



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter for May 2012

"We just had a near-life experience, fellas." – Tyler Durden in *Fight Club*

I was listening again to one of Tom Jobin's most celebrated sambas:

Tristeza não tem fim; Felicidade sim
A felicidade é como a gota
De orvalho numa pétala de flor
Brilha tranquila
Depois de leve oscila
E cai como uma lágrima de amor

Sadness knows no end, but happiness does.
Happiness is a like a dewdrop
Which hangs on the petal above,
It sparkles brightly
Then trembles lightly
And falls like a tear of love

The song reflects the brief sparkle of the Carnival parade where thousands of the poorest people dance in the floodlights for one hour of joy and excitement, before drifting back to the slums where they will spend their next twelve months in poverty, dirt and deprivation, saving their pennies for next year's extravaganza. Trouble is never far from the door of the poor, and tedium is their accepted burden.

In another context, Chuck Palahniuk's troubled novel *Fight Club* is a satirical look at how men deal with pain. Its anti-consumerist stance paints modern life as shallow and meaningless. Anything which kicks us out of complacency can be celebrated as a "near-life experience", no matter how painful.

Reflecting on that, in this period between Easter and Pentecost, reminds me that the human race is born to search for God, and as I look around I see that search failing. Without a personal relationship with God people settle for second best: a brief spectacle before the days of Lent, a credit card, a romance. For the original disciples, between the Resurrection and the human experience of receiving the Spirit of God, forty days of uncertainty passed. Waiting for God can seem like an eternity.

So I commend to you the advice of scripture: "Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." (Ps 27.14). We were created to receive God. Our whole being is an instrument designed to resonate at the sound of His

approach. I have seen His awesome loving presence transform the lives of slum-dwellers, cynical men, desperate strugglers and bewildered wanderers. The Spirit of God is the great invader of our lives, bringing the ultimate true-life experience. So let's pray for the Spirit of God to fall powerfully on our people and let's celebrate Pentecost Sunday with joy and enthusiasm.

God bless you,
Peter

Please note:
Evening services
will start at
7.00pm in June,
July and August.

SERVICES IN MAY

May 6

10.30am "Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People":
The Rule of Life: "a near-life experience" *Luke 10:25-28*
2.15pm Service in Bontnewydd
6.00pm Iona Communion Service: ***"If you want to build a vast and lofty tower of greatness you have to set deep foundations of humility."*** - St. Augustine *Matthew 18:1-5*

May 13

10.30am "Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People":
The Discipline of Endurance *James:1-8*
6.00pm A-Team Service

May 20

10.30am John Robinson
6.00pm John Robinson

May 27

10.30am Communion Service ***"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day"*** -
Deeper Experiences of the Spirit-led Life (Pentecost Sunday)
6.00pm Churches Together in Bangor (CYTUN) joint service in the
CATHEDRAL. (NO SERVICE IN PENRALLT)

The Life You've Always Wanted.

We are completing a thirteen-part study on Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People, based on the book by John Ortberg *The Life You've Always Wanted*. It is on sale from Amazon for about £6. The Home Groups are following the studies in the book.

Our Preaching Team for May:

Peter Cousins is Penrallt's minister. *Revd. John Robinson* is an American-naturalised-British missionary among speakers of the Celtic languages. A fluent Welsh speaker (he is a multi-linguist), he lives in Bangor and travels extensively. The *A-Team* is our Penrallt teenagers and their leaders.

CHURCH LUNCH

We will host a church lunch on **Sunday May 6th** . Please bring enough buffet style "finger food" for yourselves and one or two others.

However, because of the extended Jubilee bank holiday we have thought it best not to organize a Church lunch on Sunday June 3rd .

Faith Café

Faith Café takes place after the evening service, for students and young adults. Starting around 7:15 pm it is an evening of chat, interviews, music and discussions. May 6th will be the last one of this academic year.

Sunday Evening May 27th (6pm)

It's not only Pentecost Sunday, but also the day before the Olympic Torch passes through Bangor. It has been decided, therefore, to make it a special Sunday evening. There will be no service in Penrallt this evening; instead, we will all meet on the Cathedral green for a picnic at 5pm with members of other Bangor churches. Each church will bring along a birthday cake (Pentecost is "The Church's Birthday") and we will share our picnics with each other before going into the Cathedral for a service together. You aren't going to want to miss that are you?

Olympic Torch Celebrations

The churches of Bangor are joining in the celebrations to welcome the Olympic Torch to Bangor.

- Saturday 19:** Family Fun Day at the Cathedral from 11am-3pm. It will include making torches.
- Saturday 26:** Children's torch-making session in St. John's Methodist Church.
- Monday 28:** The Olympic Torch will pass in front of Penrallt. Join us on the steps to greet the crowds between 4.30 and 5.30pm. (See 'Noticeboard' for further details.)
- Monday 28:** We are expecting a group of Christians from Aberystwyth to join us for prayer. Details to be arranged.
- Tuesday 29:** A group of us from Bangor will travel to Chester (accompanying the Torch) and meet with Christians there to pray. Details to be arranged.

OTHER SPECIAL DATES FOR MAY

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|--------------------|-----------------|---|
| Tuesday 1 | 7.00pm – 9.15pm | Pastoral Care Course at Penrallt |
| Tuesday 1 | 9.00pm | Kayleigh Devine-Smith (one of our students) will give her end-of-course saxophone recital. Please go along and support her (Powis Hall, Main Arts building) |
| Wednesday 2 | 10.30am | Men's Prayer Meeting. |
| Saturday 5 | | Pastoral Care course at Billy & Jon Elliott's house |
| Tuesday 8 | 7.00pm – 9.15pm | Pastoral Care Course at Penrallt |

- Wednesday 9** 2.00pm – 5.30pm Cymanfa Arfon (Welsh speaking Baptist Churches) meeting in Caersalem Church, Caernarfon.
- Saturday 12** 7.00pm Godfrey Birtill will be in Oasis Church, Beaumaris (we often sing one of his songs, "Outrageous Grace", in our services)
- Monday 14** 7.30pm Deacons' Meeting
- Wednesday 16** 6.30pm Tim Price will be giving his final exam recital in the Powis Hall.
- Saturday 19** 7.30pm Men's games evening
- Tuesday 22** 7.00pm – 9.15pm Pastoral Care Course at Penrallt
- Saturday 26** Pastoral Care Course concludes. Venue to be confirmed.
- Saturday 26** 7.30pm Worship Team meeting in the chapel (see 'Noticeboard')

Christian Aid Week 13th-19th May

- Monday 14** 12.30pm Opening Service for Christian Aid Week in Berea Newydd followed by a bread and cheese lunch at 1.00pm. All are welcome.
- Saturday 19** Coffee morning in the Quaker Meeting House

If you feel able to help with the house to house collection or give one hour on the High Street on Saturday morning 19th May, please contact Susan Cousins Tel. 01248-353878.

NEWS OF PEOPLE

It's great to see **Will Lewis** getting on so well after his knee replacement surgery. **Joyce Ryan** is recovering after her operation and spell in hospital. We are sorry to say goodbye to **Jane Hodgson** who is leaving us this month to take up a new post in Stockton Heath with the Water Resources Regional Team. We are going to miss her immensely, but wish her God's blessing in the move.

Children's Birthdays in May

1st: Rebecca Gordon-Roberts; **6th**: Guto Evans; **16th**: Mark Walker;
21st: Nathan Davies

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 (716953)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, The Nomads	Jess & Seamus Adams (421185) Susan Cousins (353878)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, Bethesda	Jon & Deb Stammers (602868)
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)
Thu	7.45pm	HG, Talwrn	Gill & James Goodman (751074)
Fri	10.30am - noon	Cheeky Monkeys	Joan Rymer (713003)
Fri	10.30 – 12.30pm	HG, 6 Maes y Dref	Anne Collis (353173) anne@collis66.freeseve.co.uk
Sat	8.30am	Prayer Meeting	

NOTICEBOARD

- ***Men's Prayer Meeting Wednesday 2 May 10.30am***
The men will meet for prayer as usual, followed by coffee in Options.
- ***Walking Group Tuesday 15 May 10.30am***
We will be following in the steps of Derek Brockway on one of his Weatherman Walking routes. The walk is approximately 5 miles and is a circular walk along a rugged coastal path up and around Holyhead Mountain via North and South Stack and Ellin's Tower. Meet in the car park at the Breakwater Country Park, Holyhead at 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday 15th May. We will stop for a picnic lunch somewhere along the route. Geoff and Marilyn Birch will be leading this walk and if you need further information please contact them on 01286 870944 or email gmbirch@ceris.org.uk .

➤ ***Parenting under 5s – an invitation to join a course***

Bringing up children is one of the greatest privileges and challenges we are likely to experience – if you have an under 5, I'm sure you will agree with the challenge part! We plan to run a 10-session course for parents to look at how we can be the best parents possible, trying out new skills in a supportive atmosphere. The sessions are participative and fun and we plan to provide childcare if needed. Contact Bryan Collis or Wendy Lemon for more details.

➤ ***Penrallt on Facebook***

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

➤ ***Homeless in Bangor***

We do not recommend giving money to the homeless. Instead, £5 in one of the brown envelopes from the table in the porch of the church (placed in the offering) will buy a hot meal for them through the St. Mary's Hostel scheme. So far Penrallt has contributed £3340 to the fund.

➤ ***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:

Geoff Birch 01286 870944 Pat Borlace 713146, Eunice Smith 713296,
Judy Stammers 364394 Geoff Moore 410582

Holiday: Peter will be on holiday from Friday 18th to Thursday 24th May. If you have any pastoral concerns this week please contact one of the members of the Pastoral Care Team.

Deadline for next month's newsletter Sunday 20 May

Please send information to Gwyneth
(gwyneth@brindley-wales.com or 352682)

See over for 'Focus'...

FOCUS ON...

Christian Aid Week: 13–19 May 2012

Let's give the tools to help people in poverty out of poverty

Thousands of churches will stand together this Christian Aid Week to speak out for change. Some 100,000 committed volunteers will go out and put their faith into action, raising funds to help some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. This includes Britain's largest house-to-house collection – an extraordinary act of witness, demonstrating to our communities that we care about poverty and justice.

This year, Christian Aid Week tells the story of remarkable change taking place in a community in rural Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone is one of the hungriest countries in the world. But helped by Christian Aid partner the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone (MCSL), some people there have found the tools to move beyond hunger and speak out for the changes they want to see.

Christian Aid currently works with 507 partner organisations in 47 countries around the world. From Sierra Leone to Tajikistan, from Kenya to Bolivia, they are helping communities to make their voices heard and look towards a brighter future.

Christian Aid believes that poverty is a scandal and that it can be ended.

Be a part of Christian Aid Week this year: if, together, we take small actions we can help make big change happen.

- **£6.50** could buy a set of four hand tools for a farmer living in the town of Gbap.
- **£50** could pay for advocacy training for two young people in a Kenyan slum, equipping them with the tools they need to pressure their government to provide essential services.
- **£123** could buy a reclaimed aluminium greenhouse for women working on market gardening projects in Tajikistan, providing a vital tool for growing vegetables in a harsh climate experiencing extremes of hot and cold.

Please contact Susan Cousins on 01248 353878 if you can help with the house-to-house collection or collect on Bangor High Street.