



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: May 2015

From the Minister:

Gregory of Nazianzus became archbishop of Constantinople in 379AD. He hated it. His first Easter vigil was wrecked when a mob invaded the church, killing a bishop and wounding Gregory. And everywhere there were passionate and sometimes violent discussions about the nature of Christ. Gregory was one of the greatest theologians the church has ever known, but even he got fed up with the constant arguments. He complained that he couldn't get his hair cut without becoming embroiled in long theological controversy with the barber. Poor Gregory only lasted a couple of years in the post before he begged to be released back to his beloved Cappadocia.

I can't altogether sympathise with him. In my experience what's worse than having to do God-talk in the barbers is not being allowed to discuss God at all because religion is banned in polite conversation. I'm biased though, because as a young man I had a barber who loved to talk philosophy. When he discovered I was reading Sartre he produced his own little notebook of jottings and enthusiastically began to share his thoughts on finding purpose in a world without God. If I could chat about that kind of thing I'd get my hair cut once a week. The most technical discussion I've had in the barber's chair in recent years is an analysis of the decline of the Everton football team.

Am I allowed to discuss politics in the barbers? Possibly, although I might not want to. I possess rather strong views on the forthcoming election and I fear that if I voiced them I might go home with my thinning thatch looking like a dandelion. But here's the thing. God cares about both conversations (I'm excluding Everton here). Isn't politics God-talk too? God cares about whom we choose to run our country and how they run it.

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Leaf through the Bible and you'll find God expressing his concern about many of the subjects our politicians are arguing about. The prophet Isaiah complained about property magnates who "add house to house and join field to field till no space is left". Housing shortages are clearly on God's heart. He also lays down strict laws in the first five books of the Bible ensuring that immigrants get a fair deal in the land. There is a constant call to show compassion for "widows and orphans", the single-parent families of the day. And through the Bible, from beginning to end, God insists that he cares for the poor so we should care too. Issues of access to free, unbiased justice in the courts for those on low incomes or on the margins of society are tackled. Fairness in commerce is a theme which occurs. There are even sections on public health, so the Almighty holds views on the NHS too. God wants to see a society created which is fair and just for everyone. And most of the subjects currently being aired by the political parties are to be found in the Bible already.

Which is what I would say to my barber if I were asked.

I suspect though, all I'll get will be "Got your holidays booked then?"

God bless,

Peter

Serving the people of God elsewhere:

Roger Borlace will be speaking at Castle Square, Caernarfon on 3rd May and in Menai Bridge on 17th May. Please remember him in your prayers.

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.

Services This Month:

(Reminder: Don't forget that the evening services will move to 7pm for the summer starting in June)

3 May

10:30am **The seed takes root in foreign soil. Jesus on a mission trip**
Mark 5:1-20

6:00pm Communion Service.

A lesson about God's power and important lessons for leaders

Joshua 11:1-23

10 May

10:30am Speaker: Geoff Birch.

6:00pm Speaker: Diane Holmes.

17 May

10:30am **Living out your faith in Plain View** *Mark 6:1-13*

6:00pm Speaker: Elfed Godding.

24 May (Pentecost Sunday)

10:30am **God says: "Penrallt, I've got more!"** *1 Cor. 13:1-14:1*

6:00pm Pentecost Service at Bangor Cathedral (no service at Penrallt!)

31 May

10:30am Communion Service.

The Cake Church with a Bread and Fish Messiah *Mark 6:30-44*

6:00pm Baptismal Service.

Our Speakers in May

Elfed Godding is the national director of the Evangelical Alliance in Wales. **Diane Holmes** is a Baptist minister who has recently come to live near Brynsiencyn. **Geoff Birch** is a retired Baptist minister. Both Diane and Geoff are members of Penrallt. **Peter Cousins** is our minister and will be speaking at all the other services during the month.

Faith Café

Faith Café meets after church on Sunday evenings, for students, other young adults and teenagers, starting around 7:15pm. The last Faith Café of this academic year will be on 3rd May, when we will hold a quiz. There is no set time to finish so stay and chat afterwards if you wish.

Instead of Faith Café on May 10th, all students, teenagers and young adults are invited to Peter and Susan's house for lunch.

Dates For Your Diary:

Sunday 3	2:15pm	Service at Haulfre Residential Home in Llangoed.
Wednesday 6	10:30am	Men's prayer meeting followed by coffee in Options.
Saturday 9	9:30am-1pm	<i>Bible Unzipped</i> at Rhos-on-Sea URC.
Monday 11	12:30pm	Frugal lunch at Berea Newydd in support of Christian Aid.
	7:30pm	Deacons' meeting.
Friday 15		Christian Aid coffee morning at the Friends' Meeting House.
Saturday 16	7:30pm	Quizaid evening in Penrallt.
Monday 18	10:30am	Church walk at Bro Garmon.
Saturday 23	1pm	Memorial service for Declan Meirion Owen.
Wednesday 27	7:30pm	Penrallt Railway Group meeting at Lawrence's house (please speak to Lawrence Moss or Andrew March for more information).

Please see the Noticeboard section of this newsletter for more about what's happening. For details of Christian Aid Week (11-16 May) please see the Focus section on the back page.

News of People:

Our condolences to **Janet and Maldwyn** on the death of Maldwyn's father last month.

Our congratulations to **Elen and Jon** on their marriage in the Mill Road Evangelical church, Llanfairfechan. **Freya and Raj**, who now live on the Isle of Wight, are celebrating the birth of twins (Rajvir, a boy, and Ranjani, a girl).

It is good to have **Will** back in Penrallt after his operation. **Ian Kelso** is awaiting further medical treatment, while **Peter Cousins** is undergoing medical tests again.

Trudie and Duncan Tough have successfully completed their orientation course in PNG, and **Adrienne** will be going to visit them this month.

Last month we agreed to receive **Brian Wheatcroft** and **Cliff & Brenda Plum** into church membership (Cliff has now gone to live permanently in Glyn Menai; we remember him and Brenda in prayer as they readjust to the new situation). We also said goodbye to **Paul and Elaine Green** who will be worshipping in the Baptist Church in Holyhead to give Elaine further experience as she continues her theological studies.

Jean Browne is in hospital after suffering a serious stroke. As a result, the Memorial Service we were planning to hold for **Andrew Browne** this month has been postponed.

Peter will lead a Memorial Service on Saturday 23rd May for **Declan Meirion Owen**, a young man who died tragically in America where he and his family emigrated over ten years ago.

Children's Birthdays in May:

16th: Mark Walker

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, 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:

◇ **Anglesey Prayer Walk**

This year's Anglesey Prayer Walk is planned for Saturday 20th June. There will be organised prayer walks in Menai Bridge, Llangefni and Amlwch (further details about the walks have not yet been released - watch this space for information; in the meantime, please e-mail angleseyprayerwalk@hotmail.co.uk to register interest or to find out more). In the evening there will be a meeting at the Town Hall in Llangefni, with refreshments from 5:00pm and a Celebration starting at 6:00pm.

◇ **Baptismal Service**

We are holding a Baptismal Service on the evening of 31st May. If you would like to get baptised, please speak to Peter as soon as possible.

◇ **Bible Unzipped**

Saturday 9th May

9:30am

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: *The Gospels* (final part by Phillip Nye), *Preaching in the modern world (part 1)* by Rob Beamish and something by Julia Bartholomew (final programme details are to be confirmed - watch our weekly news-sheets and website for updates).

◇ **Car Parking**

Free parking is available on Sundays in Fron Heulog (the School of Healthcare Sciences) behind the Catholic church. The car park next door to Penrallt is now pay & display with no special rates for the disabled. Morrisons are happy for you to park in their car park on Sunday mornings and do your shopping after the service provided you register your car registration number at their information desk beforehand. Morrisons say that they switch the cameras off to make the car park available to us on Sunday and weekday evenings after 6pm.

◇ **Church Lunch**

We will host a church lunch on **Sunday 3rd May**. Please bring enough buffet style 'finger food' for yourselves and one or two others.

◇ **Church Walk**

Monday 18th May

10:30am

We will be walking in Bro Garmon to the south east of Betws y Coed. Meet at 10:30am in the lay by on the A470. Drive through Betws y Coed, over the Waterloo Bridge, turn left towards Llanrwst, lay by is 30m on the left. The walk is 5 miles; it climbs through woodlands and fields to the hamlet of Capel Garmon, past a Neolithic burial chamber before returning through farmland and woods. Please bring a picnic lunch. Toilets are available in Betws y Coed, as are plenty of cafés for post-walk refreshments. Contact Mari and Ian for further details (01248 421783 or 077443038183).

◇ **Men's Prayer Meeting**

Wednesday 6th May

10:30am

Time spent in prayer will be followed by coffee in Options. All are welcome to join us.

◇ **Pastoral Help**

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

Pat Borlace 713146 Adrienne Ferrada Geoff Moore 410582
Judy Stammers 364394 Helen Thomas 600174

◇ **Pentecost Sunday Evening**

Sunday 24th May

As in previous years we will be joining with the other churches of Bangor for a united service to celebrate Pentecost Sunday at 6pm in the Cathedral. You are welcome to bring a picnic for 5pm and meet up on the Cathedral green. Please note that there will be no evening service at Penrallt.

◇ **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**

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 group dedicated to prayer.

◇ **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 3rd May** (please see weekly news sheets or check with the church office for confirmation).

◇ **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. So far Penrallt has contributed £5,455 to this scheme.

From the church office:

Advance Notice: Visit of Jenni Entrican

Over the weekend of **20th/21st June** Jenni Entrican, President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, will visit Penrallt. She has asked us to organise a Women's day (primarily for Penrallt worshippers) on the Saturday, entitled ***Love yourself...actually***. This will take place at the Coach House between 10:00am and 3:30pm, with a break for lunch. A cheese/fruit/bread lunch will be provided as well as tea/coffee/cakes. This event is free but places are limited to 30 on a first come first served basis. If you would like to book a place please speak to Diane Holmes or Roshni as it is not possible just to turn up on the day.

On the Sunday, Jenni will preach at the morning service. After the service she wishes to meet up with Penrallt people; to facilitate this, we have booked the Belle Vue. Sunday lunch (with a vegetarian option) is £7.50 and places are limited to 33, again on a first come first served basis. If you would like to book a place please speak to Roshni or Magnus.

These events promise to be very good so please will you make up your minds to attend if you can and book as early as possible, and certainly no later than 10th June (for either event) so that the administration can run smoothly.

Focus on...



Christian Aid

Christian Aid is the official relief and development agency of 41 British and Irish churches (denominations) and works to support sustainable development and provide disaster relief in South America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. It works where the need is greatest regardless of religion, nationality, race or gender.

The first Christian Aid week was organised in 1957 when church leaders, who had been helping refugees in Europe following World War II, began to look beyond Europe and support development work in newly independent nations in Africa and Asia and respond to emergencies worldwide.

Alongside traditional relief and development work Christian Aid started to consider how to work for people's rights. In the late 1960s it challenged the British Government on its aid and trade policies. In the 1990s Christian Aid was among the charities campaigning to have Third World debt cancelled. It asks its supporters to see the bigger picture and challenge the structures that keep people poor, seeking justice on an international level. Climate change needs to be addressed and the root causes of poverty need to be tackled, e.g. unfair international trade rules and the tax dodging that strips developing countries of natural resources and massive tax revenues that could provide health care and education for millions.

At present Christian Aid works with 587 local partner organisations in 45 countries providing urgent practical and effective assistance giving communities the opportunities to take their own steps out of poverty. This year the literature highlights work with women and children in Ethiopia.

Cytûn Bangor has a full programme of events for Christian Aid Week (10th-16th May):

Monday 11th May (12:30pm)	Opening service & Frugal lunch at Berea Newydd
Friday 15th May	Coffee Morning at Quaker Meeting House
Friday 15th May	High St. Collection
Saturday 16th May (10am - 2pm)	Collection at Morrison's (Penrallt's responsibility)
Saturday 16th May (7:30pm)	Quizaid at Penrallt

All week: House to house collections. Volunteers very, very welcome – if you would like to volunteer, please speak to Susan Cousins.

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 24 May.

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

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