



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: January 2015

From the Minister:

It's the time of year when my mind is a jumble of "Things To Do In The New Year" or *TTDITNY*. Not resolutions, you understand; I don't have time for resolutions. I'm far too busy just trying to fit the *TTDITNY* into my programme. And if my brain is a scrambled wreck then I blame it on the untidy universe (note to self: *The Untidy Universe* would be a good title for a sermon).

Some of the men recently invited me to join their model railway club. Not that there is a model railway. Apparently you have to build it yourselves. But first you form a club. Let me state clearly that much as I like railways and models I have no manual skill and zero visual imagination, so am unlikely to contribute anything useful to the project. The company's good and I'm sure the result will be stunning when it comes to fruition. It will, of course, be tidy; model railways always are. In that sense they will never be like real life.

Also my mind is being challenged by the book a church member loaned me. A Science book, by the way (stop groaning). It goes into some detail about a famous British scientist called Alan Turing who was portrayed recently by Benedict Cumberbatch in the film *The Imitation Game*. Part of Turing's original research involved the philosophical possibility of a machine that builds other machines (referred to as a Universal Turing Machine. Abbreviate it to UTM if you like, but don't confuse it with a UTI which makes you spend lots of pennies, or an ATM which makes you spend lots of pounds). A Universal Turing Machine would probably knock up our model railway in no time at all, but would, presumably, spoil the fun. In any case, one of the group has already made the viaduct, and another has the trains, so the guys have a head start on Turing's machine.

Then there was a *The Sky At Night* documentary I watched fitfully last night (I drifted off a couple of times) which explored the chemistry of nebulae which are clouds of interstellar dust. Apparently the dust is the big secret to our existence. Without the dust, chemicals could never be formed in space, and without the chemicals there would be no planets, and without the planets no life as we know it. Suddenly the universe begins to look like a huge factory of life, a universal machine fine-tuned by God to produce planet earth and you and me. Thought for another day: a real universe is so more complicated and mysterious than model railways.

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Which brings me to a David Attenborough wildlife documentary I watched a few weeks ago. Hearing him enthuse with characteristic exuberance about animals and their behaviour reminded me of something he wrote years ago where he described his refusal to believe in God as a result of the unpleasant and painful aspects of the world. Strange that a man who has made millions by appearing on our televisions telling us that the world is wonderful suddenly finds it a terrible place when you mention God. Apparently he seemed to think that a creator God would only make a tidy universe. In fairness to Attenborough he has moderated his views somewhat in recent years and now admits "I don't think an understanding and an acceptance of the 4 billion-year-long history of life is any way inconsistent with a belief in a supreme being and I am not so confident as to say that I am an atheist."

It's a short step to giving in and admitting that life has purpose and a creator. The scientific conclusion expounded in the book I'm reading insists that chaos and uncertainty are essential to the cosmos, from atom to galaxy. God makes an untidy universe, humans make tidy model railways.

So to get back to my list of *TTDITNY*. At the centre of them is spending as much time as possible with God. The creator is not unknowable. I find him in Jesus and walk with him every day. He illuminates my path, comforts me in my trials, and forgives my failures. 2015 is sure to be an untidy mix of laughter and tears. My befuddled brain may be mercifully distracted by some model making, but more likely it'll be calmed by moments of prayer, quiet reflection, powerful public worship and the love of the Penrallt community.

It's a good place to be. Make sure you join us in our church activities this year.

God bless,

Peter

Services This Month:

4 January

| | | |
|---------|--|---------------------|
| 10:30am | Cleansing Freedom | <i>Mark 1:40-45</i> |
| 6:00pm | Communion Service. Holding tight in fright and fear | <i>Joshua 1:1-9</i> |

11 January

| | | |
|---------|--|----------------------|
| 10:30am | Improvising a solo in the symphony of forgiveness | <i>Mark 2:1-12</i> |
| 6:00pm | A flash of light in the depressing darkness: a notorious woman sees the light | <i>Joshua 2:1-24</i> |

18 January

10:30am Communion Service.

Mark 2:12-3:12

True Religion is Welcoming, Celebrating, Liberating and Kind

6:00pm **Walking in the Miracle**

Joshua 3:5-17

25 January

10:30am Speaker: Phil Jump.

6:00pm Speaker: Phil Jump.

Notes:

1. We will be celebrating Communion on the third Sunday of this month not the fourth
2. On the 25th the morning service will begin with the children already out in Sunday School with their teachers. They will then come back into the main sanctuary for the close of the service after 11:30am
3. There will be a Celebratory Lunch after the service on the 25th to mark the tenth anniversary of the inauguration of the building.

Our Speakers in January

Peter Cousins is our minister and is due to be the speaker except where otherwise noted. We look forward to welcoming back **Revd. Phil Jump** who is the Regional Minister of the North Western Baptist Association and a longstanding friend of Penrallt.

Faith Café

Faith Café will resume on Sunday 11th January. This is a free weekly event for students, teenagers and young adults immediately after the evening service. A huge "thank you" to all who have contributed food to Faith Café over the autumn term. It is always much appreciated. If anyone is keen to contribute savouries, cake, bread or cheese in the New Year, please book your slot with Susan.

Serving the people of God elsewhere:

The following members of Penrallt will be preaching or leading services at other churches this month. Please remember them in your prayers.

Sunday 4 Rob Brook leading a service at St Mary's, Llanfairpwll;
Elaine Green leading at Jerusalem Welsh Baptist, Llangoed.

Sunday 11 Roger Borlace preaching at Menai Bridge Presbyterian.

Saturday 17 James Goodman leading worship at the George Verwer (OM) event in Llangefni (see Noticeboard for details).

Saturday 18 James Goodman leading worship at Oasis Church, Beaumaris (George Verwer preaching);
Elaine Green leading at Holyhead English Presbyterian.

If you will be ministering to other congregations and would like to be included in this list in future months, please send details to Magnus in the church office.

Dates For Your Diary:

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------|--|
| Monday 5 | 7:30pm | Church members' meeting. |
| Wednesday 7 | 10:30am | Men's prayer meeting followed by coffee in Options. |
| Saturday 10 | 9am-2:30pm | Street Pastors Roles & Responsibilities training session at Penuel (see <i>Focus</i> at the end of this newsletter). |
| | 9:30am | <i>Bible Unzipped</i> at Rhos on Sea URC. |
| Saturday 17 | 6:30pm | Public meeting at Llangefni Town Hall with George Verwer, founder of Operation Mobilisation. |
| Monday 19 | | Church walk. |
| Monday 19-Friday 23 | | Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (see below). |
| Friday 23-Sunday 25 | | Penrallt 10th Anniversary Celebrations. |

Further details of most of these events can be found in the Noticeboard section later in this newsletter.

News of People:

Sadly, **Bernard Malone** died last month. We offer our condolences to Roger and Eve and family. Bernard had only just moved to Anglesey and was settling in well. He was a huge supporter of the Alpha Course and possessed a firm and exuberant faith.

Lesley Jackson is suffering from shingles. **Lyn Isak** and **John Gilberthorpe** both spent Christmas in hospital. **Mandy Shanks** is still unwell and being prepared for radiotherapy in February. She is currently at home with her parents. **Iain de Witt** is recovering from surgery last month. **Will Lewis** is waiting for knee replacement surgery. **Peter Cousins** is due to undergo surgery soon.

Children's Birthdays in January:

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1st: Ben Thomas | 3rd: Belle Owen | 18th: Jay Mapatac | 19th: Siân Snyman |
| 20th: Miriam Harmens | 25th: Amy Owen | | |

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:

We are delighted to participate in the week of Prayer again. Please try and get to at least one of these events. Please note the opening service will be in Penrallt this year. The Friday event in the Catholic church is usually a Taizé style service.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|--|
| Monday 19th January | 7:30pm | Opening service at Penrallt |
| Tuesday 20th January | 7:30pm | St John's Methodist and Hope Church – at St John's |
| Wednesday 21st January | 12:30pm | Berea Newydd and the Quakers – at Berea Newydd |
| Thursday 22nd January | 7:30pm | Penuel/Pendref and Bangor Community Church – at Penuel |
| Friday 23rd January | 7:30pm | Catholics and Anglicans – at Our Lady and St James |

Weekday Events:

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 | 2:00pm | HG, Carers | Carol Morris (208407) |
| Wed | 7:30pm | HG, Bethesda | Jon & Deb Stammers (602868) |
| Wed | 7:30pm | HG, Cymraeg | Owen & Nia Evans (352634) |
| Wed | 7:30pm | HG, Maes y Dref (pm) | Anne Collis (353173) |
| Wed | 7:30pm | HG, Nomads | Susan Cousins (353878) |
| Wed | 7:00pm | HG, Students | Delvin Varghese (07528 958150) |
| 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) | Joan Rymer (713003) |
| Fri | 10:30am-12:30pm | HG, Maes y Dref (am) | Anne Collis (353173) |
| Sat | 8:30am | Prayer Meeting | |

Noticeboard:

◇ **Bible Unzipped**

Saturday 10th January 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 which develop a theme through the term. The course is free and we can probably arrange a lift for you (ask Peter). This month: *Revelation 1* (taught by Julia), *Struggling with Difficult Bible Passages: 1 Samuel 15:1-3* (by Peter), *Infallibility and Inerrancy of Scripture* (by Rob).

◇ **Car Parking**

The car park next door to the church is now pay and display with no special rates for the disabled. Morrisons car park only allows you to park for two hours. We recommend that you use the School of Nursing car park on Sunday mornings. Morrisons say that they switch the cameras off to make the car park available to us on Sunday and weekday evenings after 6pm. (Morrisons is happy for you to park there on Sunday mornings and do your shopping after the service provided you register your car registration number at their information desk beforehand.)

◇ **Church Lunch**

We will host a church lunch after the morning service on **Sunday January 4th**. Please bring enough buffet style 'finger food' for yourselves and one or two others.

Monday 19 January

◇ **Church Walk**

Mari and Ian Kelso will be leading the walk. Details to follow in the weekly news sheet (contact the office if you would like the information to be emailed directly to you).

◇ **Getting your prayer life into gear**

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 by emailing the office now and requesting to be put on the list. And for more immediate sharing and response in prayer why not search on Facebook for *Penrallt Prayer Point* and send a request to join our page dedicated to prayer.

◇ **Homeless in Bangor**

The church's policy is not to give money directly to the homeless in Upper Bangor nor bring them into the church to feed them. You will find brown envelopes in the porch for a gift that will buy meal vouchers which are distributed to the homeless by the Cathedral. So far Penrallt has contributed about £6,000 to this scheme. Our community centre is occupied every day which makes it impossible to create a ministry to the homeless from our building. Lately we have been struggling with aggressive behaviour on the church premises by homeless people and we are having to try to keep the door locked more often. Please respect the church's policy. If you would like to do more to help the homeless we recommend that you contact St Mary's Hostel who are specialized in this ministry. Thank you.

◇ **Lecture in Manchester**

The Northern Baptist Learning Community is offering a public lecture: Monday 19th January 2015. Rev'd Dr Clare McBeath with Niall Cooper, Paul Martin and David Walker: *Two Sides of the Same Coin: Poverty North and South*. Speak to Elaine Green for more details.

◇ **Men's Prayer Meeting**

Wednesday 7 January

10:30am

Time spent in prayer will be followed by coffee in Options.

◇ **Operation Mobilisation Founder on Anglesey**

George Verwer, the founder of Operation Mobilisation has been invited to Anglesey by the Oasis Church. He will be speaking at a public meeting in Llangefni Town hall on Saturday 17th January at 6:30pm (refreshments from 5:30pm). An inspirational speaker, he has a powerful message.

◇ **Pastoral Help**

If you have pastoral concerns please contact Peter or else one of the other members of the Pastoral Care team:

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Pat Borlace 713146 | Adrienne Ferrada | Geoff Moore 410582 |
| Dave O'Brien 671848 | Judy Stammers 364394 | Helen Thomas 600174 |

◇ **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.

From the church office:

Penrallt's 10th Anniversary

This month, as you are well aware of by now, will see us celebrating the 10th anniversary of our building. The dedicated weekend is the 23rd, 24th and 25th January which has been announced several times before. The Friday night will bring in a JAM party — Ceri will be in charge of organising it; please liaise with her regarding the logistics of it all and be prepared to help where needed.

Saturday night we will host the Twmpath with a live band; tickets have been on sale for a while and are limited in number so please buy yours soon to avoid disappointment (they cost £5, or £4 for senior citizens and children aged 10 or over; younger children don't need a ticket). Please will you come with a plate of finger food to share? We will serve hot and cold drinks from the kitchen. Help is needed in the kitchen for setting up and serving food, washing and tidying up and so on.

Sunday services and lunch will celebrate the ten years of Penrallt family life; Phil Jump our Regional Minister will preach at both services. For lunch the church will provide cold meats, cheese, bread, drinks etc. It will be great if you guys can help with salads, cakes and puddings. Again, a team of people will be required in the kitchen to set up, serve lunch, wash and tidy up afterwards. Please let Mari Kelso, our hospitality co-ordinator, know if you can help out in any way at all. She will have a list of jobs to do and food items you can sign up to contribute. Stephen Burrows and Andy Lemon are the deacons responsible for setting up the chapel and the canolfan - there will be a lot of it as Saturday night the chapel needs to be cleared for the dance, the canolfan for food and then put them back to normal ready for Sunday morning. After the Sunday morning service the whole area has to be set up for food where the number could be up to 150 - 200. Once lunch is over the place has to be cleared and set back as normal for the evening service. Please offer your help to Andy or Stephen; unless everyone chips in the weekend is not going to run smooth. Please will you all ring fence the weekend and join in to celebrate together? Prayerfully consider where you can help; even if you are unable to help please attend the events with a thankful heart. We have seen, over the past ten years, Penrallt growing in every which way; let us give thanks for our Lord's numerous blessings. We have seen births, deaths, weddings, baptisms, special events, outreach events, youth work, missions and local ministry - all growing beyond expectations. Let us give thanks to our Father's faithfulness; let us worship Him with serving hearts and ask Him for continued blessings.

God bless

Roshni

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 18 January.

Please send information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org; 01248 353355)

All notices should be submitted in writing (preferably by email) as early as possible.

Focus on...



Bangor Street Pastors

It is now just over four years since Bangor Street Pastors began operating and so far we have managed to send at least one patrol out every week, whatever the weather. It is difficult to quantify exactly how many people we have helped in that time but we have given out roughly 1400 pairs of flip-flops, over 1000 lollipops and nearly 300 bottles of water and picked up getting on for 9000 bottles and glasses. We know of at least two people who became Christians as a direct result of meeting us (although there were doubtless other factors at work too) and there have been at least a couple of cases where we can be reasonably confident that our intervention has saved somebody's life. It seems reasonable to suppose that we have significantly helped many more people, either to survive the night or to take a few steps further forward on their faith journey.

We started in November 2010 with a team of 12 volunteers, of whom 9 are still active. Four further members joined the team in 2012 and we have recently commissioned another 11. We already have at least four more prospective recruits lined up and will be holding a Roles & Responsibilities training session (which everyone has to do before any further training) on Saturday 10th January, which will enable them to join the recently commissioned street pastors for the bulk of their training. This session will also function as a taster for people thinking about becoming street pastors, so you are welcome to come along to it without committing yourself to the full training course (the session will be at Penuel, between 9am and 2:30pm). Another commissioning service is expected sometime in the next few months.

Prayer support is vitally important for our work. We have a team of prayer pastors who join us to pray before our patrols and stay to pray for us while we are out for the first half, before feeding us during our break (after which they retire to bed while we carry on with the rest of the patrol). We are slightly short of prayer pastors at the moment so if you'd like to join that team (for which no training is required), you'd be very welcome.

We also have a fortnightly email prayer diary that currently goes out to about 60 people, giving them information and encouragement to help them pray. Amongst other things, this includes updates from Badagry Street Pastors (in Nigeria), with whom we have a twinning arrangement – this, as far as we are aware, is the first ever twinning of SP groups, so it is good to be pioneering this!

If you would like to receive the prayer diary or to find out more about joining the prayer pastors or street pastors (or both), or if you'd like to come out as an observer on one of our patrols to see for yourself what we do, or if you have any other questions about this work, please speak to Magnus (who is usually to be found in the Penrallt office between 10am and 2pm on weekdays; or you can email bangor@streetpastors.org.uk).