

= St Eleth 's Church , Amlwch =

St Eleth 's Church , Amlwch is a parish church built in the Neo @-@ classical style in 1800 in Amlwch , a town on the island of Anglesey in north Wales . It stands on the site of earlier buildings , with the first church here said to have been established by St Elaeth ( or Eleth ) in the 6th century . Increasing prosperity in the town through copper mining during the 18th century led to the construction of a new church to serve the growing population .

The church is still used for services within the Church in Wales , and is one of four churches in the parish of Amlwch . It is a Grade II \* listed building , a designation given to " particularly important buildings of more than special interest " , because it is a " substantially Neo @-@ classical church retaining much of its original architectural character " .

= = History and location = =

The first church in the area was reputedly established in the 6th century by Elaeth , or Eleth . He was a ruler from northern Britain who fled to Anglesey in north Wales when ousted from power , settling at St Seiriol 's monastery at Penmon .

Amlwch grew and became increasingly prosperous during the 18th century after copper mining began at nearby Parys Mountain in 1768 . As a result , the church became too small . Planning for a replacement church began in 1787 when Thomas Williams , " the Copper King " , offered £ 600 ( approximately £ 68 @,@ 800 in present @-@ day terms ) . The Copper Mines Company provided the majority of the money required for the new church ; Henry Paget , 1st Earl of Uxbridge , and the Reverend Edward Hughes ( a co @-@ owner of the mines ) also made donations . Work eventually got underway and the church , designed by the architect James Wyatt , was built and consecrated in 1800 . Different figures for the cost of construction are given by two 19th @-@ century writers : in 1833 , Angharad Llwyd said that the cost was £ 4 @,@ 000 ( approximately £ 291 @,@ 300 in present @-@ day terms ) but in 1849 , Samuel Lewis stated it to have been £ 2 @,@ 500 ( approximately £ 182 @,@ 000 in present @-@ day terms ) .

The new church was constructed on the same site as earlier buildings , set back from the road on the east side of Queen Street in the town centre . Some internal alterations were made in 1867 under Henry Kennedy , the architect of the Diocese of Bangor : tracery was added to the windows , a chancel arch and arcades inserted , and the galleries removed . Restoration took place in 1999 and 2000 under the architect Adam Voelcker , when a gallery at the west end , a baptistry and meeting rooms were added .

The church is still used for services as part of the Church in Wales . It is in the parish of Amlwch , which has three other churches in the surrounding area ( St Eilian , Llaneilian ; St Gwenllwyfo , Llanwenllwyfo ; and St Tyfrydog , Llandyfrydog ) . As of 2012 , the priest in charge is H. V. Jones . The parish is in the deanery of Twrcelyn , the archdeaconry of Bangor and the Diocese of Bangor .

= = Architecture and fittings = =

The predominant style of the church is Neo @-@ classical , although there are some Gothic elements . It is built from local stone , with courses of rubble and ashlar dressings ; the roof is made of slate . There is a tower at the centre of the west end , which houses a clock and a bell @-@ chamber behind large arched windows ; it has a parapet with pinnacles at each corner . There are two bells , one dated 1687 and the other dated 1820 . The arched doorway is set into the tower , with a circular window ( an oculus ) above it ; the tracery in this window was added in the 19th century .

Inside , the division of the nave from the narrow chancel was carried out in the 19th century through the addition of a chancel arch and creation of a chapel at the east end . Arcades were also added in the nave , to form aisles to either side . The inside of the roof is plastered . The east window contains 19th @-@ century stained glass . There are memorial stones , mostly from the previous church on the site .

The organ is 19th @-@ century by Bevington and is housed in a gallery at the west end that was added in the restoration in 1999 and 2000 . The font dates from 1900 . Outside the church , the large lychgate at the west of the churchyard dates from the early 19th century . Inside the churchyard , the gravestones have been moved to the side , possibly for ease of maintenance .

= = Assessment = =

The church is 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 25 October 1951 , and has been listed because it is " a substantially Neo @-@ classical church retaining much of its original architectural character . " Cadw ( the Welsh Assembly Government body responsible for the built heritage of Wales ) notes that the " lightness of its Victorian restoration left the original fabric and much of the detail intact , and traces changing attitudes to church layout and style without obliterating the character of the original . " It also states that the church is historically important for its links with copper mining . The lychgate has also been given listed building status at the lowest level , Grade II ( for buildings of national importance and special interest ) , because it is a " good early example " of a 19th @-@ century lychgate of " characteristic local type " and because it forms a group with the adjacent church .

The 19th @-@ century Welsh antiquarian Angharad Llwyd described the church as a " spacious handsome structure " , and Samuel Lewis ( a writer of topographical guides in the 19th century ) described the church in very similar words as a " spacious and handsome structure " ; he particularly noted the " lofty square embattled tower crowned with pinnacles . " A 2009 guide to the buildings of north Wales describes the 19th @-@ century alterations by Kennedy as " egregious " , but says that the interior " possesses considerable grace " , with the columns of the arcades being " touched by a breath of classicism " . A 2006 guide to the churches of Anglesey describes it as " a good example of a tastefully restored church " , and a " spacious , high sided building with an impressive tower " . It also comments that its shape is not typical of churches on the island .