



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: September 2016

"Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me." (Luke 9:48)

"Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." (Hebrews 13:1–2)

A very warm welcome – all of you – to Penrallt Baptist Church this September! I do hope you feel welcome, and that God will bless all of you as we meet and worship together.

The tricky thing is, it's up to all of us to do the welcoming. I'm afraid I might not be much good at welcoming people, or at least I'm woefully inconsistent. I have my good days, but very often I'm absorbed in something else. I instantly forget people's names. My mind wanders. I have other people I need to talk to and things I need to arrange. I'm too preoccupied to be much of a 'welcomer'.

Which is a problem of course. When we fail to welcome each other; to welcome little children in Jesus' name; to welcome strangers; we fail to welcome our Saviour into our fellowship and into our lives too.

In the book of Ruth, chapter 2, we meet a model 'welcomer' in Boaz. We first meet him greeting the harvesters in his fields with the words "The LORD be with you!" He is then quick to enquire after the foreign girl Ruth who is gleaning surplus grain behind his harvesters, and to make sure she is well provided for and safe from harm. It would have been so easy for him not to notice her at all with all the other business he no doubt had to attend to, not to mention her much lower social standing.

Our previous minister Peter Cousins – who we said goodbye to almost a year ago now – memorably used to say there are no heroes in the Old Testament except God. I think this is absolutely right, but Boaz comes pretty close. Contrast him with that other wealthy landowner in Luke 12:16–20 who hoards all his wealth for himself so he can take life easy, without a thought for others. We all know people a bit like that.

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Our church is now nearly one year into a pastoral vacancy. Our Church Secretary Roshni, together with the other deacons (Stephen Burrows, Ceri Walker, Deb Stammers, Andy Lemon, Andrew March and two new deacons Gwen Hicks and Owen Lloyd-Evans), has been working very hard to provide leadership. She has also had support from many others. They continue the work of seeking to help us as a church appoint a new Minister. In the meantime (and at all times!) we all need to support our deacons and work together to make sure Penrallt can be a church to welcome everyone. Let's work together. How can we do a better job of welcoming children in Jesus' name? Of welcoming our new intake of students this autumn or of welcoming strangers? In the continuing refugee crisis we see our collective failure to welcome strangers on a global scale. How can we do better? What small suggestions do you have?

Some of us don't really get a summer break. Some get the really exhausting kind of summer "break" which is harder work than what we're taking a break from! Others enjoy genuinely relaxing breaks. Either way, as we hit September we now find ourselves rushing headlong into all kinds of busy-ness as things start up again. It can come as a most *unwelcome* shock. But let's not forget to be welcoming. Let's not lose sight of our great God and the welcome he's given us. He wants to use us to welcome others too.

The Lord be with you.

Jon Stammers

We look forward to welcoming back all our students who have been on home grounds over the past few months. We assume that you all had an exciting, restful and blessed summer. We look forward to seeing you again and hearing the great stories you have to tell us.

At the same time, we are waiting to meet new ones coming to Bangor for the first time. It is our hope that you would find us friendly, warm and sound in our stand with Jesus. Come in and join us in our worship; have a coffee or tea afterwards, mingle with us and let us get to know each other. Come and eat with us at our Faith Café after the evening service. Magnus (the Church Administrator) and I would love to see you dropping into the office for a chat on week days, if you wish. Matt Dawson, our Student Co-ordinator, is at hand to help you settle down in Penrallt if you wish to join us.

God Bless,

Roshni

(Church Secretary)

Services This Month:

Our morning services in September will be on a variety of standalone subjects. In the evening services we will begin a series based on Paul's letter to Titus, and there will be a baptismal service at the end of the month. Please note that the evening services now return to their regular start time of 6pm.

4th September

10:30am Speaker: Rob Beamish
The Scandal of Grace

Romans 6

6:00pm Communion Service
Speaker: Christopher Penney
Introduction and Appointment of Elders

Titus 1:1–9

11th September

10:30am Speaker: Trevor Casey

6:00pm Speaker: Diane Holmes
A Pastor's Heart

Titus 1:10–14

18th September

10:30am Speaker: Geoff Birch

6:00pm Speaker: Jon Stammers.
How can we make the Good News look good?

Titus 2:1–10

25th September

10:30am Communion Service
Speaker: Joe Moreno
The God of Liberty

Colossians 1:15–24

6:00pm Baptismal Service led by Rob Beamish

Our Speakers This Month:

Rob Beamish is the Minister of Princes Drive Baptist Church in Colwyn Bay and Penrallt's Moderator during our current pastoral vacancy. **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. **Trevor Casey** is the Minister of Sussex Street Baptist Church in Rhyl. **Joe Moreno** is a native of Texas who worked in Australia for a number of years before moving to Anglesey, where he now works with Gobaith Môn as a Christian youth worker. The other speakers are all members of Penrallt.

Dates for Your Diary:

- Sunday 4** 2:45pm Service at Plas Garnedd residential home in Llanberis.
Monday 5 2:00pm Pastoral Care Team meeting.
7:30pm Deacons' meeting.
Wednesday 7 10:30am Men's prayer meeting followed by coffee.
Saturday 10 9am–1pm *Bible Unzipped* at Rhos on Sea URC.
Monday 19 10:30am Church walk.
Saturday 1 October *Wales to the World* presentation, featuring Cath and Dai Woolridge.

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

News of People:

Trudie and Duncan Tough are now on their way back to Papua New Guinea, with a four week stopover in the United States.

Children's Birthdays in September

5th: Rebecca Owen 16th: Reuben Stevens
17th: Amy Harmens 24th: Elin Gwilliam 25th: Siân Thomas

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:

◇ **Bible Unzipped** *Saturday 10th September 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, Rob Beamish and Peter Cousins.

◇ **Church Lunch** *Sunday 4th September*

Please bring enough buffet style food for yourselves and one or two others.

◇ **Church Walk** *Monday 19th September*

This month's walk will be led by Freda Birchall. More details to follow.

◇ **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!

◇ **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 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 Plas Garnedd on **Sunday 4th September**.

◇ **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 Dai and Cath Woolridge, will be a fusion of songs, stories and spoken word. Tickets cost £5 and can be 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/>

From the Diaconate:

The latest update regarding the pastoral vacancy is that some of us have met with the two applicants I mentioned in my last note. However, due to holidays the search team in its entirety was unable to meet them. Therefore we are not at the moment in a position to define how much progress we have made. Please bear with us; I hope to have some further news for you shortly. Meanwhile please continue to pray.

God bless,

Roshni

Back from the Big Red Bus

This August I finally got round to taking up a long-standing invitation to visit the Ó Brolcháins, who were members of Penrallt when I arrived here 17 years ago and now work for OM Ireland*. I went across to help Colm in outreach with the Big Red Bus (that I've heard so much about over the past few years) at the Fleadh Cheoil, an annual Irish music festival.

I went across a few days early and stayed with Colm at his home near the OM headquarters in Co. Roscommon, very close to the geographic centre of Ireland. The rest of the family were away but I met many of the OM staff and also helped Colm move a boat up the river Shannon – it's possible that the Big Red Bus may soon be joined by a Big Blue Boat as a ministry tool.

This year's Fleadh was in Ennis, a town in County Clare (on the West coast of Ireland). We headed down there on the Sunday to meet the rest of our 8-strong team as well as the Big Red Bus itself. The first challenge was to find somewhere to park the bus amid the high volume of traffic and very tight parking restrictions brought about by the Fleadh (which, in the space of a week, saw up to 400,000 people passing through a town that usually has a population of around 30,000). Attempts to secure a parking space beforehand had failed, but the Lord led us quickly to a wonderful spot by the river and we set up and got started right away.

The basic strategy for our outreach was to spend the afternoons and evenings playing live music (my main role on the team – ironically, as the only non-Irish resident among us, I was the team's Irish Traditional Music specialist; I also joined some of the others to sing and play worship songs), serving free tea and coffee and engaging people in conversation, as well as giving out gospel tracts.

Some great conversations were had, along with much tea and many tunes, but by the middle of week we were told by the authorities that we had to move the bus. After some prayer and searching we found what seemed to be another ideal spot slightly further out from the town centre and we set up there, only to be told that we had to take it out of Ennis completely.

More prayer (and tea) followed before we left the bus behind and went back into town on foot. We had to do without the tea service, but there was still plenty of music and conversation and for the rest of the Fleadh we were able to reach people in places we would never have got the bus to [see Proverbs 19:21].

After the Fleadh, I spent a couple of days in Roscommon with Colm and the family (who had now returned). As a parting gift on the final evening, the Lord gave us one of the most spectacularly beautiful sunsets I can ever remember seeing.

Magnus

* The Ó Brolcháins were featured in the Focus article in our June 2016 newsletter.

Focus on...



Claire Bedford

Serving with BMS in Chad



Claire Bedford relocated to N'Djamena in Chad, West Africa in January, following a year of French language study in France. Claire is working for BMS at Guinebor II hospital.

Claire is a pharmacist, originally from North Devon. She trained at the University of Bath and Torbay Hospital. In the UK Claire worked as a hospital pharmacist and more recently as a prescribing advisor for GP practices.

Claire's role in Chad is to continue the development of the pharmacy service at Guinebor II hospital, which is primarily a maternity hospital. As well as having supervisory oversight of the pharmacy and the lab, Claire has been doing some hospital personnel management (which she describes as a steep learning curve of Chadian employment law, in French!).

The working language of the hospital, between the staff, is French. However, not many Chadians speak French. Only those who've been able to have an education can speak it and unfortunately, not all children there are able to go to school. In order to be able to interact directly with the patients, Claire really needs to be able to speak Chadian Arabic. So she and 2 other ex-pat colleagues have started to learn spoken Arabic, having two two-hour lessons a week from a local teacher!

Claire asks us to pray for:

- Ongoing security and safety in Chad – give thanks that the political situation is fairly stable at the moment.
- Good working relationships with the Chadian staff and within the new expat mission worker team.
- Good health during the rainy season – when malaria abounds.

For more information: www.bmsworldmission.org.uk/cbedford

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 18th September.
Please sent information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org; 01248 353355).
All notices should be submitted in writing (preferably by email) as early as possible.