

Authority	Bridgend	Grade	II*
		Date Listed	14/07/1997
Community	Maesteg		
Locality	Maesteg	Grid Ref	28579 19086
		Record No	18493
Name	Bethania Capel y Bedyddwyr Neillduol		
Street No, Name	Bethania Street		
Street Side	SW		

Location

Located prominently on an elevated site behind a railed forecourt, and facing down Ewenny Road.

History

Built in 1908 on the site of 2 earlier chapels (1832 and 1841), and designed by W. Beddoe Rees, architect of Cardiff and a native of Maesteg, to seat 1001 worshippers. The mother church of the Baptist community in the valley which was first established in 1828.

Exterior

Coursed rubble with limestone dressings, and slate roof. Beaux Arts style. Tripartite facade defined by channel-rusticated pilasters rising to a bold pulvinated frieze, each having a central panel topped by decorative shields. The wide central bay has the entrance; an architraved pair of doors flanked by large keyed oculi with aprons. Above, Ionic style columns are set in antis, supporting an entablature inscribed 'CAPEL Y BEDYDDWYR 1908 NEILLDUOL', and a large central 80-pane window set in a cavetto surround. Flanking, are 32-pane sash windows in architraved and corniced surrounds. The narrower outer bays have a pair of recessed doors in moulded surrounds with heavy keyblocks, and above, 32-pane sashes in similar surrounds with exaggerated open half-round pediments with keystones. Above the cornice the facade is gabled with a large semicircular light set in the pediment. Square urns stand on the parapet, and an acroterion at the apex. The facade returns by one bay each side. To the rear a hipped 2-storey vestry building, extending by 3 bays to the N. Central roof ventilator. The front area has stone walls carrying iron railings between stone piers. The stanchions are shaped, and alternate bars are wavy.

Interior

A remarkably handsome interior, with gallery of 4 raked tiers of seating on 3 sides, rounded to the front, and carried on an arcade of 6 elegant round-headed arches with moulded architraves on cast iron columns, by W A Baker & Co of Newport, Mon. The ceiling is a segmental vault divided by moulded ribs. The front of the gallery is of cast iron, in the form of gilded palmettes, over a coved section. The pulpit is set against a recessed pointed arch in the back wall, occupied by a large pipe organ. Stairs of 6 steps each side rise to a raised galley, the pulpit occupying the part-octagonal centre. Below, the set fawr is enclosed by a moulded timber rail on cast iron palmette stanchions, and covers the immersion font, the access for which is below the pulpit gallery. The framed and boarded pews are in 3 blocks, divided by raked gangways, the side blocks curved, and are complete with umbrella racks and iron dishes. At the back, below the gallery, a stained glass screen encloses the entrance lobby, with extends across to framed open well stairs at each end. Behind the rear wall, there are 3 rooms on the ground floor and 4 above. The vestry, in the rear (N) wing, has a tripartite proscenium arch, with a large stage in the adjoining but separate structure.

Monuments: On the rear wall two tablets, (a) polished white marble gabled sarcophagus on black, to Iorwerth Jones (Iorwerth ddu), d. 1925., and (b) White marble scroll on black, to Parch. Richard Hughes (Hughes fach), d. 1885, author, poet and minister 1820-85, by Morris of Maesteg. Also 3 brasses, 2 to past conductors, one to an organist.

Listed

Included at Grade II* as one of the best surviving architectural achievements by a major chapel architect in his powerful Beaux Arts style.

Reference

Braslun o Hanes yr Eglwysi; Bethania, Maesteg. pp 21-29. Glamorgan Chapel Survey, No 53/22.

