



Newsletter: January 2026

Over the last 18 months we have been spending time as a leadership and as a fellowship praying, listening to God, thinking and discussing together what God is calling us to be and to do as his church here today and at this time. We believe that God's leading for us is the following:

Our Vision

Our vision is to be the light of the love of Jesus at the top of the hill, bringing glory to God and making Jesus known.

Our Mission

Our mission is:

- to see all people's lives blessed, transformed and reconciled to God by Jesus through his love, his Word and his Holy Spirit;
- to see this in our local area in Bangor, in Gwynedd and Anglesey and beyond, through the networks and communities where we all connect with others;
- so we influence our society and all our communities for good.

I find this quite inspiring and exciting and I hope it inspires and excites you too. In our Sunday morning services in January we will be preaching through this and reflecting as a congregation on the Bible passages and pictures which have led us to this. We will be asking God to inspire us and equip us by his Holy Spirit. We want to be and to do all that he calls us to be and to do. We'll look afresh at what we are called to as followers of Jesus individually and as a church together.

So we commit again to continue our love and support for one another in this coming year. We hope and pray that God's good purposes are fulfilled through our lives and through the activities, events and programme of the church. We pray that we are inspired, equipped and filled with his Holy Spirit to fulfil his plans and purposes for us.

Blessings,

John

Penrallt Baptist Church, Holyhead Road, Bangor LL57 2EU
www.penrallt.org

Minister: Revd. John Thompson; 07931 150697; minister@penrallt.org

Secretary: Jan Ablett; 07703 188632; secretary@penrallt.org

Treasurer: Cathy Fooks; 07729 892303; treasurer@penrallt.org

Administrator: Magnus Forrester-Barker; 07934 231788; office@penrallt.org (office hours: Mon – Fri, 10am – 4pm)

Morning Services

Sunday morning services start at 10:30am with an option to join on Zoom if you are unable to join us in the building (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 – 18); a crèche is also available for younger children. The children and young people stay in for all-age services; the crèche is still available.

Sunday 4th January

Fresh Starts

All-age service led by Wendy Lemon and John Thompson.

Please note that there will not be a fellowship walk after the service this month.

Sunday 11th January

Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 18th January

Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 25th January (Communion)

Preacher: John Thompson.

After the all-age service on 4th January, the remaining services this month will be on the theme of *Our Vision and Mission: Being the light and love of Jesus*.

Service Videos

Recordings of sermons from morning services are generally available both on our [YouTube channel](#) and on our own [website](#). Please contact the church office if you would like a link to recordings of full services. *We would ask you, please, to refrain from taking photos and videos during our services due to safeguarding concerns.*

Evening Services

Evening services usually start at 6pm and last around an hour; unlike our morning services, they are not normally recorded or broadcast on Zoom. There is no evening service on the first Sunday of the month.

Sunday 11th January (Communion)

Abraham: Sacrificial Faith

Preacher: Peter Jones.

Sunday 18th January

The Heart of Jesus

Preacher: Peter Jones.

This will be the first in a series of sermons based on the book *Gentle and Lowly* by Dane Ortlund, leading us up to Easter.

Sunday 25th January (7pm; refreshments served from 6:30pm)

Codi Mawl — A bilingual (Welsh/English) service, hosted jointly with Caersalem (Caernarfon) and Goleudy (Ynys Môn). Refreshments will be served beforehand from 6:30pm and translation facilities are available for those who do not speak Welsh. *In 2026, Codi Mawl is expected to run once every two months and will continue to be hosted by Penrallt, Caersalem and Goleudy in rotation.*

Children's Birthdays in January

7th: Jeffrey Packwood

29th: Samuel Salako

Christmas Offerings & Christmas Cards

Thanks to everyone contributing to the offerings at our carol service, Christingle and Christmas Day service, or making a donation for the Christmas Card board. The total raised was £572.33, which was split evenly between Coed Mawr food bank (a local charity), Mercy Ships (international) and the Calverts (one of Penrallt's mission partners).

Other Events in January

◇ Renew 57: Every Thursday, 10:30am–12:30pm

Renew 57 is a space for the whole community, on **Thursday mornings, 10:30am to 12:30pm in Canolfan Penrallt** (our rear hall/community centre), free of charge (including refreshments). Bring a hobby to share with someone else or simply sit and chat over a cup of tea or coffee and some toast. A separate prayer space is available 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. To find out more, please speak to Simon (s.lambourne565@btinternet.com) or Magnus (renew@penrallt.org) or drop in and see for yourself. *We will be running on New Year's Day as normal.*

◇ Bangor Youth For Christ Prayer Meeting: Wednesday 7th January, 7pm

We will be hosting a prayer meeting, led by Bangor YFC Centre Director Grace O'Boyle, at Penrallt. This is a space for us to come together across churches, backgrounds, and generations to pray with one heart and one purpose: to see the lives of young people in Bangor transformed by the love of Jesus. All are welcome.

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.

◇ **Pathways: Saturday 10th January (and 7th February)**

Penrallt is hosting the North Wales hub of the Pathways training course run by Cardiff Baptist College. The next module is *Pathways into Christian Belief*. It comprises two sessions, on Saturday 10th January and Saturday 7th February. It is necessary to book in advance (and pay) to attend these sessions which can be attended on a 'per module' basis. For more information or details of how to register with the College, contact John Thompson (07931 150697).

◇ **Baptist Leaders' Fellowship: Monday 12th January, 10am to noon**

The next meeting of the BLF will be on Zoom. The speaker will be Adrian Argile, a regional minister in the Heart of England Baptist Association and formerly in the North Western Baptist Association (to which Penrallt belongs); he will be speaking on *Grace in a World of Performance*. Please contact the church office (office@penrallt.org) if you would like the Zoom details when they become available. This group is open to anyone in any church leadership role.

◇ **Cylch Penrallt Tots: Monday afternoons (starting 12th January), 1pm**

This is our group for pre-school children and their parents/carers, running during the school term on Monday afternoons from 1 to 2:30pm. £1 per adult (with up to 3 children). Toys, fun play and activities. Snack, tea and coffee. Songs for tots in English and Welsh. Come along for a good space to safely play, to have fun, and to enjoy some good company together. *Please note that the group will not be running on 5th January.*

◇ **Church Members' Meeting: Wednesday 14th January, 7:30pm**

The next meeting for church members will take place in the building and on Zoom on Wednesday 14th January. Papers will be circulated to members before the meeting.

If you are not a church member and would like to know more about membership, please speak to either John (minister@penrallt.org) or Jan (secretary@penrallt.org).

◇ **Soul Sisters: Saturday 17th January, 10:30am**

Soul Sisters is Penrallt's women's fellowship group, that meet once a month for a varied programme of activities. This month they will meet in Canolfan Penrallt to plan the programme for 2026 over refreshments and to reflect on the past year. All ladies are very welcome. Please contact Averil (francishac3@aol.com) for more information.

◇ **Games Evening: Friday 23rd January, 7pm**

An opportunity to meet with other members of the church family for a fun evening of games and snacks in the church hall. All are welcome — bring your favourite game.

◇ **Alpha: Monday evenings starting 26th January, 6:30pm**

Our next Alpha course at Penrallt will start on Monday 26th January and run on Monday evenings, 6:30–9pm, for 11 weeks with a break over



Easter. This is a great way to explore the Christian faith and ask the big questions about life, or to reset your walk with Jesus. Each session includes a free meal, a video and a group discussion. Sign up through the QR code or the church website. For more details chat to Peter Jones (07906 761181).



◇ **Men's Breakfast: Saturday 31st January**

Our men's fellowship group usually meet on the last Saturday morning of the month for food and friendship at Ian Ablett's home in Caernarfon between 9 and 11am. All men are welcome. Please contact the church office or Ian (ianablett57@gmail.com) for details, or to offer or request a lift. *The venue in January is subject to confirmation, so please let us know if you are planning to attend so we can confirm the location.*

Other Information

◇ **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. Note that he sometimes works from home or is out for meetings, so you are advised to check before travelling in to the church building. *Please note that the church office will re-open after Christmas on Friday 2nd January.*

◇ **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 who 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 relationships with the Lord and with one another. There are groups on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and on Tuesday and Friday mornings, meeting weekly or fortnightly in person, online or as a combination of the two. We also have “contact, care & prayer” to enable people to stay connected even if not in a homegroup. A member of the pastoral care team (see below) would contact you every few weeks to ask how you are and if you’d like to receive prayer support. Please get in touch with the church office if you are not part of contact, care & prayer or a homegroup and would like to be

◇ **Pastoral Help**

If you have concerns about your own or someone else’s welfare, please contact a member of the Pastoral Care Team: Ian Ablett (07759 718931); 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). Please pray for the PCT as well.

◇ **Penrallt on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube**

We have three Facebook groups — *Penrallt* (www.facebook.com/groups/2402772192) is a general group for information and social interaction; *Penrallt Prayer Point* (www.facebook.com/groups/302627593231755) is a private group to share prayer requests and encouragements; you can probably guess the target audience of *Penrallt Students* (www.facebook.com/groups/195300234272943)!

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

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

◇ **Prayer Resources**

Send prayer requests, thanksgiving and testimonies to our weekly email prayer diary via office@penrallt.org — use this address, too, to subscribe to the prayer diary, which usually goes out on Mondays, or Tuesdays in the event of bank holidays. 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.

◇ Prayer Team

We would love to pray for you and pray with you. We believe that God transforms people's lives. Praying for people and regularly asking God to fill them with the Holy Spirit is a key part of this for many people. We have a team available for personal prayer, wearing blue "Prayer Team" lanyards, at most services. This is often at the end of the service, sometimes during communion or at other times; if you would like prayer please find a member of the team at any time and they will be able to offer to pray with you in an appropriate space, often as a pair.

If you are a church member and would like to be on the prayer team please speak to John or Jan. Our Pastoral Care Team are able to offer a further level of support (see *Pastoral Help* above). Please don't hesitate to approach John or another member of the Pastoral Care Team.

◇ Students

We love to welcome students as part of our church family. For more information about activities for students, or just for a friendly chat, please feel free to drop us an email to students@penrallt.org. Also, don't miss our Penrallt Students Facebook group.

◇ Youth

Our mid-week youth group, *Youth.*, is run by Bangor YFC with volunteers from Penrallt, Mosaic and other churches. This runs on Thursday evenings at Penrallt during term-time, from 7pm to 8:45pm, and is open to all youth (11–18). It features games and activities, with a gentle presentation of Christian values and principles. Registration is required, and can be done at <https://tally.so/r/noqO4Z>.

Our Sunday morning youth group, *Deeper*, takes place during the morning service, with the young people (11–18) going out part way through the service to study the Bible and apply it to their lives.

For more information, email us at youth@penrallt.org.

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Tuesday 27th January. Please send information to Magnus at the church office. All items should be submitted in writing, preferably by email, as early as possible.

News Mailing List: Sign up to receive email notification (and a PDF link) when the newsletter is published each month, as well as other news updates from time to time. To join or leave the list please send an email to office@penrallt.org.

Chris and Anna Hembury

Serving in Hull with CMS

Chris and Anna moved from North Wales (and Penrallt) at the tail end of the last century to work with Hull Youth For Christ. They are still working in Hull, now under the banner of the Church Mission Society (CMS). Here are some extracts from their forthcoming newsletter (please contact the church office if you would like a copy of the full newsletter when it is published):

We seem to have found ourselves in a season of endings. First, there was the decision to close Matt's House, our courageously experimental intentional community, after some 10+ years... So we are exploring how to do missional community in a local but dispersed form. Then, our local church found itself undergoing a serious overhaul of all its activities... We had been hosting an "all are welcome" space where anyone could come in off the street, enjoy the garden and warm space, a cuppa and toast, join in or not on their own terms with a bit of creative reflection around a theme / passage from the Bible, prayer and a shared lunch. Given where we live, and the other social provision the church had going during the week (food bank, clothing bank, addiction recovery groups, etc.), many of the folk who dropped in and joined us were battling addictions, homelessness and unprocessed trauma... In the end, without animosity, we felt it might be better to start afresh around the corner at the Parish Hall (run by Hull YFC, where Orts, Circuit Breaker and many of the other activities we're involved in happen).

Now, after 21 years of taking children and young people to Frontier Camp, constraints and changes in the way camp is run as well as the particular needs of those we bring from our community, mean we find ourselves starting afresh there too. We and loads of kids / teenagers / adults from Hull are grieving the end of what has been a hugely important part of our lives and giving thanks for all the fun, relationships, joy and faith formation. With the team here we are taking the bold step to reimagine what a homespun summer camp for our lot might look like next year.

Shoshin is a Japanese term that translates as "beginner's mind". It refers to a paradox: the more you know about a subject, the more likely you are to close your mind to further learning. We have been here a long time and were getting comfortable with the idea of living this next season as some sort of wise elders, experts in the field who had seen it all before and could contribute best by sharing from the wealth of our experience. It seems God has a better idea! We find ourselves called to start again — with fresh eyes and intellectual humility, free of preconceptions, filled with curiosity and open to a world of possibilities. "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3).