



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: October 2016

Over the summer I was staggered and humbled to receive no fewer than three unexpected gifts from family, friends and (almost) strangers. Their generosity left me saying: "how can I ever repay you?" Each was thoughtful, personal and sacrificial. As well as gratitude, I am sad to confess an innate mean-spiritedness, bound up in the nagging feeling that I somehow need to repay the gift (I simply cannot) or am in some way beholden to the giver; and there's a personal challenge too: would I do the same in similar circumstances? How do I fare when it comes to costly giving?

The spirit of materialism has taken such a hold that it is hard to think in terms other than the financial and economic value of activities these days. With incessant news of national debts and insufficient resources to go round, of increasing population and personal finances under pressure it is easy to get lulled into a deficit mind-set which seeks to hang on to what we've got for dear life – because you never know when you might need a thing. The act of giving challenges our addiction to 'stuff', because it causes us to ask where our security and priorities lie – in things, or in the Giver of all good things? Indeed, it has been said that giving is one of the simplest acts of faith a Christian may undertake. When we give, we are putting that promise to the test: 'My God shall supply all your *needs* according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.' (Phil 4:19). Note my emphasis. The world shouts "there's not enough to go round, hold on tight to what you have!" – like the monkey who grasps the peanuts in the jar only to find itself trapped by its own fist because it refuses to let them go. But we worship an abundantly generous God, who has the cattle on a thousand hills. Our God is the one who spoke all of creation into being, who created all that is, seen and unseen, from nothing. I believe in Him but do I trust Him?

The spirit of the age is regularly worshipped at the temple known as 'self.' Whilst visiting the 'in-laws' in Belfast, Gill and I bought a National Geographic magazine for her dad, on a whim – swiftly reconsidered when we read the subtitle: 'Blue Zones: the science of living longer.' It contained all sorts of conflicting pseudo-science as to how to extend your time on the planet. One interesting piece of advice was to 'join a faith-based community' because research has shown that members live 4-14 years longer than outsiders (don't ask me how they did THAT research!) Readers

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were told to 'find one that matches your worldview'. But isn't the priority here back to front? Joining in order to get rather than to give. In any case, quality of life is not measured by years alone; as believers, eternal life starts the moment we put our faith in the One who did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, giving up his life on a cross. Observing my father-in-law's devotion, sacrificial love and care for his 92 year old wife reminded me of Christ's example and made me want to quietly shred the magazine. The best gift is surely the gift of oneself (not 'knowledge,' as our university's motto – *Gorau Dawn Deall* – might have it!)

As a faith-community and church family in Penrallt, may we imitate the priority and example of those Macedonian Christians that the apostle Paul applauds in 2 Corinthians 8, who gave themselves first to the Lord (v5), and, whose overflowing joy and extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity (v2). May I – may we all – experience the joy and liberation of giving, of our time, energies, money, and ourselves as an expression of the Kingdom of God, here in North Wales as in heaven.

May God bless each one of us this autumn.

James Goodman

Hello students...

It is indeed a pleasure to welcome you guys, old and new, at the beginning of this academic year. Hope those of you who have been away during the summer have had a blessed and meaningful break and are now back ready to move on with your studies as well as your walk with Jesus; we have missed your energetic presence. The new ones, we pray, will settle down and find a church in Bangor that suits your spiritual journey; if it is Penrallt that is great; we embrace you with both arms. Going deeper with God is an emphasis in Penrallt and this is reflected in all we do throughout the week. We would love you to come in, look around, make friends not just with student but also with other church families, find a niche for yourself, join in and become one with us; we are not perfect, you can help to make us stronger, better. Just coming in for Sunday services or Faith Café is fine, you will find peace, joy, friendship and food there; however getting involved in the daily life of the church will bring you great blessings, on a journey to the heart of God; you might find it supporting you in rising up to the 'university challenge'. Together we would grow and be the sort of Christians Jesus wants us to be, bearing spiritual fruit, bringing glory and praise to the Father. Matt Dawson, our Student coordinator, has a lively calendar of events for you; please make yourselves known to Matt and us.

God Bless,

Roshni (Church Secretary)

Services This Month:

Our morning services in October will be on a variety of standalone subjects. In the evening services we will conclude our series on Paul's letter to Titus and begin a short series on Psalms.

2nd October

10:30am Speaker: Dai Woolridge
Does God care?

John 11:35

6:00pm Communion Service Speaker: Neil Rymer
Gracious Goodness

Titus 2:11–3:2

9th October

10:30am Speaker: Freddy Farias-Palacios
When facing turning points in our lives

Exodus 17:8–16

6:00pm Speaker: Christopher Penney
A Life of Grace and Good works

Titus 3:3–11

16th October

10:30am Speaker: Deb Stammers
Can these bones live?

Ezekiel 37:1-14

6:00pm Speaker: Donald Poirot.
Exercises for the soul

Psalms 33

23rd October

10:30am Speaker: Speaker: Christopher Penney
Building a house for God

2 Samuel 7:1–17

6:00pm Speaker: James Goodman

Psalms 34

30th October

10:30am Communion Service Speaker: Phil Jump

6:00pm Speaker: Phil Jump

Our Speakers This Month:

Dai Woolridge is a poet and actor from South Wales who will be taking part in the Wales to the World presentation at Penrallt on Saturday 1st October . **Freddy Farias-Palacios** is the Minister of Eastern Avenue Baptist Church in Romford (Essex). **Christopher Penney** is a Baptist Minister who is currently taking a sabbatical researching for a degree with the University of Wales through Spurgeon's College London. **Phil Jump** is a Regional Minister with the North Western Baptist Association. The other speakers are all members of Penrallt.

Dates for Your Diary:

- Saturday 1** 9:30am *Faith for the Future* event with Steven Gaukroger at Prince's Drive Baptist Church, Colwyn Bay.
- 7:30pm *Wales to the World* presentation at Penrallt.
- Sunday 2** 2:15pm Service at Haulfre residential home in Llangoed.
- Monday 3** 7:30pm Church Members' Meeting in the chapel.
- Wednesday 5** 10:30am Men's prayer meeting followed by coffee.
- Saturday 8** 9am–1pm *Bible Unzipped* at Rhos on Sea URC.
- Monday 10** 2:00pm Pastoral Care Team meeting.
- Saturday 15** 1:30pm ASD training at Penrallt.
- Monday 17** 10:30am Church walk at Cemlyn Bay.
- Friday 21** 7pm George Verwer event at Llangefni Town Hall.
- Saturday 22** 10:30am Bangor Street Pastors coffee morning at Berea Newydd.
- 7:00pm Games evening in the Canolfan, with light refreshments and a variety of exciting games. All are welcome.
- Monday 31** 6–7:15pm Light Party at Penrallt. A fun, 'non-scary' alternative celebration to Halloween parties. Games, singing, party food etc. All children / parents and youth welcome. Come along in really interesting bright coloured clothing. Please NO Halloween-style costumes.
- Saturday 26 November** Penrallt Christmas Fair.

Please see the Noticeboard section of this newsletter for more about many of these events.

News of People:

Congratulations to **Judy and Malcolm Stammers**, who celebrated their golden wedding anniversary last month.

Children's Birthdays in October

5th: Evangeline Goodwin 7th: Anna Warnock 20th: Micah Adams
21st: Gwilym Davies 23rd: Scott Jones
26th: Hannah Howick 31st: Catrin Gwilliam

Church Lunch will take place on Sunday 2nd October after the morning service. Please bring enough buffet-style food for yourself and one or two others.

Homegroups:

Many of our folk meet in small groups during the week for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. We encourage you to join one of these groups if you are able to.

NB not all these groups meet every week. Please check with the contact people to find out when and where they are meeting this month.

Day	Time	Group Name	Contacts
Tue	7:30pm	Nilgiri	Joan Beer (353874)
Tue	7:30pm	Tyddyn Isaf (Menai Bridge)	Magnus Forrester-Barker (717570)
Wed	2:00pm	Carers	Carol Morris (208407)
Wed	7:30pm	Bethesda	Jon & Deb Stammers (602868)
Wed	7:30pm	Nomads	Pat & Roger Borlace (713146)
Thu	10:30am	Llanfairpwll (am)	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Thu	7:30pm	Llanfairpwll (pm)	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Fri	10:30am–12:30pm	The Lydias	Freda Birchall (371316)

Noticeboard:

◇ **ASD Training** *Saturday 15th October 1:30pm*

We will be hosting a training session for those (e.g. parents, friends or Sunday School teachers) who support someone with an autism spectrum disorder (autism itself, Asperger's, etc.). This is free and open to anyone who feels it may be useful to them; it will take place in Canolfan Penrallt.

◇ **Bethesda Homegroup**

This term the Bethesda home group will be meeting fortnightly, alternating between a Bible study and a prayer meeting to pray for the local area.

Dates for the Bible study will be: 5th Oct, 2nd Nov, 30th Nov.

Dates for the prayer meeting will be: 19th Oct, 16th Nov, 14th Dec (depending on Christmas activities).

All welcome. See Deb or Jon Stammers for more details.

◇ **Bible Unzipped** *Saturday 8th October 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. The course is free. This month's sessions are led by Jon Stammers, Sarah Plum and Julia Bartholomew.

◇ **Church Walk**

Monday 17th October

This month's walk will be led by Roger Malone. Meet at the western car park at Cemlyn Bay Nature Reserve, at 10:30am. A linear walk to Cemaes, about 6 miles. walking boots and a good windproof coat recommended. Bring a picnic lunch.

◇ **Faith Café**

Faith Café for this academic year will start on Sunday October 2nd. This is an informal time of fellowship for students after the evening service in which we provide soup, bread, cheese, cakes etc. It runs during term time for the whole academic year. If you can help in any way, by making soup or cakes or providing bread, cheese etc or by making a gift, please see Mari (Kelso) in church or contact her on 07443038183 or 421783. Thank you!

◇ **Faith for the Future**

Prince's Drive Baptist Church in Colwyn Bay are hosting an event to help you think about the question "What is my faith for?" on Saturday 1st October, from 9:30am to 2:30pm. The speaker is Rev. Steven Gaukroger, former president of the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Call 01492 531681 for more information. The event is free but a buffet lunch can be booked in advance for £5. Childcare is available.

◇ **George Verwer**

George is the founder of Operation Mobilisation and will be speaking at Llangefni Town Hall on Friday 21st October. There will also be a time of worship led by James Goodman. Doors open at 6:30pm for light refreshments and networking; the event itself starts at 7pm.

◇ **Pastoral Help**

If you have issues of concern about your own or someone else's welfare, please contact a member of the Pastoral Care team: Pat Borlace (713146); Adrienne Ferrada; Gwen Hicks; Geoff Moore (410582); Lawrence Moss (713793); Judy Stammers (364394); Helen Thomas (600174).

◇ **Penrallt Art Group**

If you are interested in joining this small, friendly group please come along on Monday afternoons from 2:30pm to 4:30pm. The Autumn term starts on Monday 26th September and lasts for about 10 weeks. At present we don't have a tutor, but work on our own projects (any medium). Bring your own materials. If you'd like any further information, please contact Gwyneth Brindley (01248 352682 or gwyneth@brindley-wales.com). All welcome.

◇ **Penrallt on Facebook**

We have two groups on Facebook: a general group for news and information, called *Penrallt* (NB searching on Facebook for "Penrallt" will also bring up several other pages and groups, many of which are not related to us) and a prayer-specific group called *Penrallt Prayer Point*.

◇ **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 (or occasionally on Tuesdays) by emailing the office now and requesting to be put on the list. For more immediate and interactive sharing of prayers, search on Facebook for *Penrallt Prayer Point* and send a request to join our group.

◇ **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.

◇ **Saturday Morning Prayer Meeting**

Every Saturday morning at 8:30am there is a prayer meeting in the Twrgwyn Room to pray for the Penrallt family, our wider community and any other concerns that the Lord lays on your heart. All are welcome.

◇ **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 2nd October**.

Wales to the World

Saturday 1st October 7:30pm

We look forward to hosting the first evening of a Wales-wide Bible Society tour that looks at the rich spiritual heritage of Wales to give us inspiration for how we can bring the Bible to life in people's hearts now and in the future. The evening, featuring Penrallt's dear friends Dai and Cath Woolridge, will be a fusion of songs, stories and spoken word. Tickets cost £5 and can be bought from the Penrallt office, bought at the door (subject to availability) or booked online at: <https://cicconline.org.uk/event/wales-to-the-world-bangor>

For more information, see:

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/events/wales-to-the-world-winter-2016-tour/>

Links to both these websites can be found from the news page of the Penrallt website (www.penrallt.org/news/index.php).

Focus on...

Chris & Anna Hembury **Serving with Hull Youth For Christ**

Chris and Anna have been sharing God's love in one of the more deprived areas of the UK for the past 19 years. They have given us the following prayer requests:

- Many of those we have the privilege of calling friends here, and many more we don't know by name, are struggling with addictions of one sort or another. Please pray with us that they would experience Jesus' love and acceptance and freedom from the chains that bind.
- Thank God for all that we have been able to harvest from the garden, not only potatoes but hope, deepening relationships within our existing community and new youth work opportunities with a group who would not fit in to our youth club setting but are yearning for connection and belonging.
- That we would be faithful in keeping Jesus at the centre of all our endeavours with the Hope Grows community garden, Matt's House and Orts (a sewing collective).
- Give thanks for a wonderful summer camp, as spiritually refreshing as it was physically exhausting! Pray for the 27 young people we took, that they would continue to hear God's whisper and dare to respond.
- Elijah (nearly 16yrs) and Kavita (14yrs) seem to be fairly successfully navigating the choppy social waters of teenage-hood. However, making sense of faith in a way they can confidently articulate or act on is a big ask so generally avoided! This is true for all the young people we work with, who are not coming from church backgrounds. Please pray for them, and for us, as we try to work out how to do the discipleship thing in this context.

Due to space constraints it was not possible to print the whole of the news update the Hemburys sent us with these prayer requests. Please speak to Magnus (see below for contact details) if you would like a copy.

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 23rd October.

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

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