



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: April 2016

One of the most exciting books I've read in recent months is Tom Wright's *Surprised by Hope* (SPCK, 2007; ISBN: 9780281064779), in which he examines Biblical teaching and contemporary Christian beliefs about life after death (and related topics) and concludes that the two don't always quite match up. It's an excellent and thought-provoking read which I'd thoroughly recommend.

As you might expect from a book on this subject, it has a certain amount to say about Easter. If I had to sum up Wright's thinking on Easter (at least based on this book) in a single word, it would have to be... CELEBRATION.

Easter is all about the resurrection of Jesus – and the amazing implications this historical fact has for our ability to know with confidence the forgiveness and grace of God and to look forward to our own resurrection and everlasting life with him. If ever there was something worth celebrating, this has got to be it!

Tom Wright suggests that on the whole we probably don't quite make enough of this celebration, which (he says) should be the biggest one in the Christian calendar. I'm not sure how well his idea of celebrating with a champagne breakfast would go down in a Baptist church¹, and in any case we'd have to go outside to drink the champagne due to the trust deeds on our building, but I certainly take his point that Easter Sunday should be a moment of supreme joy.

However, he doesn't stop at Easter Sunday. Or rather, he suggests the problem is that so often we do stop there. After six weeks of keeping Lent (albeit perhaps not quite as consciously as Wright's Anglican tradition does), confining the celebration of arguably the most momentous event in the history of the universe to a single day seems somewhat ludicrous. Wright writes:

"Easter week... ought to be an eight day festival, with champagne served after morning prayer or even before, with lots of Alleluias and extra hymns and spectacular anthems. Is it any wonder people find it hard to believe in the resurrection of Jesus if we don't throw our hats in the air?... Is it any wonder the world doesn't take much notice if Easter is celebrated as simply the one-day happy ending tacked on to forty days of fasting and gloom?"

Penrallt Baptist Church, Holyhead Road, Bangor LL57 2EU
Tel: 01248 353355; Email: office@penrallt.org; Website: www.penrallt.org
Office open Mon–Fri 10am - 2pm; Administrator: Magnus Forrester-Barker

Secretary: Roshni Verghese, 2 Vicarage Close, Llandudno LL30 1PH; Tel: 07967 320048 / 01492 871444
Treasurer: Stephen Burrows, 39 Cil y Graig, Llanfairpwll LL61 5NZ; Tel: 01248 714048

Again, we could probably dispense with the champagne² and the anthems, but the idea of a week-long party seems quite a good one.

Technically the whole forty day period from Easter Sunday to Pentecost is considered as Eastertide (or the Easter season) in the traditional church calendar. Wright suggests that, just as Lent is traditionally a time for giving things up, Eastertide would be a good time for taking things up. He uses the analogy of a garden – there is a time for weeding and preparing the ground (Lent) and a time for sowing and planting out (Easter) so that the garden can blossom, filled with colour and perfume and in due course bearing fruit.

Whether or not you gave up anything for Lent this year, you may like to consider if there's anything you could usefully take up – perhaps a commitment to reading the Bible every day if you're not already doing that, or setting aside a bit of time each week to volunteer for some worthy charitable cause, or whatever else a little bit of imagination suggests to you – over the weeks following Easter Sunday.

And whatever else we do, let's celebrate, for Christ is Risen!

God bless,

Magnus

Notes

1. Personally, I quite like the idea although I'd probably rather have coffee and croissants, or a bacon butty or two, for breakfast. I'm not overly fond of champagne as the bubbles tend to get up my nose...
2. Wright refers to champagne 3 times within the space of as many pages in his book, so he evidently feels it's quite important. On the other hand, I seem to have managed to use the same word 6 times in two pages (including the footnotes). Draw your own conclusions!

Services This Month:

In April we will be finishing our morning service series on the Fourth Book of Psalms and starting a new evening service series on the "I am" sayings of Jesus in John's gospel.

3rd April

10:30am Speaker: Bryan Collis *Songs for God's People #9: Psalm 101*

6:00pm Communion Service
Speaker: Andrew March *"I Am" #1: Deut. 8:1-7; John 6:27-40*
I am the Bread of Life

10th April

10:30am Speaker: Jon Stammers *Songs for God's People #10: Psalm 102*
Overwhelmed by life; overwhelmed by God

6:00pm Speaker: James Goodman *"I Am" #2: John 8:12-27*
I am the Light of the World

17th April

10:30am Speaker: Julia Bartholomew *SFGP #11: Psalm 103 & 104*
Where do I fit into God's creation?

6:00pm Speaker: Julia Bartholomew *John 3:1-8; 16-17*
What does God really think of me?

24th April

10:30am Communion Service
Speaker: Rob Beamish *SFGP #12: Psalms 105 & 106*
Give thanks to the Lord

6:00pm Speaker: Deb Stammers *"I Am" #3: John 10:1-10*
I am the Door

Our Speakers This Month:

Julia Bartholomew is the Minister of Rhos-on-Sea URC. **Rob Beamish** is the Minister of Prince's Drive Baptist Church, Colwyn Bay and Penrallt's Moderator during our pastoral vacancy. Both Julia and Rob are leaders of Bible Unzipped, along with Peter Cousins (NB Bible Unzipped is taking a break this month but will be back in May). The other speakers are all members of Penrallt.

Dates for Your Diary:

Sunday 3	2:15pm	Service at Haulfre residential home in Llangoed.
Wednesday 6	10:30am	Men's prayer meeting followed by coffee.
Monday 11	7pm	Alpha restarts after Easter break.
Tuesday 12	7:30pm	Church members' AGM.
Wednesday 20	7:30pm	Penrallt Railway Group meeting at Lawrence's house.
Saturday 23	9:30am	Penrallt Railway Group construction day in the Twrgwyn Room.
Monday 25	7:30pm	Missions Group prayer meeting at Sarah Jackson's house.
Tuesday 26	7:30pm	Cytûn Hustings at Penrhyn Hall.

Please see the Noticeboard section of this newsletter for more about most of these events.

News of People:

Eileen McKenna is due to be having an operation in April.

Congratulations to **Janet Gough** and **Peter Smith** on their engagement.

Children's Birthdays in April:

11th: Samuel Adams

Weekday Events:

Please check with the contact people for confirmation of when they are meeting this month. HG = Home Group

Day	Time	Details	Contacts
Tue	7:30pm	HG, Nilgiri	Joan Beer (353874)
Tue	7:30pm	HG Tyddyn Isaf (Menai Bridge)	Magnus Forrester-Barker (717570)
Wed	2:00pm	HG, Carers	Carol Morris (208407)
Wed	7:30pm	HG, Bethesda	Jon & Deb Stammers (602868)
Wed	7:30pm	HG, Nomads	Pat & Roger Borlace (713146)
Thu	10:30am	HG, Llanfairpwll (am)	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Thu	7:30pm	HG, Llanfairpwll (pm)	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Fri	10:30am–12pm	Cheeky Monkeys (parent/toddler group)	Ceri Walker (07581 452098)
Fri	10:30am–12:30pm	HG, Maes y Dref	Anne Collis (353173)
Sat	8:30am	Prayer Meeting	

Noticeboard:

◇ Church Lunch

Sunday 3rd April

Please bring enough buffet style food for yourselves and one or two others.

◇ Church Walk

Details of this month's walk have not yet been released. Please watch the website news page (www.penrallt.org/news) and weekly news sheet for information, or contact the church office or Roger Borlace if you would like to be informed when details become available.

◇ **Hustings**

Tuesday 26th April 7:30pm

Cytûn Bangor has organised Hustings in Penrhyn Hall, Bangor (near the bus station). This is an opportunity to hear the Arfon constituency candidates for the Assembly elections. Questions for the candidates must be submitted in writing before noon on 26th April to cytunbangorhustings@gmail.com (Please include your name). The meeting will be chaired by the Right Reverend Andy John, Bishop of Bangor. All are welcome.

◇ **Pastoral Help**

If you have issues of concern about your own or someone else's welfare, please contact a member of the Pastoral Care team: Pat Borlace (713146); Adrienne Ferrada; Gwen Hicks; Geoff Moore (410582); Lawrence Moss (713793); Judy Stammers (364394); Helen Thomas (600174).

◇ **Penrallt on Facebook**

Did you know that we have a Facebook page? Search for "Penrallt Baptist Church". We also have a general group (search for "Penrallt", though note that this will also bring up several other pages and groups, many of which are not related to us) as well as our prayer-specific *Penrallt Prayer Point* group (unlike the page, you need to join the groups before you can use them).

◇ **Penrallt Railway Group**

The Penrallt Railway Group (or PRG for short) is now well under way with constructing their model of Bala Junction and surrounding area, c. 1958. If you would like to join them, or to find out more, please speak to Andrew March or Lawrence Moss. The group will be meeting twice in April – on the evening of Wednesday 20th April (at Lawrence's house) for a planning meeting and on Saturday 23rd April (at Penrallt) for a construction day to work on the layout itself.

◇ **Pray for Penrallt Every Day**

We believe in prayer and encourage people to pray. You can send prayer request to our electronic diary via office@penrallt.org (there are also prayer cards in the church porch that you can fill in). Better still, you can receive the prayer diary straight to your inbox every Monday (or occasionally on Tuesdays) by emailing the office now and requesting to be put on the list. For more immediate and interactive sharing of prayers, search on Facebook for *Penrallt Prayer Point* and send a request to join our group.

◇ **Rough Sleepers**

The church's policy is not to give money directly to the rough sleepers in Upper Bangor. Be warned that some of them can be aggressive. You will find brown envelopes in the porch for a gift that will buy meal vouchers which are distributed to rough sleepers by the Cathedral. So far Penrallt has contributed £6,250 to this scheme.

◇ **Sunday Afternoon Services**

We visit residential homes in the area once a month on a Sunday afternoon, alternating between Haulfre (in Llangoed, on Anglesey, starting at 2:15pm) and Plas Garnedd (in Llanberis, starting at 2:45pm), usually on the first Sunday. This month we are due to visit Haulfre on **Sunday 3rd April**.

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 17th April.
Please sent information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org; 01248 353355).
All notices should be submitted in writing (preferably by email) as early as possible.

Focus on...

Christians Against Poverty

Serve the poor

In 1996 the charity began its debt work headed by the founder John Kirkby. After struggling with debt himself he understood the darkness and isolation that debt can cause. Therefore, began a journey dedicated to freeing people from this darkness and releasing them to live again. The charity now have over 300 debt centres and are still growing! They work by visiting the clients three times, collecting all of their debts and then giving them a recommended route out of debt such as repayment, insolvency or bankruptcy.

They have expanded to have three other services and one church course. Firstly, the CAP Job Club aims to help those who are unemployed become more employable by growing in confidence and some practical help with their CV's. This has proved successful as over 700 people have found work. We recently celebrated 100 people being freed from addictions after attending a release group course. The CAP Release Group aim to help people overcome life controlling habits such as smoking, alcohol addictions or gambling. Our newest service is the CAP Life Skills which assists people in living a healthy lifestyle where they are able to control their finances and build budgets. Similar to the CAP Money Course which is a church course aiming to teach basic budgeting and money management skills.

Save the lost

Evangelism is a fundamental element to all CAP's services and there are many opportunities for the CAP staff to share their faith. The debt centre staff are encouraged to pray, share their testimony and if appropriate invite the client to church. The other services are often held in a church and share their faith during the community time (a time for the group to bond, often over food). There are regional evangelists all over the UK who hold events that the services can invite their client to. Also, we have client holidays where we take the clients away and use that time to do sessions on such things as anger and depression. These often have incredible results and we celebrated in December our 5000 salvation with many more since.

Through the church

The services are all run through the church and by members of the church and they are a wonderful opportunity for the church to get involved in social actions as well as reaching the lost in their community.

Across the nation;

There are hundreds CAP services across the UK with the closest debt centre to Penrallt being in Caernarfon. In the future we aim to have full coverage of the UK.

Amy Burrows