



Newsletter: September 2023

Identity. Who am I?

This month we enter a new sermon series on Christian identity. Who am I? Who am I like? Who do I want to be? Who do I want to be like?

Having a strong sense of Identity in our pluralistic culture is important. The definition of the word 'identity' in the Collins Dictionary perhaps encapsulates the struggle faced by people in Britain today as they wrestle with this. It is both (1) "the state of having unique identifying characteristics held by no other person or thing", and at the same time it is (2) "the state of being the same as a person or thing described or claimed". Identity is a mix of something that we are and something that we choose. Psychologytoday.com states that "identity encompasses the memories, experiences, relationships, and values that create one's sense of self." And that "new facets are developed and incorporated into one's identity over time".

The Bible has a lot to say about Christian Identity. We are "made in the image of God" (Gen 1v27), we are "God's handiwork" (Eph 2v10), we are "loved" (Eph 3v17) "born again" (John 3v3), we are "citizens of heaven" (Phil 3v20), we are "children of God" (John 1v12), "born of the spirit" (John 3v5), "temples of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor 6v19), "anointed" (2 Cor 1v21), "owned by God" (2 Cor 1v22). If I was to "be" these things and to "know what it was" for me to be these things, and to "know what I was capable of doing" because of who I am — wouldn't that be amazing! And the Bible has much more to say more about who we are in Christ — this is just the beginning of the list.

The one who epitomises what it means to "be" and to "know" who they are is of course Jesus. What does it mean for me to be like Christ (Christian) and have my identity rooted in Jesus Christ? I pray that we are encouraged, inspired and mobilised as we explore this together.

Blessings,

John

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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.

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).

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 24th September.

Please send information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org). All items should be submitted by email as early as possible.

Children's Birthdays in September

- 7th: Ronnie Isiakpere
- 24th: Oscar Edwards
- 28th: Royal Isiakpere
- 29th: Manasseh Sobaloju

Service Videos

Recordings of sermons from morning services are available on our [YouTube channel](#) and our own [website](#). Please contact the [church office](#) if you would like a link to recordings of full services.

Giving

We take up an offering during our morning services. There is also a donations box at the back of the chapel which you can use 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 Averil (treasurer@penrallt.org), who will be able to advise.

Morning Services

Morning services start at 10:30am on Sundays with an option to join on Zoom if you are unable to join us in the building (Zoom 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 – 17); crèche facilities are also available for younger children. For all-age services, the children and young people remain in the service but crèche facilities are still available if needed.

Sunday 3rd September

Back to School with God

All-age service led by Wendy Lemon and Becca Williams.

Sunday 10th September

Christian Identity: I am made in the image of God.

Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 17th September

Christian Identity: I am a child of God.

Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 25th September (Communion)

Christian Identity: I am a new creation.

Evening Services

Evening services begin at 6pm on Sunday evenings except where otherwise noted. Unlike morning services, these are not usually broadcast or recorded. There is no evening service on the first Sunday; instead we have our church lunch and fellowship event following the morning service (see next page). Services planned for the rest of the month are:

Sunday 10th September

Prophetic service

Sunday 17th September

Prayer meeting (NB we are moving prayer meetings back to the building following an experiment with having them on Zoom before the summer break)

Sunday 25th September

Contemporary service

◇ **Alpha**

Our next Alpha course at Penrallt will be starting on **Monday 25th September** and will run on Monday nights for 12 weeks (with an away day in November). Publicity materials and invitations are available, so please take some as you prayerfully consider who you can invite. This course is for adults, and all are welcome. We are considering running a Youth Alpha soon.

◇ **Baptist Leaders' Fellowship**

This month's meeting of the Baptist Leaders' Fellowship will happen on Monday 18th September from 10am in Princes Drive Baptist Church, Colwyn Bay. It will be led by Mark Young, talking about his work in Llandudno. It will give us a chance to get to know him better and a good part of our meeting will be dedicated to praying for him and the ministry in Llandudno. The meeting will not be available on Zoom or YouTube. There will be lunch available from midday as usual for those who want to stay on a bit longer to chat. This is open to anyone in any leadership role in a church.

◇ **Church Lunch and Fellowship Events**

Our monthly church lunch and fellowship event resume on 3rd September. For the lunch, please bring a plate of finger-food (enough for yourself and one or two others so we have plenty for visitors). The fellowship event will be a woodland and coastal walk at Pentraeth. It will be about 4.5km and include some uneven ground and muddy bits. This is a good spot to see wading birds, so you may want to bring binoculars. For more information or to request or offer a lift, please contact Jenny (fellowship@penrallt.org).

◇ **Church Members' Meeting**

Our next church members' meeting will take place on Tuesday 10th October at 7:30pm in the chapel and on Zoom. Further details will be emailed to church members in due course. Amongst other things we will be aiming to appoint a new treasurer and several deacons at this meeting – nominations will be open from Sunday 10th September to Sunday 24th September and will be announced in the services between those dates. For more information about the meeting or the election of deacons, or to find out more about church membership, please speak to John (minister@penrallt.org) or Jan (secretary@penrallt.org).

◇ **Count Me In**

We have recently printed forms to enable you to sign up to help in various areas of church life. Please take one and reflect on how you may be able to serve. Forms can be returned to the Welcome Card box in the foyer or given back to Magnus.

◇ **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.

◇ **Hardship Fund**

The church has a small fund to help people in need. If you find yourself in financial difficulty or know someone else that 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 Averil Francis (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 relationship with the Lord and with one another. There are groups on Monday to Thursday evenings and on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Most groups meet weekly, though some are fortnightly and we have groups meeting in person and groups meeting online (or a combination of the two). Please contact Magnus (office@penrallt.org) if you would like to connect with a group.

We also have "contact, care and prayer" to enable people to stay connected even if not in a homegroup. A member of the pastoral care team would contact you every 3 weeks or-so to ask how you are and if you'd like to receive prayer support. Please contact the [church office](#) if you are not part of contact, care & prayer or part of a homegroup and would like to be.

◇ **Kindle Kid's Club**

Kindle, our fortnightly Friday night kids' club will restart on 22nd September. To find out more about Kindle, contact Becca (youth@penrallt.org).

◇ **Open The Book**

Cytûn have *Open the Book* teams that go into local primary schools to deliver dramatized Bible Stories. Open the Book is an initiative by the Bible Society and is a fun and effective way to have a Christian presence in assembles at primary schools. Please speak to Magnus (office@penrallt.org), a member of the team at Ysgol Hirael, to find out more.

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

We have three Facebook groups:

- *Penrallt* (www.facebook.com/groups/2402772192)
a general group for information and social interaction
- *Penrallt Prayer Point* (www.facebook.com/groups/30262793231755)
a private group to share prayer requests and encouragements
- *Penrallt Students* (www.facebook.com/groups/195300234272943)

We also have a YouTube channel and a Facebook page (both called *Penrallt Baptist Church*), as well as another Facebook page for our young people, and now also an Instagram account:

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

◇ **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: 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 them.

◇ **Prayer Resources**

Send prayer requests, thanksgivings and testimonies to our email prayer diary via office@penrallt.org — use this address, too, to subscribe to the prayer diary, which goes out every week (usually on Mondays). 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 (also listed at the bottom of our email prayer diary each week). *Note that the Saturday meeting will restart on 9th September following a summer break.* Our monthly evening prayer meeting is part of our evening service structure; the next one will be on Sunday 17th September.

◇ **Renew 57**

All are welcome to come to Penrallt on a Thursday morning, where the Canolfan (rear hall) is open from 10:30am to 12:30pm. Bring a hobby to share with someone else, have a cup of tea or coffee and some toast and a chat. There is a separate prayer space (in a different room) available throughout this time for quiet reflection with optional opportunities to be led in short gentle contemplative prayer in the prayer space at the beginning and the end. 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. Please pray for the team. If you'd like to know more, speak to Adrienne (adrieferrada@hotmail.co.uk) or Magnus (office@penrallt.org) or, even better, drop in and see for yourself.

◇ **Soul Sisters**

Soul Sisters is Penrallt's women's fellowship group. Our next meeting is on Saturday 9th September at 10:30 – 12:00 in the Canolfan, where we will be sharing our crafts/hobbies with each other. We will also be discussing/sharing our ideas for the Christmas Fair on 18th November.

A warm welcome is extended to all women including family and friends. Please contact Averil Francis (tel. 01248 421744; email: treasurer@penrallt.org) if you are not already on the group's mailing list and are interested.

◇ **Students**

We love to welcome students as part of our church family. To learn more about what activities are available, or just for a friendly chat, drop our student co-ordinator, Becca (students@penrallt.org) a line. Also, don't miss our [Penrallt Students](#) Facebook group.

◇ **Youth: Ignite and Deeper**

Our main youth activities are a Thursday night group called *Ignite* (usually meeting in the Canolfan at 7pm) and a Sunday morning group, *Deeper* (during our service). Ignite, a social evening with games and activities, is open to all. Deeper provides opportunity to find out more about the Christian faith. Find out more on our youth website, www.penralltyouth.org, as well as our [Penrallt Youth Facebook page](#) and [Instagram group](#). Contact our youth worker, Becca (youth@penrallt.org), for more information. Deeper will restart on 10th September and Ignite on 14th September after the summer break.

Focus on...

Peter & Rachel Calvert **Serving with Perspectives and A Rocha France**

Peter and Rachel, along with their daughters Anna, Sophie and Inès, live in Blois in the Loire Valley in central France. In the last couple of years they have moved away from the church planting that was their focus both in Blois and previously in Saint-Étienne into other areas of ministry.

Pete is continuing to provide pastoral support for a church in Romorantin, a town about three quarters of an hour away from Blois. He especially requests prayers for wisdom and love in dealing with occasional relational tensions and for his efforts to build up a network of visiting preachers willing to visit the church 1–3 times a year.

Pete is also involved in leading scouting activities and recently had fun looking after the younger (cub/brownie) section of a scout camp as well as the joy of helping 20 year old Jan Willem prepare two Bible talks (on the Israelites in the wilderness). Jan Willem is the son of two of their Perspectives colleagues and Pete and Rachel have known him for his whole life; he's now planning to start theological training with a view to serving as a pastor.

As well as scout camps, Pete is the director of the younger of two InterAction camps that take place in France each August (there are similar camps in Belgium and Germany). He's had this role for 5 years and been involved in the camps for longer. This year they had a team from Bushey Baptist Church (where Rachel's father was the pastor some years ago) helping them for the first time. They had a number of meteorological and medical complications to attend to (i.e. lots of rain and a variety of bugs and bangs) but the campers were very well behaved and the leaders' team worked together very harmoniously. They are now planning to launch a third camp in 2024 to increase their capacity.

Rachel's work at the moment is largely with A Rocha France (part of a wider network of Christian ecology / conservation organisations), where she serves as the chair of the board of trustees. This involves frequent visits to the south of France where their head office is based at Les Courmettes. Recently they held their annual training conference on the theme of "Living with Limits", with about 60 participants — a bigger group than in previous years, which was encouraging.



Peter and Rachel celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary in July, and the girls cooked them a lovely lunch to celebrate (see picture). In their latest prayer letter, Rachel thanked everyone who has been praying for them in those 20 years and noted that God has been faithful in answering those prayers.