



Newsletter: January 2024

Happy New Year. Hope you have a whale of a time!

Praying God's blessing for us all as we continue to seek to glorify him in our lives and at Penrallt in the new year!

Anyone who has been to the Natural History Museum can't fail to have been impressed with the huge skeletons or life-sized models of whales hanging from the ceiling. Whenever I see them, it always reminds me of Jonah. I believe it actually happened, and also — what a powerful story! Story is such a powerful medium of communication.

So to start the new year, we turn to the Old Testament story of Jonah. It's good to look at different parts of the Bible — we need all of scripture to help us in our understanding of God. Jonah was perhaps one of the most successful missionaries in the Old Testament. He walked straight in to an infamous, hostile city. He called people to repentance, they 'believed God', and turned to Him. Jonah's own life was full of faults — running away from what he knew God wanted him to do and not having a good understanding of God's compassion. But we can be encouraged that God used him, and we can learn from his repentance and his obedience (eventually!) and from the insight he was given into God's heart of mercy, compassion and love.

The largest presence in the book of Jonah is not the prophet, or even the 'huge fish', it's God. "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness. (Exodus 34v6)"

Our focus for the new year is the greatest missionary ever: Jesus. Jesus never sinned. He fully obeyed God and was full of compassion and grace. He was swallowed up by death and yet burst out of the grave. He calls us, and many, to repentance. By his death, he gives us access to forgiveness, peace, eternal hope and life to the full to the glory of God. Praise Jesus!

Blessings,

John

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Information in this newsletter is correct, as far as possible, at the time of publication. Please see the website for up to date information, as details are subject to change.

Church Office

The church administrator, Magnus, can be contacted on office@penrallt.org or 07934 231788 during the church office opening hours (10am – 4pm Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays).

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 28th January.

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

Children's Birthdays in January

7th: Jeffrey Packwood

12th: Edith Kohn-Hollins

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2024 will run from 18th to 25th January, using materials on the theme of "Go and do likewise". Events in Bangor are:

- Thursday 18th January, 7:30pm at St John's Methodist Church
- Friday 19th January, 7:30pm at Our Lady & St James' Catholic Church
- Monday 22nd January, 7:30pm at Penrallt
- Tuesday 23rd January, 2:30pm at the Quaker Meeting House
- Wednesday 24th January, 7:30pm at Capel Berea Newydd

Morning Services

Morning services start at 10:30am on Sundays with an option to join on Zoom if you are unable to join us in the building (Zoom link on website). Children and young people go out part way through the service for Sunday school (Primary school / up to 11) or *Deeper* (Secondary school / 11 – 17); crèche facilities are also available for younger children. For all-age services, the children and young people remain in the service but crèche facilities are still available if needed.

Sunday 7th January (all-age)

New Year service led by Becca Williams.

Sunday 14th January

Jonah runs away from God and fish food.

Jonah 1. Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 21st January

The repentance and prayer of Jonah

Jonah 2. Preacher: *TBC*.

Sunday 28th January (communion)

Jonah leads revival in Nineveh.

Jonah 3. Preacher: John Thompson.

Evening Services

Evening services begin at 6pm on Sunday evenings except where otherwise noted. Unlike morning services, these are not usually broadcast or recorded. There is no evening service on the first Sunday; instead we have our church lunch and fellowship event following the morning service (see next page). Services planned for the rest of the month are:

Sunday 14th January

Communion, prayer and prophecy service to pray for the church in the new year, led by John Thompson and Abi Penney.

Sunday 21st January

No evening service. *Instead we encourage you to attend one or more of the events for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (see previous page).*

Sunday 28th January

Café service in the chapel, with cake and a panad.

◇ **Baptist Leaders' Fellowship**

The next BLF meeting will be on Friday 19th January via Zoom, led by Jane Henderson, a Regional Minister with the North Western Baptist Association. We are awaiting further information including the Zoom details. Please contact the church office if you would like to receive these in due course.

◇ **Church Lunch and Fellowship Events**

Our monthly church lunch and fellowship events take place on the first Sunday of the month; this month they will be on 7th January. For lunch, please bring a plate of finger-food, enough for yourself and one or two others so there is enough to share with our visitors. The walk will be through the woods to the Britannia bridge, starting from the viewpoint between the two bridges. For more information, or to offer or request a lift, please contact Jenny (fellowship@penrallt.org).

◇ **Church Members' Meeting**

Our next church members' meeting will take place on Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 7:30pm in the chapel and on Zoom. Papers will be circulated to members in the first week of January. To find out more about church membership, please speak to John (minister@penrallt.org) or Jan (secretary@penrallt.org).

◇ **Church Members' Away Day**

Reminder that we will be having an away day for members on Saturday 27th January as we prayerfully make plans for the Church moving forwards. Including Bible study and talks, Worship, Discussion and Prayer. 10am–3:30pm. Venue: Prince's Drive Baptist Church, Colwyn Bay.

◇ **Foodbanks**

Bangor Cathedral Foodbank (www.bangorfoodbank.org) is open 2 – 3pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, operating from Tŷ Deiniol (the Diocesan Centre) next to Bangor Cathedral. They are able to give people up to two emergency food parcels without a referral from another service. Mosaic church have a Foodbank at Coed Mawr Community Centre, open on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings, 9:30 – 11am. Contact Christine King on 07734 667011.

◇ **Giving**

We take up an offering during our morning services, or you can use the donations box at the back of the chapel if you would like to give financially towards the work of Penrallt, our mission partners and other projects we support. To explore other ways of giving, please speak to Cathy (treasurer@penrallt.org), who will be able to advise.

◇ **Hardship Fund**

The church has a small fund 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. If you are in a position to add to the hardship fund, please speak to Cathy Fooks (treasurer@penrallt.org).

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

We encourage you to join a homegroup 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. There are groups on Monday to Thursday evenings and on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Groups meet weekly or fortnightly, in person, online or a combination of the two. We also have "contact, care and prayer" to enable people to stay connected even if not in a homegroup. A member of the pastoral care team would contact you every 3 weeks or so to ask how you are and if you'd like to receive prayer support. Please contact the [church office](#) if you are not part of contact, care & prayer or part of a homegroup and would like to be.

◇ **Kindle Kids' Club**

Kindle is our fortnightly Friday night club (6–7pm) for primary school aged children. The dates for January are still to be confirmed. To find out more, contact Becca (youth@penrallt.org).

◇ **Men's Breakfast**

Our men's fellowship group usually meet once a month on Saturday mornings for food and friendship at Ian Ablett's home in Caernarfon. The next breakfast will be on **January 6th**. All men are welcome. Please contact the church office (office@penrallt.org) or Ian (ian.ablett@open.ac.uk; 07759 718931) for more details or to offer or request a lift.

◇ **Mission Prayer Meeting**

The Penrallt mission group will be meeting on Zoom at 7:30pm on Wednesday 31st January to hear updates from our mission partners around the world and to pray for them. Please contact the church office for the Zoom details.

◇ **Open The Book**

Volunteers urgently needed. Another local primary school has asked the churches in Bangor to provide an Open the Book team to come and share Bible stories with children. As invited guests in school, storytelling teams use the *Open the Book* programme to prepare and present a 10–15-minute scripted Bible story to a school assembly, involving the children as much as possible. This is a fantastic opportunity to share Bible stories with children who would otherwise never hear them. For more information see <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/open-the-book/> and speak to Sarah Jackson or Magnus.

◇ **Penrallt on Facebook, Instagram 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/30262793231755)
a private group to share prayer requests and encouragements
- *Penrallt Students* (www.facebook.com/groups/195300234272943)

We also have a YouTube channel and a Facebook page (both called *Penrallt Baptist Church*), as well as another Facebook page for our young people, and now also an Instagram account:

- www.youtube.com/@penralltbaptistchurch
- www.facebook.com/penralltbc www.facebook.com/penralltyouth
- www.instagram.com/penralltbaptistchurch/

◇ **Pastoral Help**

If you have concerns about your own or someone else's welfare, please contact a member of the Pastoral Care team: Jan Ablett (07703 188632); Magnus Forrester-Barker (07890 109645); Geoff Moore (01248 410582); Monica Morris (07827 472637), Abi Penney (01766 890624); John Thompson (07931 150697).

◇ **Prayer Resources**

Send prayer requests, thanksgivings and testimonies to our email prayer diary via office@penrallt.org — use this address, too, to subscribe to the prayer diary, which goes out every week (usually on Mondays). We also have a more interactive Facebook prayer group (*Penrallt Prayer Point*). To pray with others, you are welcome to join our weekly Zoom prayer meetings on **Wednesdays at 11:30am** and on **Saturdays at 8:30am**; please contact the church office if you need the connection details for either meeting (also listed at the bottom of our email prayer diary each week).

◇ **Renew 57**

All are welcome to come to Penrallt on a Thursday morning, where the Canolfan (rear hall) is open from 10:30am to 12:30pm. Bring a hobby to share with someone else, have a cup of tea or coffee and some toast and a chat. There is a separate prayer space available throughout this time for quiet reflection, with optional opportunities to be led in short gentle contemplative prayer at the beginning and end of the session. This is a place where it is "OK not to be OK". An opportunity to give some attention to our mental and spiritual well-being. Please pray for the team. If you'd like to know more, speak to Adrienne (adrieferrada@hotmail.co.uk) or Magnus (office@penrallt.org) or drop in and see for yourself.

◇ **Service Videos**

Recordings of sermons from morning services are available on our [YouTube channel](#) and our own [website](#). Please contact the [church office](#) if you would like a link to recordings of full services.

◇ **Soul Sisters (Women's Fellowship)**

We meet on the second Saturday of the month in the rear hall between 10:30 to 12:00. On January 13th we will be planning our programme for 2024 and reflecting on the past year, over refreshments. A warm welcome is extended to all ladies.

◇ **Students**

We love to welcome students as part of our church family. To learn more about what activities are available, or just for a friendly chat, drop our student co-ordinator, Becca (students@penrallt.org) a line. Also, don't miss our [Penrallt Students](#) Facebook group.

◇ **Youth: Ignite and Deeper**

Our main youth activities are a Thursday night group called *Ignite* (usually meeting in the Canolfan at 7pm) and a Sunday morning group, *Deeper* (during our service, except for all-age services). *Ignite*, a social evening with games and activities, is open to all. *Deeper* provides opportunity to find out more about the Christian faith. Find out more on our youth website, www.penralltyouth.org, as well as our [Penrallt Youth Facebook page](#) and [Instagram group](#). Contact our youth worker, Becca (youth@penrallt.org), for more information. *Ignite will restart on 11th January after the Christmas break.*

Focus on...

Gobaith Môn

Serving in the secondary schools of Anglesey

Gobaith Môn is one of Scripture Union's Local Mission Partners. It was established around 10 years ago by Christians on Anglesey. Gobaith Môn aims to bring together Christians from all denominations to bring hope to the youth of the Island, by encouraging and developing youth work in schools, churches and communities.



Over the past decade, Gobaith Môn Schools Workers have been welcomed into local secondary schools in Holyhead, Menai Bridge, Bodedern, and Amlwch. Activities have included assemblies, collective worship, RE lessons, PSE lessons and facilitating the formation and running of the school ambassadors and council. Gobaith Môn also have an office in the school in Holyhead, giving the opportunity for the students to interact with schools workers on a personal level. As a result of this contact they are able to ask questions about issues raised in the assemblies, RE lessons and PSE lessons.

Gobaith Môn have also run a monthly youth event to bring together local young Christians and encourage them to deepen their faith.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the recent problems with RAAC in school buildings have both had an impact on students' learning experiences and the work of Gobaith Môn. Amy Turner, Gobaith Môn's schools worker, is returning to work 3 days a week in the new year, following maternity leave, and picking up with the regular activities.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the open doors in local secondary schools over the past decade.
- Pray for continuing open doors and increasing opportunities to minister to the young people of Anglesey.
- Pray for Amy's smooth transition back into work.
- Pray for more workers to be called to work with Gobaith Môn.
- Pray for more financial release to come to the vision.