

Vejen Church



Thorough renovation work was done on the interior of Vejen Church from 2020-2021. This leaflet briefly describes the many changes.

A more detailed description is available at www.vejenkirke.dk.

Some facts about Vejen Church

- Vejen's first church was built at the end of the 13th century
- However, this church was demolished in 1896
- That same year, a new church was built just a few hundred metres to the east of the site of the old church
- The new church was built under the direction of architect Vilhelm Ahlmann
- It was inaugurated on 20 December 1896
- The church became a self-owned institution on 1st of January 1910
- The church is a red brick construction with neo-Romanesque shapes and has a slate roof
- Its layout is a three-sided block nave with short transepts
- Small cross wings were added to the tower in the west in 1969-70
- Changes and extensions have been made over time
- The church interior was renovated in 1979-80 (architect Jakob Mortensen and Rolf Graae)



The altarpiece as a luminous centrepiece

Light and faith in life have replaced darkness and suffering. The previous altar piece, which now hangs in the left transept, is a rather gloomy depiction of Jesus being taken down from the cross.



On the new altarpiece, artist Maja Lisa Engelhardt has depicted a rose vigorously shooting up from frozen ground, with the message of the Christ who saves. With its gilded frame and a newly installed skylight made of yellow Plexiglas, the new altarpiece stands strong as the shining central feature of the church. The frame is the original from the previous altarpiece, coated with gold leaf. The kneeler and altar table are both new additions made of solid oak; a tree species that appears in many places in the church.



New tones in the church space



The new German-made Klais organ at Vejen Church is not just a thing of beauty. It also has a deeper, bigger sound, thanks to its new location at the church's entrance.



The sound waves that come out of the shiny organ pipes are optimally distributed through the church space, and this impressive instrument will be able to provide the music for many church services or concerts, for many years to come. The organ console can be moved to the choir.

The font

The red granite font stood at the same position in the old church building since 1768 and is thus one of the original church fittings. The bottom of the brass baptismal basin features an engraving of the Annunciation. Its location right in the middle of the church is deliberate. During funerals, the font and coffin stand are aligned, beautifully symbolising the cycle of life from birth and baptism to a life lived that has come to an end.

The pulpit



Love, wisdom, justice, faith.

Four of the Ionic virtues adorn the pulpit, which dates back to the 17th century. The pulpit was donated by Mandrup Abildgaard, whose family presented the church with many large gifts over time.

The pulpit has seen extensive alterations over the years. Several coats of paint have been stripped and the original cover and coats of arms have been removed. The coats of arms are now placed on the church hymn boards.



Reopening of the side nave windows

One of the most significant transformations to the church after the major renovation is a much brighter church space.

Two windows in both naves had previously been blocked off. They have now been reopened and create a completely different light incidence in the church.



The desk chair

“God’s angels rejoice over every sinner who repents.”

The door of the desk chair with its golden message dates from 1896 and is thus an original feature of the old Vejen Church that was fitted in the new building.



On the inner side is a frieze filling, which dates back to the year 1525 and was transferred from a medieval desk chair.



A memorial to two lost children



On Christmas Eve 1774, the infant Maria Catharina died, barely a month old. In the following year, her brother Jens also departed this life, just a day after his birth. Hans Gundorph, their father and the owner of the church, had the memorial plaque made with the text that reads “For though God took them early from this wretched life, what better life they now enjoy together

with God.” The frieze depicts the event of death in the form of a skeleton and a bird (the soul) leaving its cage; that is, the earthly prison that the body constitutes. The memorial plaque dates back to the year 1625, but has been reused and painted over. It is believed that Hans Gundorph obtained the plaque to his children from another church.



A work of detail

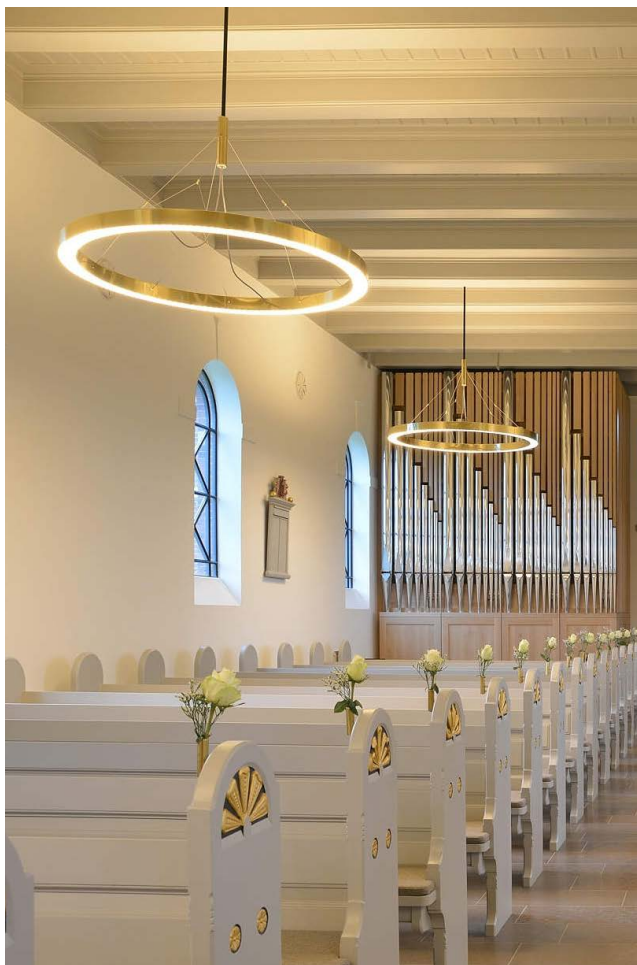
If you have enough time during your visit, the old altarpiece in the right transept features a wealth of details to explore; Ionic herms, crucifixes, paintings, scrolls, lion heads and much more, as well as the coats of arms of Eggert Abildgaard and his wife Mette Juul.

The altarpiece dates back to 1606 and has undergone extensive restoration. The fine carvings are attributed to a local image carver from Gamst.

New light in the house of God

Modern aesthetics meet historical beauty when the new and stylish chandeliers illuminate the church's renovated interior.

The chandeliers are controlled from a panel and can be dimmed, change hue and switched on in phases depending on which part of the church you want to emphasise.



Present with a touch of the past

Eight months of renovation work have transformed the interior of Vejen Church. But the church also has a duty to preserve cultural heritage, which visitors to the church guests can see if they bend their necks. As prescribed by the regulations, one section of the ceiling has been left unpainted to show its original appearance with patterned friezes. Several other elements, including two chandeliers, also come from the old Vejen Church and are therefore an obvious feature of the church space.



www.vejenkirke.dk

