

## CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

<b>LISTED BUILDING</b>	Tabernacle Presbyterian Chapel, West End, Penclawdd, Swansea
<b>Grade:-</b>	II
<b>Date of Notification:-</b>	06.05.00
<b>National Grid Reference:-</b>	SS 5390095865
<b>O.S. 1:10,000 Sheet No.:-</b>	SS59NW
<b>CADW Reference No.:-</b>	23478
<b>C &amp; C of S Reference No.:-</b>	LB:425

### **Notes:-**

#### ***Location:-***

On the main street of Penclawdd village, facing the part named West End. Stone-walled graveyard at front with cast-iron railings on a plinth wall and cast-iron gates to the front. Modern manse and house (former manse) at rear.

#### ***History:-***

Tabernacle Presbyterian Chapel (formerly Tabernacle Calvinistic Methodist Chapel) was completed in 1911-12.

The first Calvinistic Methodist chapel in Penclawdd was Bethel, a chapel of Lady Barham's connexion opened in 1816. Bethel's connection with the Calvinistic Methodist movement was later served and it became Independent, whereupon the Calvinistic Methodists established the predecessor of Tabernacle on the present site in 1836. In the religious revival of the early years of the C20 it was decided to rebuild on the same site.

#### ***Exterior:-***

A Gothic-style chapel with its front to the main road of the village, including a corner tower and spire which are a village landmark. Rock-faced local limestone masonry in the small course with dressings throughout in Bath stone. The original masonry is visible at the front elevation and for a considerable return at each side, corresponding to the wider parts containing the gallery access staircases, to the rear of that masonry has been rendered. The front elevation has a centre between side towers defined by buttresses with prominent quoins. The buttresses have small offsets and are crossed at the corners. The centre features a large Decorated-style window of five main lights with an ogee label mould carried up to a finial. Above this the top of the gable is decorated with a panelled triangle surrounding a trefoil-headed roof ventilator. Below the sill of the window is a band with the chapel name in raised lettering, and a projecting door archway to two orders the apex of which covers the band and carries the date. Double doors in oak to the main entrance and the tower doorways. Lancet windows each side of the main entrance. The left tower is slightly recessed and has a segmentally-headed upper window and a moulded equilateral archway beneath, and a crenellated parapet with large end-finial above. To the right is a larger tower, projecting, with an additional belfry storey with two-light traceried louvred openings, a cornice on brackets with corner gargoyles, a crenellated parapet with corner finials, and an octagonal spire. The side elevations each have a cinquefoil light at the head of the gallery stairs, and each is

otherwise two storeys of two-light windows. The rear elevation is of utilitarian design with projecting officers.

***Interior:-***

An exceptional interior with integrally designed organ. Small vestibule with five-panel window to interior and four-panel doors with art-nouveauish coloured glass. Side doors to the towers at left and right, with stone stairs to the gallery, slightly asymmetrical.

The interior has a layout of seating concentric with the pulpit and an all-round gallery with straight sides but pronounced curves at the corners. The outer walls are also curved at the corners. The pulpit is tall and wide with broad symmetrical stairs, projecting front and canted sides, colonnettes at angles, carved panels above, plain panels below, pulpit flanks and stairs with broad handrails, carved newels and balusters, rear panelling. The set fawr is semicircular, with end newels, carved back, arm-rests for ten seats. The table is a quarter circle, this and the chairs being integral to the design. The set fawr is two steps above the general floor level. Doors to vestry each side, with decorative glazing, additional door at left.

The pew design in the main interior and gallery is comparatively plain, with boarded backs. The gallery is carried on none fluted cast-iron columns with Corinthian caps, and has a panelled front with a cast-iron pierced decoration above. The gallery drops slightly at the rear of the pulpit, where there are two rows of stands within a broad groined ceiling recess, the panelled casing carried out to about the same width as the set fawr. Two manual organ by Norman and Beard, 1912. A gallery dado extends horizontally to each side, not following the dip of the gallery and organ loft. Four-panel doors with decorative art-nouveau glazing in upper panels and overlights lead to the gallery stairs, and similar doors without overlights lead to the vestry stairs and the corner towers.

The ceiling is deeply coved, and divided by large decorative ribs into squares and oblongs above a decorative cornice. Three decorative squares centrally with foliage at corners, ventilators at centre. Elaborate plasterwork in the panels from which the lights hang.

***Listed:-***

Listed as a fine Gothic chapel of the early C20 religious revival, with an exceptionally well integrated interior design.

***Reference:-***

R N Cooper, Higher and Lower (1998) pp. 109-10

J Newman, Glamorgan (Buildings of Wales, 1995) p. 498.