

= St Pabo 's Church , Llanbabo =

St Pabo 's Church , Llanbabo is a medieval church in Llanbabo , in Anglesey , North Wales . Much of the church dates to the 12th century , and it is regarded as a good example of a church of its period that has retained many aspects of its original fabric . The church houses a tombstone slab from the 14th century , depicting a king with crown and sceptre , bearing the name of Pabo Post Prydain , the reputed founder of the church . However , there is no evidence that Pabo , a 5th @-@ century prince , lived in the area and the tradition that he founded the church has little supporting basis .

The church is still in use , as part of the Church in Wales , although services are only held here occasionally . It is a Grade II \* listed building , a designation given to " particularly important buildings of more than special interest " , because it is a medieval church that has been little altered .

= = History and location = =

The date of foundation of the church in Llanbabo , Anglesey , is unknown , but it is known that there was a church here before 1254 as it is recorded in the Norwich Valuation of that year . According to tradition , it was founded by Pabo Post Prydain ( Pabo the " Pillar of Britain " ) , a 5th @-@ century prince from North Britain who was driven out in 460 and settled thereafter in Anglesey . He is also said to have been buried in the area . A stone slab gravestone dating from the late 14th century , made from Flintshire sandstone , was found in about 1680 : according to the 17th @-@ century Welsh historian Lewis Morris , it was unearthed by a sexton digging a grave in the churchyard . The rectangular slab ( from the same workshop as one at Bangor Cathedral and one of St Iestyn at St Iestyn 's Church , Llaniestyn , given the similarities between them ) has a shallowly engraved full @-@ length image of a bearded man wearing a crown and a loose , pleated tunic over a garment reaching to his wrists . He holds a sceptre in his right hand ; his head is on a cushion underneath an arch , and the background is decorated with flowers . The effect is somewhat like a monumental brass in stone ; the slab is now displayed vertically inside the church . The inscription , which is incomplete , reads " Hic iacet Pa [ bo ] Post Priid " ( or " Prud " ) ? " Here lies Pabo the Pillar of Britain " . Additional letters have been interpreted as denoting the name of the donor of the monument . Apart from this , the tradition linking Pabo to the church is not recorded in writing until the Welsh antiquarian Henry Rowlands in the 18th century , nor is there evidence that Pabo devoted himself to religion or died in Anglesey ; accordingly , modern writers suggest that there is no link between him and the church .

The church stands alongside a minor road between Llanddeusant and Rhosgoch , near the Llyn Alaw reservoir . It is part of the Church in Wales , although it is only used for services occasionally . It is one of nine churches in the combined parish of Bodedern with Llanfaethlu , and forms part of the deanery of Llifon and Talybolion , within the archdeaconry of Bangor in the Diocese of Bangor . As of 2012 , there has been no incumbent priest since September 2009 . The village of Llanbabo takes its name from the church : the prefix llan originally meant " enclosure " and then came to mean " church " , and " ? babo " is a modified form of the saint 's name .

= = Architecture and fittings = =

The church is built from rubble masonry , dressed with freestone . It measures 45 feet by 14 feet 6 inches ( 14 by 4 @. @ 4 metres ) . The building is largely 12th @-@ century in construction , with the walls and a narrow lancet window in the south wall dating from that time ; another window at the east end of the south wall is rectangular and dates from the late 14th or early 15th centuries , with a more modern window in between . The east wall and window , with stone tracery and an ogee @-@ topped light in a pointed arch , are from the 14th century . Some of the windows use atypical green glass , and some have frames made out of wood .

Chevron @-@ carved voussoirs ( wedges ) and three stone human heads , weathered by time and

also probably from the 12th century , have been repositioned over the doorway , which is at the west end of the south side of the church . The wedges probably come from a former chancel arch and apse , removed ( as in other churches in Anglesey ) to make the chancel larger . The doorway has been enlarged at some point , most likely during the early part of the 19th century . On the north side , a doorway was added in the 18th century , but it was subsequently blocked and a window inserted instead . One writer has speculated that this might have been a leper niche and window . There are two other modern windows in the north wall , and all three are at different heights . There is a bellcote at the west end , housing a bell ( probably from the 18th century ) . The roof has been described as being " clearly one of the earliest on the island " .

Inside , as well as the Pabo monument on the north wall , there are medieval arched trusses and two 18th @-@ century marble memorials . The font , which is probably 12th @-@ century in date , is a circular bowl about 1 foot ( 30 cm ) in height . There is no division between the nave and chancel , and there is one step from the chancel into the sanctuary , which is marked with a simple rail . The altar is made of wood . The fittings , including plain pews , were added in 1911 . There is a carved head above the doorway inside the church , in similar style to those on the outside . " The Llanbabo Devil " ( Diafol Llanbabo ) , a stone previously set in the wall of the churchyard and thought to represent a Celtic deity , is now kept inside the church .

= = Assessment = =

The church is 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 12 May 1970 , and has been listed because it is " a good , scarcely altered simple Medieval church which retains a great deal of the Medieval fabric , including decorate fragments of probable 12th century date , and a fine later Medieval roof . " According to Cadw ( the Welsh Assembly Government body responsible for the built heritage of Wales ) , St Pabo 's Church " can be considered an important survivor " , as many other old churches on Anglesey were either rebuilt or restored during the 19th century . Some restoration work , including replacement of some of the timbers in the roof , was carried out in 1909 under the architect Harold Hughes , but overall " the church has not suffered from excessive restoration . "