



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: February 2016

A certain word has recently kept coming into my head, quite unbidden. This word is 'Precious'. I pondered on it, and realised that it has various degrees of meaning.

One meaning, I suppose, occurs when someone has an artificial expectation of their own importance and the things they do, or is overly concerned about a possession "He/she is very precious about..." But that surely does not convey the real meaning of the word.

One of my hobbies is making jewellery; some of the gemstones I use are 'semi-precious', others are 'precious'. What makes the difference? Well, the precious ones are those that are highly valued and desired because they are rare, or because they have a special beauty or brilliance, whereas the others are more plentiful and therefore more readily available. If you ask people to list precious gemstones, it is likely that they will first of all cite diamonds, followed by sapphires, rubies and emeralds as the most valued of all, and they would be right. They are well-known, easily come to mind and were considered to be the 'big four'. I say 'were considered' because the situation has now changed. Another gemstone has recently been included in the list. This gem is not very well known, but is rare. It is tanzanite, which was discovered in the 1960s in a very small part of Tanzania at the foothills of Kilimanjaro, and found nowhere else in the world so far. Tanzanite is beautiful, but so many other stones, such as amethyst, peridot or topaz, are equally fine yet do not demand quite the same attention. The reason for the special value put on this particular gemstone is that the site was depleted and the mine closed two years ago, causing the value of the gemstone to rise dramatically. The only samples available are those already in circulation, enabling their owners to ask whatever price they like when selling them on. So, 'precious' in this context means highly valued and esteemed because of rarity. It is something desirable because not many people have seen it, let alone own it.

There is a more personal meaning to the word 'precious' that doesn't necessarily denote monetary value. You all, I'm sure, have possessions that are very precious and dear to you, especially if they used to belong to a loved one no longer here: a grandfather's war medals, a child's first baby clothes, photographs, and so on.

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

These do not have much intrinsic value, but are still important and greatly prized. This meaning of the word is 'cherished' – 'dear', not in a monetary sense, more 'dear to my heart'. It gives the idea of being hugged so that it is protected.

In the Bible, precious stones, gold and silver, all denoting splendour and richness, are mentioned numerous times. Solomon adorned his temple with them, and of course in the Book of Revelation the brilliance of the Holy City is described as being that of a 'very precious jewel, its foundations decorated with every kind of precious stone', comprising jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, onyx, ruby, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, turquoise, jacinth, and amethyst, while the twelve gates were single pearls. How splendid!

We, however, are not encouraged to stockpile these treasures and covet more. As Matthew 6:19 states, *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven"*. We are also told that some things are more valuable than gems – wisdom, for example, is worth more than rubies (Proverbs 8:11).

All these are **things**, but we Christians have a very special **person** who is precious to us: our Lord Jesus Christ. He is precious in both senses of the word. He is a rare being! He is 'beautiful beyond description' and has a radiance that makes us in awe of his presence. And he is also precious to us because he is ours to cherish and love for his own sake. It is 'through the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish and without spot' (just like that precious gemstone) that we are redeemed. In the first epistle of Peter it is stated *"He is the living Stone, rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him... and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."* We are not regarded by him more highly if we are rich – quite the contrary – but we are valued just by being his children and offering to him our selves, and what small gifts we have, in all humility. As the song says "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee", and in that beautiful carol by Christina Rossetti, *In the Bleak Midwinter*, she writes "What can I give him, poor as I am?... What I can I give him: give my heart".

He is precious to us, but WE are precious in HIS sight! How wonderful is that? As Anne Graham Lotz (evangelist Billy Graham's daughter) writes: "We are God's treasure! When God the Father looked throughout the universe for something to give His only Son in reward for what He accomplished on earth, the Father handpicked us! We are the treasure – His priceless gift of love to the Son!"

Gwyneth Brindley

Services This Month:

In February we are continuing our morning service sermon series on the Fourth Book of Psalms. In the evenings we will be concluding our series on the Parables of Jesus and starting a new series on Meals with Jesus in the gospels.

7 February

10:30am Speaker: Rob Beamish *Songs for God's People #4: Psalm 94*
The Lord will rescue

6:00pm Communion Service
Speaker: Roger Borlace *Parables #6: Matthew 20:1-15*
The workers in the vineyard

14 February

10:30am Speaker: Geoff Birch *Songs for God's People #5: Psalm 97*
The Righteous Justice of an Awesome God & Rom. 3:21-26

6:00pm Speaker: Diane Holmes *Parables #7: Mark 4:1-20*
The Farmer went out to sow – sow what?

21 February (Tearfund Sunday)

10:30am Speaker: Neil Rymer. *Songs for God's People #6: Psalm 95*
A three line whip? (*& 96*)

6:00pm Speaker: Deb Stammers *Meal with Jesus #1: Luke 5:27-32*
Eating with Jesus

28 February

10:30am Communion Service
Speaker: Geoff Birch *Songs for God's People #7: Psalm 98*
The Salvation of the Lord made known to us & Eph. 2:1-10

6:00pm Speaker: James Goodman *Meal with Jesus #2: Luke 7:36-50*
Meals are enacted community – The woman & the Pharisees

Our Speakers This Month:

Rob Beamish is the Minister of Princes Drive Baptist Church in Colwyn Bay and is Penrallt's Moderator through our pastoral vacancy. The other speakers are all members of Penrallt.

Dates for Your Diary:

| | | |
|---------------------|------------|--|
| Monday 1 | 7:30pm | Church members' meeting. |
| Tuesday 2 | 7pm | Alpha continues at the Belle Vue (NB apart from this week it will be on Monday nights!) |
| Sunday 7 | 2:15pm | Service at Haulfre residential home in Llangoed. |
| Tuesday 9 | 7:30pm | Missions group meeting at Sarah Jackson's house. |
| Wednesday 10 | 7pm | Cytûn AGM at Berea Newydd. Revd. Peter Cousins will be giving a word of encouragement after the AGM. There is a vacancy for the Christian Aid Treasurer and the Publicity Officer. |
| Saturday 13 | 9:30am-1pm | Bible Unzipped at Rhos on Sea URC. |
| Monday 15 | 10:30am | Church walk at Benllech. |
| Wednesday 17 | 7pm | Prayer ministry training session (Upper Room). |
| Wednesday 24 | 7pm | Prayer ministry training session (Chapel). |

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

News of People:

Our condolences are with **Ian Walker** and his family following the death of Ian's mother last month.

Please pray for **Hannah Norris** and her family, as her baby niece Zoë has been diagnosed with leukaemia. Please also keep **Joan & Tony Mason** and **Eileen & Phil McKenna** in your prayers, for their ongoing health struggles.

Colin & Monica Morris are still in India working with street children until the end of February, and are grateful for your continued prayers. If you would like more information about what they are doing, please ask Magnus.

Mari Roberts is continuing to recover well following major surgery in December and is now back with us.

We congratulate **Geoff & Marilyn Birch** on the safe arrival of their latest grand-niece in January.

Children's Birthdays in February:

1st: Morgan Goodman 7th: Afan Hedd Whitton 8th: Sophie Toplis
11th: Amelie Goodwin & Max Osborne 25th: Inge Snyman 27th: Siôn Davies

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:

- ◇ **Bible Unzipped** *Saturday 13th February 9:30am–1pm*
Bible Unzipped aims 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. We meet monthly on the second Saturday morning at Rhos-on-Sea URC from 9:30am to 1pm. Each morning includes three sessions. The course is free. This month's programme: *Four Gospels, One Message (Part II)* (Philip Nye); *Hard passages of the OT: Abraham and Isaac* (Peter Cousins); *Great Worship Services II: Dedicating the Temple (a time-traveller's tour of Chronicles)* (Jon Stammers).
- ◇ **Church Lunch** *Sunday 7th February*
Please bring enough buffet style food for yourselves and one or two others.
- ◇ **Church Walk** *Monday 15th February 10:30am*
Meet at 10:30am in the free Car Park across from Tesco in the village of Benllech, Anglesey. The walk takes us around the vicinity of Benllech through the hamlet of Bwlch and proceed to Marianglas. From here we will go to Traeth Bychan and walk along the coastline to Moelfre. Here there are several cafes. Bring a packed lunch. Walking boots desirable. For more information contact Jan and Terry on 01248 852859.

◇ **Men's Prayer Meeting** *Wednesday 3rd February* *10:30am*

Time spent in prayer will be followed by coffee in Options. All men 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).

◇ **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 (except bank holidays) 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.

◇ **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 7th February**.

◇ **Worship and Prayer Ministry**

On Saturday 5th March, we are going to be hosting an evening of worship and prayer ministry in the Chapel. Starting at 7:30pm, we will be coming together in worship, hearing from Deb Stammers and receiving the Holy Spirit through praying for one another.

In preparation for this, though also useful more generally in life, we are providing three prayer ministry training sessions on Wednesdays 17th and 24th February and 2nd March. Starting at 7pm in the Upper Room (17th Feb) or Chapel (24th Feb/2nd March), we will be covering how to prayerfully intercede for one another in a manner that is sensitive to the Spirit's leading. Speak to Andrew March or Matt Dawson if you want to come along.

Focus on...



Brad & Ruth Biddulph **serving with BMS in Guinea**

Brad and Ruth Biddulph and their sons Ethan and Samuel relocated to Labe in Guinea, West Africa last summer, following a year of French language study near Paris. Guinea is a Muslim majority country. They are working for BMS within a multi-national team, exploring opportunities to do community development work, pre-school work, teaching and training, and outreach to university students.



In the meantime, Brad and Ruth are fixing up their new home to make it safe and child-friendly and finding ways to live as a family in this new setting. They are also busy learning Pular, (the most widely spoken indigenous language in Guinea) and engaging in local projects to get to know the community and practice their new language skills.

Brad and Ruth recently sent the following matters for prayer:

THANK GOD:

- For our developing friendships with people in the neighbourhood;
- That Ethan's dairy, egg and peanut allergies have all but gone;
- For an increasing sense of purpose here as we find more ways to use our time.

ASK FOR:

- Good progress with learning Pular;
- Continued protection from illness and accidents;
- Samuel to continue to sleep better (he's been sleeping through to 6:30am but some days he's still up before 6!);
- For wisdom and guidance as we consider options for projects/training programmes, and especially for God to guide us to the right locals who we can work with and train.

For more information: www.bmsworldmission.org.uk/brbiddulph

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 21st February.
Please sent information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org; 01248 353355).
All notices should be submitted in writing (preferably by email) as early as possible.

