

= Church of Saint Oswald , King and Martyr , Oswaldkirk =

The Church of Saint Oswald , King and Martyr is a Church of England church serving the village and parish of Oswaldkirk , North Yorkshire , England . It is located along the main road passing through the village (Oswaldkirk Main Street) , 1 @. @ 5 miles (2 @. @ 4 km) east of Ampleforth Abbey .

Dedicated to the Christian saint Saint Oswald , it is over 900 years old and run by the Church of England . It is part of a four @- @ parish benefice , and is in the archdeaconry of Cleveland , and the diocese of York . Notably , the future Archbishop of Canterbury and chaplain to King Charles II , John Tillotson , preached his first sermon at the church in 1661 . Major restoration work was done to the church in 1886 , and a large amount of the Chancel woodwork dates from this period . The church has been a Grade II * listed building since 1955 , and is the oldest building in the village by more than six centuries .

= = Etymology = =

The word " kirk " means church , so the village is literally called " Oswald 's church " , after the church , which is dedicated to Saint Oswald of Northumbria , a Christian king who spread Christianity throughout Northumbria in the 7th century AD .

= = History and architecture = =

Almost nothing of the original church ? built on the site of a wooden Saxon church ? remains , apart from unique examples of Celtic stonework , including a plait interweave and a bas @- @ relief of the Virgin and Child , which was carved around 1000 AD . The current building still has a quoin , which was probably a re @- @ cycled Anglo @- @ Saxon cross shaft . The stone southern entrance to the church still stands ; it was built in the 12th century and is a typical example of Norman stonework . The church was re @- @ consecrated in 1287 by the bishop of Candida Casa under the direction of John le Romeyn , Archbishop of York . The tall windows set in the church wall both north and south of the nave can be dated to approximately 1320 to 1330 , and in the top sections of two of the windows , small fragments of medieval glass can be found . A sideways orientated tombstone can be found under a low arch on the inside of the southern wall , generally believed to be that of Sir Richard Pickering (d . 1441) , a member of the Pickering family who ruled the village of Oswaldkirk from the 14th century into the 16th century .

The church records include an unbroken list of rectors dating back to 1302 , during the reign of King Edward I. One notable rector was John Dee , who served from early 1568 until the year 1574 , although he was probably never a permanent resident . Dee , a noted mathematician , astrologer , alchemist and astronomer , was on friendly terms with the ruling monarch , Queen Elizabeth I , and had given her astrological advice for setting the date of her coronation .

The future Archbishop of Canterbury and chaplain to King Charles II , John Tillotson , preached his first sermon at the church of Saint Oswald in 1661 , because of his friendship with John Denton , who was rector of the church from 1658 until his expulsion in 1662 for non @- @ conformism .

Perhaps the most important event in the 17th century was the installation of two brand new bells , one bearing the inscription " Venite Exultemus Domino " , or " Come , let us rejoice in the Lord " (dated 1684) , and the other bearing the inscription " Gloria in Altissimus Deo " , or " Glory to God in the highest " (dated 1683) . These are still in use through bell @- @ ropes , which have been replaced several times in the intervening centuries and extend down to the floor next to the clock mechanism , which is dated 1898 and is wholly mechanical , powering a clock whose two faces can be seen on both the western and eastern sides of the bell tower .

There was major restoration work done to the church in 1886 , and a large amount of the Chancel woodwork dates from this period . During the restoration the east window was also replaced ; it now depicts the stylised form of Saint Oswald , flanked on either side by Saint Aidan , and Saint Cuthbert , both Christian saints of the same era , and who helped him in missionary work in the Kingdom of

Northumbria . These windows are directly opposite the western window , above the font at the other end of the church , which depicts the queen at the time , Queen Victoria . Further modern additions to the church can be seen in the bell turret and organ chamber , as well as the south porch , which is currently the sole congregational entrance to the church . The church uses an electric organ during services . The church is a Grade II * listed building and has been so since 4 January 1955 .

= = Modern usage = =

St Oswald 's is part of a four @-@ church benefice , including the churches and parishes of Oswaldkirk , Ampleforth , Gilling , and Stonegrave . As of May 2012 , the vicar is the Reverend Susan Fraser Bond , who serves all four parishes , although services in the church occur weekly on Sunday and at other times during the week with the help of volunteers in the local community . There is also a " tea time club " , which is a club teaching Christian morals and biblical teachings to young people , as well as biblical role @-@ plays and " mini @-@ pilgrimages " . The church is host to a carol service each year on Christmas Eve , jointly undertaken by the Anglican congregation and that of Oswaldkirk 's Roman Catholic church , the church of Saint Aidan . The united churches of Oswaldkirk also have a harvest festival each year , hosted in the building of Saint Aidan 's church every other year , alternating with St Oswald 's church .

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