

= St Edwen 's Church , Llanedwen =

St Edwen 's Church , Llanedwen is a 19th @-@ century parish church near the Menai Strait , in Anglesey , north Wales . The first church was founded here by St Edwen (daughter of Edwin of Northumbria , king and saint) in 640 , but the present structure dates from 1856 and was designed by Henry Kennedy , the architect of the Diocese of Bangor . It contains some memorials from the 17th and 18th centuries and a reading desk that reuses panel work from the 14th and 17th centuries . The 18th @-@ century historian Henry Rowlands was vicar here , and is buried in the churchyard . The church is on land that forms part of the Plas Newydd estate , home of the family of the Marquess of Anglesey since 1812 and owned by the National Trust . Some of the Marquesses of Anglesey , and some of their employees , are also buried in the churchyard .

The church is used for worship by the Church in Wales , one of seven in a combined parish . A service is held using the Book of Common Prayer each Sunday morning . St Edwen 's is one of the few churches in regular use in Wales to be lit entirely by candles . It is a Grade II listed building , a national designation given to " buildings of special interest , which warrant every effort being made to preserve them " , in particular because it is regarded as " a good example of H Kennedy 's designs for a small @-@ scale rural church . "

= = History and location = =

St Edwen 's Church is in the south of Anglesey , north Wales , in a rural area known as Llanedwen . It is about 5 miles (8 km) from the county town of Llangefni , about 1 mile (1 @.@ 6 km) from the A4080 road between Llanfairpwllgwyngyll and Brynsiencyn and about 250 metres (270 yds) from the Menai Strait that separates Anglesey from the rest of Wales . The church is on land that forms part of the Plas Newydd estate , which has been the home of the family of the Marquess of Anglesey since 1812 ; some of the former marquesses and their employees are buried in the churchyard . Plas Newydd and its grounds are now owned by the National Trust . The area of Llanedwen takes its name from the church : the Welsh word llan originally meant " enclosure " and then " church " .

According to the 19th @-@ century Anglesey historian Angharad Llwyd , the first church in the area was established by St Edwen in 640 . Nothing is known of Edwen 's life , but according to the manuscript sources , she was the daughter ? perhaps the illegitimate daughter ? or the niece of Edwin of Northumbria , a king who converted to Christianity in 627 and who was venerated as a saint after his death in 633 . The 12th @-@ century writer Geoffrey of Monmouth said that Edwin was born whilst his mother was taking refuge in north Wales with Cadfan ap Iago .

Llwyd described the church in 1833 as " a small but neat edifice , of great antiquity " . In 1840 , the church was rebuilt by John Welch . Writing in 1847 , the clergyman and antiquarian Harry Longueville Jones said that St Edwen 's was in the Early Perpendicular style , although its windows had been replaced , and measured 52 by 16 feet (16 by 5 m) . The Welsh politician and church historian Sir Stephen Glynne visited in May 1850 . He said that it was " a very small church in a lovely situation " , which had " a beautiful view over the Menai " .

In 1856 , the church seen by Llwyd , Jones and Glynne was demolished and the present structure was erected , designed by Henry Kennedy , architect of the Diocese of Bangor . The only part of the old church to survive was some of the stonework at the base of the west wall . Some repair work was carried out in 1956 .

St Edwen 's , which is used for worship by the Church in Wales , is one of seven churches in the combined benefice (churches grouped together under an incumbent priest) of Bro Dwywnwen . A service is held every Sunday morning using the 1662 Book of Common Prayer , either Holy Communion or Morning Prayer ; there are no midweek services . The parish is within the deanery of Synod Ynys Mon , the archdeaconry of Bangor and the Diocese of Bangor . As of 2016 , the priest in charge is the Reverend E Roberts and the associate priest is Canon Professor Leslie Francis .

People associated with the church include Henry Rowlands , vicar of St Nidan 's , Llanidan , and its associated churches (including St Edwen 's) in the first part of the 18th century . He wrote a history

of Anglesey entitled *Mona Antiqua Restaurata* , published in 1723 . He is buried in the churchyard to the west of the door . His tombstone is inscribed in Latin with the words : " All things are nought save what he gave to needy ones . These have force when arts perish and writings fall to pieces . " William Bulkeley Hughes , who lived in the parish and died in 1882 , is also buried in the churchyard . He was a Member of Parliament for 40 years . The churchyard contains one Commonwealth war grave , of a First World War officer of the Westmorland and Cumberland Yeomanry .

= = Architecture and fittings = =

St Edwen 's is built from local red gritstone , formed into square blocks and dressed with sandstone . The roof is made from slate with stone edging . The church , which is in the Late Decorated style , has a tower topped with a broach spire at the north @-@ west corner of the nave , supported by buttresses . The church is entered through a porch with an arched doorway in the lowest of the three stages of the tower . Inside , the woodwork of the roof is exposed ; some of the nave timbers might be medieval beams reused in the 1856 rebuilding . The nave and chancel are divided by an arch and by three steps leading up from the nave . The chancel and sanctuary are separated by an altar rail set on top of some wooden panels .

There is a pair of windows in the west wall decorated with tracery (stonework within the window frame forming a pattern) . Scenes from the Bible and geometric patterns are shown in the stained glass , and birds (phoenix and peacock) are depicted at the top of the windows . The glass is dedicated to Rice Robert Hughes , a clergyman who died in 1801 . There are three arched windows in the south wall of the nave ; the stained glass of the easternmost (dedicated to William Bulkeley Hughes) shows biblical scenes . The easternmost window of the three in the north wall of the nave is dedicated to Thomas Bulkeley Hughes (who died in 1836) , his wife and children . The chancel has one window in the east wall , which has three lights (sections of window separated by stone mullions) .

The pulpit has some 19th @-@ century oak panelling and reuses some ornate 17th @-@ century panel work that is decorated with pictures of cherubs , dragons , dogs and lions ' heads . The pews are made of pine ; the choir stalls also have some carved oak panels that may date from the 17th century . A reading desk from the 19th century reuses material from the 14th and 17th centuries , depicting a lion , a griffin and angels . The church also has an eight @-@ sided sandstone font decorated with a carved cross .

A survey in 1937 by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire recorded seven 17th and 18th century memorials within the church , the oldest in memory of a Thomas Owen who died in 1646 . The tombs in the churchyard include one of a Sidney Griffith (died 1618) and more than 20 others from the 17th and 18th centuries . The survey also noted some oak dog tongs , likely to be from the 19th century , and three 17th @-@ century chairs .

A survey of church plate within the Bangor diocese in 1906 recorded an engraved chalice dated 1842 and a paten dated 1776 ? 77 ; both are made from silver and are decorated with foliage . A silver flagon bears an inscription to denote that it was given by William Bulkeley Hughes when the new church was consecrated in 1856 . The survey also noted a flagon from about 1700 and a dish , both made of pewter , but said that an 18th @-@ century silver chalice had been lost some time after 1811 . St Edwen 's is one of the few churches in regular use in Wales to be lit only by candles .

= = Assessment = =

St Edwen 's has national recognition and statutory protection from alteration as it has been designated as a Grade II listed building ? the lowest of the three grades of listing , designating " buildings of special interest , which warrant every effort being made to preserve them " . It was given this status on 23 April 1998 , and has been listed because it is seen as " a good example of H Kennedy 's designs for a small @-@ scale rural church " . Cadw (the Welsh Government body responsible for the built heritage of Wales and the inclusion of Welsh buildings on the statutory lists)

also notes the fittings that incorporate " some fine carved work of the 14th and 17th centuries . "

Sabine Baring Gould , writing in 1908 , said that the rebuilt church was " wholly devoid of interest " . A 2009 guide to the buildings of the region notes that the Incorporated Church Building Society (active in the 19th century) considered Kennedy 's design was " inconsistent with the gravity of feeling which pervades the ancient churches of Wales . "

Harry Longueville Jones wrote in 1847 that the churchyard was " one of the most interesting in Anglesey , from its picturesque appearance and situation . " A 2006 guide to the churches of Anglesey describes St Edwen 's as " a good example of an unspoilt 19th century country church " , adding that is " little changed since it was built . " It says that it is in a " tranquil spot " , and notes that it is a landmark " visible from a considerable distance " .