . According to one 19th @-@ century writer , an old rood loft had previously rested on one of the beams supporting the gallery . The late @-@ medieval internal roof timbers are exposed . The chancel , which is 17 by 16 feet ( 5 @.@ 2 by 4 @.@ 9 m ) , is raised two steps above the nave and is separated from it by a Victorian pointed arch ; there is also a Victorian arch between the nave and the north transept . The second of the three steps leading up from the chancel to the sanctuary at the east end is decorated with encaustic tiles , with the Welsh words *Golchaf fy nwyllaw mewn diniweidrwydd ath allor o Arglwydd a amgylch hynaf* ( " Wash my passion away with innocence at the altar of the Lord here " ) .

= = = Windows = = =

There are five windows on the south side of the nave ; the one to the west of the porch is set in a pointed frame , and the others are in square frames . The middle and easternmost of the five date originally from the 15th century but have been repositioned ; the other three are 19th @-@ century . On the north side , there is a pointed doorway from the early 14th century , with a 19th @-@ century window to the west and two repositioned 15th @-@ century windows with two lights ( sections of window separated by mullions ) to the east . The west wall has a repositioned 15th @-@ century window . The chancel 's east window is also 15th @-@ century , with three lights headed by trefoils ( a three @-@ leaf pattern ) and decorated with tracery . It has 19th @-@ century glass depicting the Ascension . The south side of the chancel and the north transept have 19th @-@ century windows ; the south chancel window has three lights with tracery headed by cinquefoils ( a five @-@ leaf pattern ) , with geometric patterns of glass .

The east and south chancel stained glass is in memory of the wife , son , and daughter of Hugh Wynne Jones , who died in the mid @-@ 19th century . He was the first priest to be vicar of the parish ( 1868 ? 1888 ) ; his predecessors had been curates , a lower position . He is depicted as Simeon , who in Luke 's Gospel receives Jesus and his family when they visit the Temple of Jerusalem after the birth of Jesus ( an event celebrated as the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple ) . The north transept has a three @-@ light window to the north depicting St Edern , by Franz Mayer & Co . There are also windows with two lights on the east and west sides of the transept , one of which has a window from 1951 by Celtic Studios .

= = = Panelwork and other fittings = = =

St Edern 's has several pieces of 17th @-@ century panelwork , possibly of Dutch origin . There is

a softwood panel screen between the nave and chancel , decorated with carved flowers and fruit , with a frieze of acanthus leaf . The reredos ( the screen behind the altar ) has further carved panelling , as does the upper section of the rectangular pulpit , a reading desk , the communion rail and a table . The panels of the communion rail , set between wooden columns decorated with fruit , flowers and ribbons , are topped by a long balustrade , also decorated with acanthus leaf . The panels came from Jesus College , possibly from the college chapel which was renovated in 1864 by the architect G. E. Street , or from a disused gallery in the library ; the balustrade previously ran along the tops of the chapel 's pews . The college 's archivist has described the chancel as containing " a startling assemblage " of panels , " patched together in jigsaw fashion " and " heavily varnished " .

A stone dating from the 6th century and inscribed with the name " Ergagni " is kept in the transept . It was discovered during excavations of the Pen Eglwys Edern site in 1972 . The font , which is medieval in date , is a plain octagonal bowl set on an octagonal column . Memorials include a " chunky Grecian memorial " to an officer of the Bengal Native Infantry who died in 1835 , a tablet in neoclassical style from 1839 , and a slate tablet to an army officer who died in 1914 . A survey by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire in 1937 also noted an oak communion table and two oak chairs of simple design , both from the early 18th century , and various memorials inside and outside the church from the 17th and 18th centuries .

A survey of church plate within the Bangor diocese in 1906 recorded three silver items : a plain chalice dated 1887 ? 88 , a paten dated 1803 ? 04 , and a flagon inscribed " Bodedern 1809 " . The author noted that church records from 1776 to 1831 included mention of another silver chalice , dated 1574 , with other references to a flagon and a paten made from pewter , but these were no longer to be found .

= = Churchyard = =

The churchyard contains the war grave of a Royal Field Artillery soldier of World War I.

= = 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 5 April 1971 because it was regarded as " a good example of a late medieval church , its character maintained in the late 19th @-@ century restoration and rebuilding work , and retaining some of the medieval fabric and windows " . Cadw ( the Welsh Government body responsible for the built heritage of Wales and the inclusion of Welsh buildings on the statutory lists ) also notes " some finely detailed fittings including the chancel screen , reredos , pulpit and reading desk with 17th @-@ century carved panels , and also a late 18th @-@ century gallery at the west end . "

There are various descriptions of the church as it stood before Kennedy 's 1871 rebuilding . In 1833 , the Anglesey antiquarian Angharad Llwyd described the church as " a small ancient structure , displaying some good architectural details " . She also noted that it contained " some fine monuments " to members of local families . The Welsh politician and church historian Sir Stephen Glynne visited the church in 1851 . He said that the church was " little superior in size or architecture to the generality of Anglesey churches " , but added that it was in " a neat and creditable state " . He also commented upon the " neat and uniform " pews . In 1862 , the clergyman and antiquarian Harry Longueville Jones wrote that the church was " of good work , and with the details of doors and windows carefully elaborated . " He compared the east window to that at St Mary 's Church , Llanfair @-@ yng @-@ Nghornwy ( also on Anglesey ) , and noted that there was an ambry or recess in the east wall beneath the window .