



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: April 2021

Easter, lockdown and Tom and Jerry

In times of Covid, we have needed to find a new way to present an old story. We have also needed to find a new way to express our faith and be a community of faith together. A new way to be the Church. It's far from ideal, but we prayerfully decide together what we believe best serves God, the church and the community. We do what we can and we trust God and lean on Him.

Thinking back to last Easter, I wonder whether we would have believed that we would still be wrestling with the effects of Coronavirus a year later. 2,000 years ago I don't think that the people standing at the crucifixion, or those exploring an empty tomb anticipated the impact that the death of Jesus was going to have on the lives of people around the world for the next 2,000 years. Today, it is estimated that nearly one third of the people on the planet, 2.4 billion people of a population of 7.5 billion would describe themselves as Christians. Christianity is still the largest growing faith on the planet. The death and resurrection of Jesus changes everything, for everyone, everywhere and at all times. This is the universal impact of the climax of the ministry of the Son of God.

Back in the trivial world of daily life, I am excited that a new film of Tom and Jerry has been made. I'm excited to see how new techniques will be used. How the producers will seek to capture something of the thrill, tension and hilarity that I remember from my childhood. Simply watching a cartoon of a cat chasing a mouse. Today gives a new perspective on an old story. I wonder how the filmmakers will take the opportunities that they have today to tell this story in a fresh new way.

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As we prepare to come out of Covid for a second summer, we have an opportunity to tell the story of Jesus in a new and fresh way. How will we tell the story again now? As individuals? As a church? How can we connect afresh? What difference has the death and resurrection of Jesus made to me in the past and today too? I pray that God helps us to share the joy, the thrill and the deep love of knowing Jesus in our lives in a way that will speak to others too.

Blessings,

John

NWBA Services for Holy Week

The North Western Baptist Association (NWBA) are providing YouTube services for Maundy Thursday (1st April) and Good Friday (2nd April), both with various options for start times to watch the live stream. Links for them can be found at <http://www.faithspace.org.uk/lent/>

Wil Lewis

We give thanks for the life of Bill Lewis (better known at Penrallt as Wil), who died peacefully in his sleep last week after a period of illness. Wil has been part of our church family for over 90 years, including many years of faithful service as a deacon and as treasurer. Please hold his wife Betsan (also a church member for many years) and family in your prayers.

The funeral will be held at Colwyn Bay Crematorium on Wednesday 7th April at 11am, for family and invited guests (numbers are limited by covid restrictions – please do NOT go in person unless you have been specifically invited by the family). The service will be conducted by one of our former ministers, Peter Cousins, who knew Wil very well. Our minister, John, and Joan Beer will also be taking part on behalf of Penrallt. It is planned for the service to be broadcast over the internet; please contact the office if you would like to receive details when they become available.

Children's Birthdays in April

11th: Sam Adams

Services This Month

All our services remain online for the moment, though we are moving towards holding more services live over Zoom (led, as far as possible from the church building). All services are open to everyone, including students. Please feel free to browse the online services on our website at www.penrallt.org/services — for the usual service format the pages are available at any time but we recommended starting them at 10:30 on Sunday mornings, which should let you finish just in time to join us on Zoom for a chat straight afterwards at 11:30am (visitors are welcome and you can join without a camera if you prefer). Live services on Zoom start promptly (see start times noted below), and we will aim to make recordings available later in the week for those who are unable to join us on the day (NB the Good Friday Reflection and Cytûn Easter Service will not be recorded).

Friday 2nd April (10am): Good Friday Reflection

A short reflection for Good Friday, led by Revd. John Thompson, **live on Zoom** at 10am. Note that this service is not suitable for young children but there will be children's activities available on our website if you wish to use them.

Easter Sunday: 4th April

8am – Cytûn Easter Service.

10:30am – Penrallt All-age Easter Service including Family Communion.

Both of these services will be **live on Zoom**. For the communion service you will need bread and wine (or equivalent) to fully participate.

11th April

Jesus: Lord of the Sabbath

Luke 6:1–11. Preacher: Andy Lewis.

18th April

Jesus: Up, In and Out

Luke 6:12–19. Preacher: John Stammers.

25th April

Communion service. *Sermon on the Plain: Blessings and Woes*

Luke 6:20–26. Preacher: John Thompson.

The whole service will be **live on Zoom, starting at 10:30am** (followed by a chat as usual). You will need bread and wine (or equivalent) to fully take part in the communion.

Note that the sermons on 11th, 18th and 25th April are part of our ongoing series, [Love, Trust and Follow Jesus](#). Previous sermons in the series can be found on our website (and the series will continue into May and beyond).

◇ **Building**

If you need to enter the church building, please contact the church office beforehand to obtain permission and arrange access.

◇ **Children's Work**

Sunday school for 5–11s meets online every Tuesday at 6pm via Zoom, for about 45 minutes. There is a Facebook messenger group used by families in the church for general communication and support. We share information about church activities for children and families but also use it to support one another with whatever is happening. Please contact the church office if you would like to join in.

◇ **Church Members' AGM**

Our Annual General Meeting for church members will take place via Zoom on Monday 19th April at 7pm. Papers and Zoom details for the meeting will be circulated to members. If you would like to become a member or to find out what membership means in a Baptist church contact, please speak to John (minister@penrallt.org) or Owen (secretary@penrallt.org).

◇ **Cytûn Easter Trail**

Cytûn (Churches Together in Bangor) is running an Easter Trail around Bangor town centre, using bilingual materials from Scripture Union. It starts at Bangor Cathedral and ends in the High Street, via Bangor Clock. It will be available until 12th April. Follow the trail and scan the QR codes on your phone to watch a series of videos that tell the Easter story.

◇ **Election Hustings**

Cytûn Bangor has organised Hustings at 7:00pm on Wednesday 21st April 2021, on Zoom. This is an opportunity to hear the Arfon constituency candidates for the Senedd elections. Questions for the candidates must be submitted in writing before noon on Tuesday 20th April to hustings.cytunbangor@gmail.com (Please include your name). The meeting will be chaired by the Right Reverend Andy John, Bishop of Bangor. All are welcome. Zoom link to follow.

◇ **Foodbank**

Bangor Cathedral Foodbank is open 2 – 3pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, operating from Tŷ Deiniol (the Diocesan Centre) next to Bangor Cathedral. A referral from another service is normally required to access the foodbank but they are able to give people up to two emergency food parcels without a referral. To find out more about how you can access or contribute to the foodbank please visit www.bangorfoodbank.org

◇ **Giving**

We quite understand that financial difficulties may impact your ability to give to the work of the church at this time. Please do not place yourself under additional financial strain. However, if you normally give to the weekly cash offering and would like to explore other ways of giving to the work at Penrallt, please speak to Averil, our Treasurer, who will be able to advise (treasurer@penrallt.org).

◇ **Hardship Fund**

The church has a small fund overseen by the minister to help people in need. If you find yourself in financial difficulty or know someone else that is struggling, please speak with Sarah Jackson (sarah.jackson.home@gmail.com) or John Thompson (minister@penrallt.org) in confidence. And if you are in a position to add to the hardship fund, please speak to Averil Francis (treasurer@penrallt.org).

◇ **Homegroups / Contact, Care & Prayer**

We encourage you to join one of our homegroups if you are not already in one, as they are invaluable in helping us to deepen our relationship with the Lord and with one another. The groups currently meet on Zoom and other online platforms on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on Tuesday and Friday mornings (most groups meet weekly). Contact the church office to find out more or be put in touch with a group.

There are contact, care and prayer groups to enable people to stay connected and receive prayer support even if they are not in a homegroup; these groups do not meet together but each one has a designated person to contact the other group members regularly. Once again, please contact the church office if you are not part of a contact, care & prayer group or a homegroup and would like to be.

◇ **Missions Prayer Meeting**

Penrallt supports several mission partners around the world and our missions prayer group meets quarterly to hear updates and pray for them. You are welcome to join us for our next prayer meeting, which will be on Zoom on Wednesday 28th April at 7:30pm (Meeting ID: 899 8050 6944; Passcode: 613764 or email office@penrallt.org if you would like a clickable link).

◇ **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: Magnus Forrester-Barker (07890 109645); Geoff Moore (01248 410582); Monica Morris (01407 840439), John Thompson (07931 150697).

◇ **Penrallt on Facebook and YouTube**

We have three Facebook groups:

- *Penrallt* (www.facebook.com/groups/2402772192)
a general group for information and social interaction
- *Penrallt Prayer Point* (www.facebook.com/groups/302627593231755)
a private group (as defined by Facebook, i.e. request to join)
specifically to share prayer requests and encouragements
- *Penrallt Students* (www.facebook.com/groups/195300234272943)

There is also a Facebook page and a YouTube channel (both called *Penrallt Baptist Church*):

- www.facebook.com/penralltbc
- www.youtube.com/channel/UCwK0_IPqAVqGKwQREg6JhHg

◇ **Prayer Resources**

Send prayer requests, thanksgivings and testimonies to our email prayer diary via office@penrallt.org – email this address, too, to subscribe to the prayer diary, which goes out every week (usually on Mondays). We also have a Facebook prayer group (see above) which allows more interactive sharing of prayer requests and updates, and prayer meetings via Zoom on Wednesday lunchtimes at noon and Saturday mornings at 8:30am (please contact the church office if you need the connection details for either meeting).

The Baptist Union have resources for prayer and reflection at www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/338269/Prayer_and_reflections.aspx, as well as other resources at www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/337630/Coronavirus.aspx and at www.nwba.org.uk/ with encouraging articles and stories, prayer broadcasts and reflections.

◇ **Shopping**

Do you need help with shopping? Or does someone you know need help with shopping? We would love to help. We have a small team of volunteers able to shop for those cannot get to the shops themselves. If you would like to use this service, or join the team, please contact the church office (office@penrallt.org).

◇ **Spring Harvest**

This year's Spring Harvest is taking place online, so you can attend without having to travel all the way to Minehead or Skegness. It's running from 4th to 8th April. Details can be found (and tickets booked) at springharvest.org

◇ Youth Work

Our youth events are continuing to run on Thursday evenings on Zoom between 7 and 7:30pm (deliberately kept short to reduce Zoom fatigue!), open to anyone aged 11 – 18. There is an Easter Escape Room on 1st April. To find out about future events, see the [youth page](#) of our website or email youth@penrallt.org

Church Office

The church administrator, Magnus, can be contacted on office@penrallt.org or 07934 231788 during the church office opening hours (10am – 3pm Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays). *NB Magnus is working from home at the moment but office hours still apply.*

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 25th April

Please send information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org). All items should be submitted by email as early as possible.

hrist is risen
lleluia!

Focus on...

Spurgeon's Children's Charity



Penrallt supports Spurgeon's Children's Charity with an annual contribution from our missions budget and with prayer. Here is a brief article from Spurgeon's to summarise their work:

It is over 150 years since Charles Haddon Spurgeon and friends began their work to provide a safe home, care and education for vulnerable children in south London.

Today, Spurgeons is working through 50+ services across England, continuing to support and care for children and families through difficult and challenging times in their lives. We run children's centres and family support work; groups and one to one support for young carers; specialist services for domestic abuse and girls at risk from criminal exploitation or gangs; and support for children of prisoners, including working with their dads to help strengthen their parenting skills and family relationships.

Many of the families that we work with are affected by more than one issue – poverty, mental health, social isolation, domestic abuse, separation and loss, low confidence and lack of opportunities. All of these have been aggravated by the impact of Covid-19 over the last year but we have found ways and means to stay connected through phone, technology and even good old fashioned post! (with activities and resource packs) to make sure that children, young people and families know and trust that we are still there for them.

We would really appreciate your prayers that Spurgeons can continue to bring compassion and hope to all those we are asked to serve and to give thanks for the means and grace to do it.

Our Spring 2021 edition of ***Yours Faithfully*** our supporters' magazine can be found on our website [Yours Faithfully – Spurgeons](#) or ring our central office on 01933 412412 to request a copy in the post.

C. H. Spurgeon was a Baptist minister who, as noted in our January newsletter, laid the foundation stone for New Park Street English Baptist Chapel in Holyhead (which was named after Spurgeon's own church in London).