

= St Beuno 's Church , Trefdraeth =

St Beuno 's Church , Trefdraeth is the medieval parish church of Trefdraeth , a hamlet in Anglesey , north Wales . Although one 19th @-@ century historian recorded that the first church on this location was reportedly established in about 616 , no part of any 7th @-@ century structure survives ; the oldest parts of the present building date are from the 13th century . Alterations were made in subsequent centuries , but few of them during the 19th century , a time when many other churches in Anglesey were rebuilt or were restored .

St Beuno 's is part of the Church in Wales , and its parish is one in a group of four . The church remains in use but as of 2013 there is no parish priest . It is a Grade II * listed building , a national designation for " particularly important buildings of more than special interest " , in particular because it is regarded as " an important example of a late Medieval rural church " with an unaltered simple design .

= = History and location = =

St Beuno 's Church is in Trefdraeth , a hamlet in the south @-@ west of Anglesey by Malltraeth Marsh , about 5 miles (8 km) south @-@ west of the county town of Llangefni . It stands in a roughly circular llan (Welsh for an enclosed piece of land , particularly around a church) north of the road between Trefdraeth and Bethel . Beuno , a 7th @-@ century Welsh saint , has several churches in north Wales dedicated to him .

According to Angharad Llwyd (a 19th @-@ century historian of Anglesey) , the first church on this site was reportedly established in about 616 . No part of any 7th century building survives , and restoration over the years has removed much historical evidence for the church 's development .

The earliest parts of the present structure are the nave and the chancel , which are 13th @-@ century . The church shows signs of alterations and additions in subsequent centuries . A transept or chapel was added to the south side of the chancel in the late 13th or early 14th century . The arch between them was once the archway between the chancel and the nave but was later moved . The bellcote at the west end of the roof was added in the 14th century . The porch on the south side of the nave was built in about 1500 , and was re @-@ roofed in 1725 . A doorway in the north wall of the nave was inserted in the late 15th or early 16th century , and now leads into a vestry added in the 19th century . The main roof is largely 17th @-@ century . Some repairs were carried out in the 1840s , with further repairs in 1854 under the supervision of the diocesan architect , Henry Kennedy .

= = Benefice = =

St Beuno 's is one of four churches in the benefice of Trefdraeth with Aberffraw with Llangadwaladr with Cerrigceinwen . Other churches in the benefice include St Beuno 's , Aberffraw and St Cadwaladr 's , Llangadwaladr . The church is in the Deanery of Malltraeth , the Archdeaconry of Bangor and the Diocese of Bangor . As of 2013 the parishes have no incumbent priest .

A number of notable clergy have held the living of St Beuno 's . Henry Rowlands , Bishop of Bangor 1598 ? 1616 , was rector of Trefdraeth during his episcopacy , as the income from the parish was attached to the bishopric . The scholar and rhetorician Henry Perry was appointed priest in 1606 . Griffith Williams was appointed rector in 1626 and went on to be Dean of Bangor in 1634 . David Lloyd was rector in the late 1630s and early 1640s , and thereafter Dean of St Asaph . Robert Morgan was rector before and after the English Civil War and was made Bishop of Bangor in 1666 . John Pryce was rector 1880 ? 1902 and Dean of Bangor 1902 ? 1903 .

= = = Welsh language controversy = = =

In 1766 John Egerton , Bishop of Bangor , appointed an elderly English priest , Dr Thomas Bowles , to the parish of St Beuno , Trefdraeth and its chapelry of St Cwyfan , Llangwyfan . Between them

the parish and chapelry had about 500 parishioners , of whom all but five spoke only Welsh , whereas Bowles spoke only English . The parishioners and churchwardens of Trefdraeth petitioned against Bowles 's appointment , arguing that the appointment of a priest who did not speak Welsh breached the Articles of Religion , the Act for the Translation of the Scriptures into Welsh 1563 and the Act of Uniformity 1662 . In 1773 the Court of Arches ruled that only clergy who could speak Welsh should be appointed to Welsh @-@ speaking parishes , and Bowles should not have been appointed , but he now held the ecclesiastical freehold of the benefice and the case to deprive him of it had not been proved . The court therefore let Bowles stay in post , which he did until he died in November of that year . Bowles was then replaced in the parish and chapelry with Richard Griffith , a priest who spoke Welsh .

= = Architecture and fittings = =

St Beuno 's is Decorated Gothic , built mainly with rubble masonry , with squared stones used to create courses in the nave 's south wall and the lower part of the west wall . There are external buttresses at the west and east ends , the south porch and the south transept . The roof is surfaced with hexagonal slates and has a stone bellcote on its west gable . Internally , there is no structural division between the nave and the chancel save for a step up to the chancel . The nave and chancel together are 59 feet (18 m) long and the church is 15 feet (4 @. @ 6 m) wide . Near the eastern end of the church is a transept or chapel on the south side of the chancel , from which it is separated by a step down and an arch . The transept is 13 feet 9 inches (4 @. @ 2 m) by 14 feet 6 inches (4 @. @ 4 m) .

The windows range in age from the late 14th or early 15th century to the 19th century . The oldest is the chancel east window , which has an 18th @-@ century inscribed slate slab as its sill . The window is a pointed arch with three lights (sections of window separated by mullions) , and it has a stained glass of the Crucifixion of Jesus that was installed as a memorial in 1907 . The nave north wall has a window from about 1500 , which was originally in the nave south wall . The nave west window is rectangular , again from about 1500 . In the nave south wall are two early 19th @-@ century windows set in square frames , one single @-@ light and one two @-@ light . The transept has a 19th @-@ century two @-@ light arched window in its south wall , which contains the oldest stained glass in the church : 15th @-@ century fragments of a crucifixion scene . It also has a pointed arched doorway in its west wall , from the late 13th or early 14th century .

The church is entered through the porch to the west end of the south wall of the nave , which leads to an arched doorway . There are two 18th @-@ century slate plaques on the walls by the south door commemorating those who made donations to the poor of the parish ; one has names from 1761 , the other from 1766 . On the opposite wall , a 17th @-@ century slate plaque commemorates Hugh ap Richard Lewis and his wife Jane (died 1660 and 1661 respectively) . The internal timbers of the roof , some of which are old , are exposed , but there is a decorated panelled barrel @-@ vaulted ceiling above the sanctuary at the east end of the church . The transept roof is largely 17th @-@ century .

The cylindrical font is 12th @-@ century , and is at the west end of the church . Four of its six panels are decorated with saltires ; a fifth has a Celtic cross in knotwork with a ring ; the sixth is blank . One author has pointed out the similarities with the fonts of St Cristiolus 's , Llangristiolus , which is about 2 miles (3 km) away , and of St Beuno 's , Pistyll , in the nearby county of Gwynedd .

A survey by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire in 1937 also noted the early 18th @-@ century communion rails , a plain oak communion table dated 1731 , and a wooden font cover dated 1714 . Other memorials , including parts of an early 14th @-@ century inscribed slab , were also recorded . Three items of church silver were included in the survey : a cup (dated 1610 ? 1611) , a paten (1719) and a flagon (1743) . Externally , an 18th @-@ century brass sundial on a slate pedestal was noted , as was a weathered decorated stone on the lychgate , thought to be from the 10th century . The Arts and Crafts Movement pulpit was made in 1920 .

= = Churchyard = =

The churchyard contains the Commonwealth war graves of a Royal Engineers soldier of World War I and a Pioneer Corps soldier of World War II .

= = Assessment = =

The church has national recognition and statutory protection from alteration as it has been designated 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 30 January 1968 , and has been listed because it is " an important example of a late Medieval rural church " . 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 that the church 's " simple design [remained] unaltered during the extensive programme of church re @-@ building and restoration on Anglesey in the 19th century . "

In 1833 Angharad Llwyd described the church as " a small neat edifice " , with " an east window of modern date and of good design " . She noted that the parish registers , legible from 1550 onwards , were the second oldest in north Wales . Similarly , the 19th @-@ century publisher Samuel Lewis said the church was a " small plain edifice " that could hold nearly 300 people .

In 1846 the clergyman and antiquarian Harry Longueville Jones wrote that the church " has been lately repaired in a judicious manner , but without any restoration of importance being attempted , and is in good condition " . He added that with its " good condition this ranks as one of the better churches of the island . " The Welsh politician and church historian Sir Stephen Glynne visited the church in October 1849 . He said that the chapel on the south side resembled several others in Anglesey and Caernarfonshire . He also noted the new slate roof , the " mostly open and plain " seats , and the " very large cemetery ... commanding an extensive view " .

A 2006 guide to the churches of Anglesey describes St Beuno 's as being in " a pleasant and quiet rural location " . It adds that the church was " fairly small " and the roof had " unusual ornately @-@ shaped slates " . A 2009 guide to the buildings of the region comments that " for once " Kennedy had repaired rather than replaced the church . It notes that " strangely " the chancel arch had been reset in the transept , and says that the nave roof was of " unusual construction " .