

= St Cristiolus 's Church , Llangristiolus =

St Cristiolus 's Church , Llangristiolus is a medieval church near the village of Llangristiolus , in Anglesey , north Wales . The village , about 1 mile (1 @. @ 6 km) from the building , takes its name from the church . Reputedly founded by St Cristiolus in 610 , the present building dates from the 12th and 13th centuries . Alterations were made in the 16th century , when the large east window in Perpendicular style was added to the chancel ? a window which has been described by one guide to the buildings of north Wales as " almost too big to fit " in the wall . Some restoration work took place in the mid @- @ 19th century , when further windows were added and the chancel largely rebuilt .

The church is still in use for weekly Sunday services (in Welsh and English) , as part of the Church in Wales , and is one of four 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 of its age and the east window . The church contains a decorated font from the 12th century , as well as memorials from the 18th , 19th and 20th centuries . Richard Owen , a 19th @- @ century Calvinistic Methodist minister from Llangristiolus , is buried in the graveyard .

= = History and location = =

St Cristiolus 's Church is in central Anglesey , north Wales . It is situated just to the south of the A5 and A55 roads , on raised ground above Malltraeth Marsh . The modern village of Llangristiolus is about 1 mile (1 @. @ 6 km) to the west of the church . The village takes its name from the church : the Welsh word llan originally meant " enclosure " and then " church " , and " -gristiolus " is a modified form of the saint 's name .

The date of foundation of the first building on this site is unknown . Geraint Jones , in a 2006 guide to Anglesey churches , wrote that it is thought that St Cristiolus established a church here in 610 . Cristiolus , a 7th @- @ century saint about whom little detail is known , was a follower of St Cadfan , a Breton saint associated with the Christian community on Bardsey Island in Wales . Cristiolus is also credited with the foundation of the church in Eglwyswrrw in modern @- @ day Pembrokeshire , south Wales . He was the brother of St Rhystud , who established the church at Llanrhystud in mid @- @ Wales .

The present building dates from the 12th century ; it is the only medieval building in the parish . During the 13th century , the chancel was extended , and the older part of the church may have been rebuilt using the previous stones at this time . By 1535 , the position of rector of the parish was held by the person holding the position of Archdeacon of Anglesey , as part of the remuneration for that office ; this is no longer the case . Further structural changes to the church were made in the early 16th century when some windows were added to the chancel . In 1852 , restoration work took place to the nave and chancel under Henry Kennedy , architect of the Diocese of Bangor . The chancel was rebuilt , although the east wall and window were retained , and further windows were added in the church .

St Cristiolus 's Church is still in regular use and belongs to the Church in Wales . It is one of six churches in the combined benefice of Plwyf Seintiau Braint a Chefnï . The other churches in the benefice are St Michael 's , Gaerwen ; St Ffinan 's , Llanffinan ; St Caffo 's , Llangaffo ; St Edwen 's , Llanedwen ; and St Mary 's , Llanfairpwll . It is within the deanery of Malltraeth , the archdeaconry of Bangor and the Diocese of Bangor . The current incumbent (as of 2013) , Emlyn Williams , was appointed as vicar of St Cristiolus 's Church in 2007 ; before that , the position had been vacant for 20 years despite many attempts by the Church in Wales to fill it . He is assisted by one associate priest and two associate curates . Services are held every Sunday morning , alternating between a bilingual service of Holy Communion and a service of Morning Prayer ; there are no midweek services .

People associated with the church include Henry Maurice (elected Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at the University of Oxford shortly before his death in 1691 ; his father , Thomas , was the perpetual curate of the church) and the 19th @- @ century writer and priest Owen Wynne Jones (who was the curate for a time in the early 1860s) . The 19th @- @ century Calvinistic Methodist

preacher Richard Owen was born in the parish , and is buried in the graveyard that surrounds the church .

= = Architecture and fittings = =

The church is built from rubble masonry (mainly gritstone) and dressed with freestone . The nave measures 44 feet 9 inches long by 15 feet 6 inches wide (13 @. @ 6 by 4 @. @ 7 m) and the chancel measures 32 feet 9 inches long by 20 feet 6 inches (10 by 6 @. @ 25 m) wide . The nave has three bays , and the chancel at the east end of the nave has two bays ; it is slightly wider than the nave . The nave and the chancel have external buttresses .

Internally , the chancel arch dates from the 13th century . It is 12 feet (3 @. @ 7 m) wide and 19 feet (5 @. @ 8 m) from the floor to the top of the arch ; the supporting pillars are 10 feet (3 @. @ 0 m) tall . There are windows from the early 16th century in the chancel , with the large east window in Perpendicular style (in contrast to the rest of the church , which is mainly in Decorated style) . It has five ogee @-@ headed lights separated by vertical tracery , and measures 10 feet 10 inches (3 @. @ 3 m) at its widest point by 14 feet 2 inches (4 @. @ 3 m) at its tallest . Unlike most of the other windows in the church , it contains coloured glass . A smaller window in the north wall also dates from this time , and has a square frame containing two lights ; a matching window was added in the 19th century in the opposite wall . The other windows in the church are from the 19th century in various designs . One window , in the north wall of the nave , has had stained glass added as a memorial to two local residents who died in the 1990s .

The entrance is through a porch (probably dating from the 16th century) on the south side of the building , at the west end of the nave . At the west end of the roof , which is made of slate , there is an ornate bellcote for one bell (added by Kennedy) . There are plain iron crosses on top of the porch and the chancel . Inside , the rafters and trusses of the roof are exposed . The pews and choir stalls were added in the 19th century . The nave has a brass memorial to a former Chancellor of Bangor Cathedral , William Morgan (died 1713) , his wife and son . There are other memorials inside the church , including one for those from the parish who died during the First World War .

The gritstone circular font , at the west end , dates from the 12th century , and has six decorative panels . It is one of a group of fonts in north @-@ west Wales using interlace (a medieval decorative style) showing links to Irish and Norse artistic traditions ; other similar fonts in Anglesey are found at St Ceinwen 's , Cerrigceinwen , St Peter 's , Newborough and St Beuno 's , Trefdraeth . One author says that the patterns on the fonts at Llangristiolus and St Beuno 's Church , Pistyll (in the nearby county of Gwynedd) seem " closely linked " to patterns on one of the stone crosses at St Seiriol 's Church , Penmon .

= = Churchyard = =

The churchyard contains six Commonwealth war graves : in the east part of the ground are buried two British Army soldiers of World War I and north @-@ north @-@ west of the church are buried three soldiers and an airman of World War II .

= = 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 three) grade of listing , designating " particularly important buildings of more than special interest " . It was given this status on 30 January 1968 , and has been listed because it is a medieval church that , unusually for Anglesey , dates substantially from the 12th and 13th centuries . Cadw (the Welsh Assembly Government body responsible for the built heritage of Wales and the inclusion of Welsh buildings on the statutory lists) also notes the " fine 16th @-@ century rebuilding of the chancel " and the chancel window . The chancel arch has been described (in a 2009 guide to the buildings of north @-@ west Wales) as the best such arch in the region , and the " fine " east window as " almost too

big to fit " in the wall .

The 19th @-@ century antiquarian Angharad Llwyd described the church as " a spacious structure , exhibiting some excellent architectural details , and decorated with an east window , of good design , enriched with tracery . " Writing in 1846 (before Kennedy 's restoration work in 1852) , the clergyman and antiquarian Harry Longueville Jones noted a wooden gallery at the west end , above the font , inscribed RICHARDUS DE GREY FECIT 1778 . LAUS DEO . He described the chancel arch as displaying " workmanship of good character . "

The Welsh politician and church historian Sir Stephen Glynne visited the church in 1849 . He wrote that it was a " fair specimen of the better sort of Anglesey village church " . The nave and chancel were " of good proportions " , with the chancel " properly distinguished and developed " . He also said that the chancel arch was " of considerable elegance , unusual in North Wales , having excellent moulding and clustered shafts which have a Middle Pointed character . "