



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter for February 2013

The Irish poet Sylvia Sands imagines Jesus waiting in a queue to be baptized by John the Baptist.

*Jesus, waiting in a queue with all the smitten-hearted;
with all the guilty;
with all the hopeless, helpless, hidden people.
Jesus waiting in a queue behind self-loathing tax men,
wild-haired, wanton women,
behind broken, stumbling beggars, buskers, con-men,
strange street people.
Jesus waiting in a queue.
(From "Queue" by Sylvia Sands)*

Later, of course, they'd queue up to see him. Wait in line with their sick child, their sick father, their sick aunty or just themselves with their own sick body. Or they'd queue to talk to him, tell him their troubles, ask his advice. Or they'd come to him and ask how to find God, seeing that the divine seems so elusive. Or they'd queue up with their children to be blessed only to be turned away by the disciples for "wasting the Master's time". One group couldn't be bothered to wait, so stripped the roof off the house and lowered their friend down on a stretcher. The average person in the UK spends 5 hours and 35 minutes a month standing in queues. Five months, two weeks and five days in a life time.

We're good at queues.

So it's comforting to imagine Jesus in one too. Standing there with all the riff-raff like us.

My mother was once queuing for her South Wales Echo in the local Spar when one of the national leaders of a major political party came in, grabbed a paper, jumped the queue and strode out. Too important to queue with the riff-raff (Yes, I'll tell you his name if you ask!).

Nice to be reminded that Jesus could wait if needed. It encourages me, especially when I'm praying and not seemingly getting very far ("Your prayer is in a queue and will be answered as soon as possible."). Good to remember that life has its own pace when you're walking with Jesus.

The Lord knows that we need patience to survive in this world. Patience with people, patience with "the system" (only thing worse than the system: no system), patience with ourselves. No wonder he wandered off on his own for hours on end to pray. ("What do you mean you don't know where he is? We've walked two hours to come and see him. Bring him back at once!")

We'll be holding a baptismal service in February, the candidates following Jesus (after an interval of nearly 2,000 years) into the water. Cleaner water than the Jordan, admittedly, and perfectly adequate. Baptism is for ordinary folk who've decided to follow Jesus. Common people who know their own faults, limitations and inadequacies. It celebrates what he has done for us, not what we've done for him. And there's a lot to celebrate.

Come along to the service on the evening of February 10th.

God bless,
Peter

SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

Feb 3

10.30am	<i>The Key to the Next Level</i>	<i>1 Peter 2:9-10</i>
2.15pm	Service at Bontnewydd	
6.00pm	Communion Service <i>If you wonder why God bothers . . .</i>	<i>Genesis 28:10-22</i>

Feb 10

10.30am	<i>Live Freely, Tread Cautiously</i>	<i>1 Peter 2:11-17</i>
6.00pm	Baptismal Service	

Feb 17

10.30am	Geoff Birch
6.00pm	Neil Rymer

Feb 24

10.30am	Communion Service. <i>How to Cope with Suffering Injustice</i>	<i>1 Peter 2:18-25</i>
6.00pm	A-Team Service	

Faith Café

After church on Sunday evenings we host Faith Café for students, teenagers and other young adults. Starting around 7:15 pm it is an evening of chat, interviews, music and discussions. There is a short programme at around 7:40 after which you are free to leave or stay and chat.

CHURCH LUNCH

We will host a church lunch on **Sunday February 3**. Please bring enough buffet style "finger food" for yourselves and one or two others.

SPECIAL DATES

Monday 4	7.30pm	Deacons' Meeting
Tuesday 5	7.00pm	Post-Alpha Course
Wednesday 6	10.30am	Men's prayer meeting followed by coffee in Options.
Saturday 9		<i>Bible Unzipped Course</i> restarts in Rhos-on-Sea. See below.
Tuesday 12	7.00pm	Post-Alpha Course
Tuesday 19	7.00pm	Post-Alpha Course

WEEKDAYS

Please check with the contact people when there are meetings this month.

HG = Home Group

Day	Time	Details	Contacts
Tue	8.00pm	HG, Nilgiri	Joan Beer (353874)
Tue	7.30pm	HG, Tyddyn Isaf, Menai Bridge	Magnus Forrester-Barker (717570)
Wed	10.30am	Men's Prayer Meeting	Peter Cousins (353878)
Wed	2.00pm	Carers' Home Group	Carol Morris (208407)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, The Nomads	Jess & Seamus Adams (421185) Susan Cousins (353878)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, Bethesda	Jon & Deb Stammers (602868)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, Penchwintan Road	David McCormack (07725 028074)
Wed	8.00pm	HG, Grŵp Cymraeg	Owen & Nia Lloyd Evans (352634)
Thu	10.30am	Post-Alpha Bible Study	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Thu	7.30pm	HG, Llanfairpwll	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Fri	10.30am - noon	Cheeky Monkeys	Joan Rymer (713003)
Fri	10.30 – 12.30pm	HG, 6 Maes y Dref	Anne Collis (353173) anne@collis66.freemove.co.uk
Sat	8.30am	Prayer Meeting	

NEWS OF PEOPLE

Nancy Jones is now living in Bryn Llifon home in Bangor. **John Gilberthorpe** is home from hospital but still unwell. Congratulations to **Bethany Elliott** on being awarded a teachers' training place in London from September.

As we went to press we received news of the death of **Bobby MacKenzie**. Our condolences go to Pat, Stephen, David and the family. Bobby was a church member of faith and courage. He will be greatly missed by us all. The funeral will be on Wednesday 30 January at 12.30pm in Penrallt and afterwards at the Crematorium.

Children's Birthdays in February:

1st: Morgan Goodman; **11th** Amelie Goodwin; **25th**: Inge Snyman

NOTICEBOARD

- ***Men's Prayer Meeting*** ***Wednesday 5 February 10.30am***
The men will meet for prayer as usual, followed by coffee in Options.

- ***Post-Alpha Group***
The Post-Alpha Study group will meet on Tuesdays from 7pm. We will be studying a series called "Jesus Christ: Teacher, Servant and Saviour" compiled by the late, great, Christian teacher John Stott. All who have done the Alpha Course in the past are welcome to join us. The group will be led by Brian and Peter as before, meeting in Peter's office at the church.

- ***Bible Unzipped.*** ***Saturday 9 February 9:30am - 1pm***
Bible Unzipped is run by a group of local ministers who have a passion for Biblical Theology. Its aim is to unpack Scripture with those interested in learning more than can be offered in a Sunday sermon. It also equips those leading in the church with some tools for studying and teaching from the Bible. The histories of the texts themselves, the different ways they have been interpreted and their use for contemporary life and personal devotion will be considered.
Bible Unzipped meets monthly on a Saturday morning at Rhos-on-Sea URC from 9:30am to 1pm. Each morning includes three one-hour sessions which develop a theme through the term. The themes for this term are: The Book of Hebrews and the Old Testament, Mission in the 21st Century and the book of Romans.
The course is free, and if you talk to Peter we can probably arrange a lift for you.

- ***Walking Group*** ***Tuesday 19 February 10.30am***
Meet at Henllys Golf Club car park. From Beaumaris continue on the B5109 with the castle on your left. Take the first turn left (signpost to Llanfaes and golf club). Take the next left turn (HPB Henllys) continuing along the lane keeping right at a junction. The golf club is on your left with the car park at the rear. As the fields are very wet for walking or picnicking, it is proposed to walk as far as possible on quiet lanes returning to the golf club for a late lunch (or just a drink/snack if preferred). Any queries, please contact the Hebblethwaites on 01248 490581 or email paul.hebblethwaite@virgin.net

➤ **Support Kate Barton**

Kate is a student at Bangor University and has been part of Penrallt since 2009. A year ago she had to suspend her studies to receive hospital treatment for anorexia, an eating disorder she'd suffered from for 13 years. She is now in recovery, and is passionate about turning her negative experience into a positive one. In August 2013 she is cycling 338 miles across three cities (London, Amsterdam and Brussels) in four days to raise as much money as possible for 'Beat', a life-saving Eating Disorders charity. Her charity website has more details: <http://www.doitforcharity.com/KateBarton>. Do support Kate if you can.

➤ **Course: Mindfulness from a Christian Perspective. 5, 12 & 19 March**

A recent development in CBT has been the so called 'Third Wave' of therapies which include mindfulness, acceptance and commitment theory, these are based less on the controlling of our thoughts and emotions but more on the acceptance of how they are, and changing how we react to them. This acceptance of our thoughts and emotions can be perceived as incompatible with the Christian faith and these workshops we will take a critical look at how Christians can apply mindfulness in their lives. The biblical basis for this practice will also be examined and discussed. The workshop will include some practical meditations and discussion on how these can be integrated into our Christian lives. The practices will include some movement and sitting so comfortable loose clothing would be practical. In the final session other relaxation methods will be taught.

➤ **Penrallt on Facebook**

100 people are signed up to Penrallt's Facebook site. Join us.

➤ **Homeless in Bangor**

Please do not give money directly to the homeless in Upper Bangor. We have found in the past that it has encouraged aggressive begging on the church premises by people who have a history of violence. You will find brown envelopes in the porch to put your gift in. This will buy vouchers which are distributed by the Cathedral to the homeless.

➤ **The Prayer Room...**

...is open before and after the service for quiet prayer. Penrallt is a place of prayer, so make use of this sacred space.

➤ **Pray for Penrallt Every Day**

Sign up to receive our prayer diary by e-mail every Monday morning by sending your request to: office@penrallt.org.

If you have some subject for prayer, either send it in by e-mail, or fill in one of the pink cards, which are available in the porch, and place it in the visitors' cards box or give it to Peter or Magnus.

➤ **Pastoral Help**

If you have pastoral concerns please contact Peter or one of the other members of the Pastoral Care team. *Please note that Peter and Susan will be away on holiday from 14th to 21st of this month.*

Pat Borlace 713146, Judy Stammers 364394 Geoff Moore 410582
Susan Cousins 353878 Helen Thomas 600174

Deadline for next month's newsletter Sunday 17 February
Please send information to Gwyneth (gwyneth@brindley-wales.com or 352682)

FOCUS ON...

Beth in Bolivia

"To the loved, a word of affection is a morsel; but to the love-starved, a word of affection can be a feast." Max Lucado

Having been back in Britain now for just over a month, the time has come to share the things that I learnt about poverty, what it is, how it affects people, how statistics are not just numbers, they're human beings, each with their own story.

It was such a privilege to be involved with some of the work that Mosoj Yan and other charities and churches did in Cochabamba with these children. For eight weeks, myself and another of my team were working in L'Albergue de Restauracion, or The Restoration Shelter. This was a permanent home for 12 girls aged between 9 and 17. All of the girls there had suffered abuse. Some came directly to the shelter from their homes, whilst some were rescued from the streets having fled from abusive 'families'.

"We're here to build relationships" is something I heard constantly there. Since hearing again and again about the huge need for relationships to be built, I began to understand the absolute need for - and purpose of - simply building relationships. I struggled when I first arrived with feelings of uselessness, though I am aware now of how naïve I was being. I was expecting that by the time the group left, after 10 weeks, we'd have all the street children playing Mozart and speaking fluent English!! After all that was what I was taking with me, my God-given gifts in music and education! After a few weeks I understood that we were actually there to help build relationships with girls that were hugely vulnerable. It was hugely important to love each girl individually, spending time with them, getting to know them, coming alongside them in their different journeys.

After this trip, I feel that creating life-giving relationships is one way to invest in tackling the huge heartbreaking issue of human and country development. Seeing daily with my own eyes, and hearing stories of lives being restored within Mosoj Yan and the various projects we were involved with, is a huge testament to the importance of building relationships with those who are so vulnerable. It takes a lot of time and resources to build these impacting relationships...but it's so, so worth it.

Bethany Elliott