



Newsletter: January 2023

What will we hold on to in the New Year?

In uncertain times I find it helpful to reflect on what I believe. Do you believe in gravity? It's something you can't see, but you know it is there. You can see its effects. Almost everyone believes in gravity and we teach it at school. Scientists can do calculations and show from their observations that gravity as a concept works. We believe gravity is foundational in holding the world together. But actually, it doesn't feel like it makes a lot of difference in everyday life.

Believing in God is similar in some ways. Similarly, we can't see him, although we know he is there. We can see the effects of God in people's lives. There have been times, when almost everyone in this country believed in God, and in our Lord Jesus. Now this is not the case, but over the years and still today, world-renowned scientists and other great logical thinkers believe in Jesus and believe that it makes sense. Similarly, we believe that God is foundational in holding the world together.

However, unlike believing in gravity, believing in God does have a profound effect on our daily lives. He is not simply a force, he is our perfect, good and holy Heavenly Father. His desire for us is that we will be in beautiful relationship with Him now and eternally. He has made this possible through his son Jesus. Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins and make us children of God. God gives us His Holy Spirit — a deposit of heaven. We believe that His motivation in coming to Earth to save us was love. So we believe in Jesus and his love, in the Bible, in the Spirit and in Unity. We pray for our turbulent world and pray that our belief in Jesus can anchor us, secure us and offer hope and salvation to all.

Blessings,

John

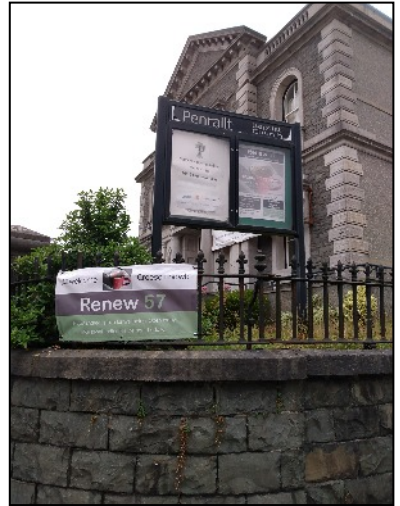
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Anyone and everyone is welcome to come to Penrallt on a Thursday morning, where the Canolfan (rear hall) is open from 10:30am to 12:30pm. Bring a hobby to share with someone else, have a cup of tea or coffee and some toast and a chat. There is a separate 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.



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). ***The office will re-open after Christmas on Tuesday 3rd January.***

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Wednesday 25th January.

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

Morning Services This Month

Our morning services continue to be in a hybrid format, in the building and on Zoom. Please see the website for up to date information about services and a link for the Zoom meeting, as well as recordings of past sermons.

Morning services start at 10:30am on Sundays. 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 1st January

All-age service led by Lesley Jackson.

Sunday 8th January

What do we believe? (Part 1).

Preacher: John Thompson.

This is the first of three sermons based on Penrallt's [Statement of Faith](#).

Sunday 15th January

What do we believe? (Part 2).

Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 22nd January

What do we believe? (Part 3).

Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 29th January (Communion)

Preacher: Siân Rees.

Siân will be joining us on Zoom. Those on Zoom will need bread and wine (or equivalent) to fully take part in communion.

Service Videos

Recordings of full services are no longer listed on YouTube or our own website. The recordings themselves are still available; please contact the [church office](#) if you would like a link to them. Videos of sermons will remain directly available and the services will still be broadcast on Zoom.

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.

Evening Services This Month

Evening services begin at 6pm on Sunday evenings and take place in the chapel, except where otherwise noted. Unlike morning services, these are not usually broadcast or recorded.

The programme for January is as follows:

Sunday 1st January

No evening service; instead we have a fellowship walk in the afternoon (see next page).

Sunday 8th January

Prayer meeting and communion service, led by Ama Eyo and John Thompson.

Sunday 15th January

An African themed thanksgiving service of worship and praise, led by Ama Eyo.

Sunday 22nd January

No evening service; instead we will be hosting the opening service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Wednesday 18th (see below for full WPCU programme).

Sunday 29th January

Café service in the hall, led by Becca Williams.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023 will run from 18th to 25th January, using materials prepared by the churches of Minneapolis on the theme of unity against racial injustice. Events in Bangor are:

- Wednesday 18th January, 7pm: service at Penrallt (with Mosaic)
- Friday 20th January, 7pm: worship at Our Lady & St James' Catholic Church
- Monday 23rd January, 7pm: service at St. John's (with Berea Newydd)
- Wednesday 25th January, 2pm: service at Emaus (with Quakers or Cathedral)

Children's Birthdays in January

7th: Jeffrey Packwood

◇ **Church Meeting**

Our next meeting for church members is due to take place on Monday 16th January at 7:30pm in the chapel, with the option to join via Zoom. Papers for the meeting, along with a Zoom link, will be emailed to members shortly.

If you are not a member and would like to become one or to find out what membership is about, please speak to John (minister@penrallt.org) or Owen (secretary@penrallt.org).

◇ **Fellowship Walk**

We are planning to have a New Year's walk at Llanfairfechan on the afternoon of Sunday 1st January. Meet at 1pm in the promenade car park for a picnic on the benches by the park (or in our cars, if the weather is bad) followed by a walk to the bird hides and back. All are welcome.

◇ **Foodbanks**

Bangor Cathedral Foodbank 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. To find out more please visit www.bangorfoodbank.org

Mosaic church also have a Foodbank at Coed Mawr Community Centre, which is open 9:30 – 11 on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings. 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 one of our homegroups 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, Tuesday, Wednesday and 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).

We also have "contact, care and prayer" to enable people to stay connected even if they are not in a homegroup. This is where 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 is a (free) fortnightly kids' club on Fridays from 6 to 7pm. All primary aged children are welcome and there is a space for parents to stay and chat over a panad while the club is on. The first session of the year will be on **20th January**. For more information, contact Becca (youth@penrallt.org).

◇ **Men's Fellowship**

Our men's fellowship group usually meet on the first Monday evening of the month. Our January event (if any) is still to be determined. Please contact Magnus (office@penrallt.org) to receive details when they become available or to join the mailing list for future events — all men are welcome.

◇ **Missions Prayer Meeting**

The Penrallt mission group will be meeting on Zoom at 7:30pm on Wednesday 25th January to hear updates from our mission partners around the world and to pray for them. Please contact the church office for the Zoom details.

◇ **Open The Book**

Cytûn have an *Open the Book* team that goes into Ysgol Hirael 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 assemblies at primary schools, especially as it has been agreed by educational authorities. This is also a great way for Penrallt to continue our links at Hirael. Please speak to Magnus (office@penrallt.org), who is a member of the team, if you are interested.

◇ **Penrallt on Facebook 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 (as defined by Facebook, i.e. request to join) specifically 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:

www.youtube.com/@penralltbaptistchurch

www.facebook.com/penralltbc

www.facebook.com/penralltyouth

◇ **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: 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). There are also prayer cards in the church porch that you can use to submit items for the prayer diary.

We also have a more interactive Facebook prayer group (*Penrallt Prayer Point*: www.facebook.com/groups/30262793231755). 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). Our monthly evening prayer meeting will be combined with a communion service on **Sunday 8th January at 6pm**.

◇ **Safeguarding**

We will be running level 2 and 3 Safeguarding courses on Saturday 7th January. Those who currently need the training have already been contacted by the office.

◇ **Soul Sisters (Women's Fellowship)**

Our first meeting for 2023 is on Saturday 14th January at 10:30 at the Fron Goch Garden Centre in Caernarfon for coffee and cake. As well as being a social event, we will be planning the programme for the next few months so please come with ideas. A warm welcome is extended to all women, including family and friends. We look forward to seeing you there. If anyone would like a lift, please contact Averil.

◇ **Students**

We love to welcome students as part of our church family. If you would like to know more about what activities are available, or if you just want a friendly chat, our student co-ordinator, Becca (students@penrallt.org) would love to hear from you. Also, don't miss our student Facebook group: *Penrallt Students* (www.facebook.com/groups/195300234272943)

◇ **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 morning services). Ignite is open to all, and is a social evening with games and activities; it will restart after the Christmas break on **12th January**. Deeper provides opportunity to find out more about the Christian faith. Find out more on our youth website, www.penrallyouth.org, as well as our *Penrallt Youth Facebook page* and *Instagram group*. Contact our youth worker, Becca (youth@penrallt.org), for more information.

Focus on...

Bangor Street Pastors

Listening – Caring – Helping

It is now just over 12 years since Bangor Street Pastors began operating (memorably on 5th November 2010 — starting with a bang, as one street pastor at the time observed). Until Covid struck in March 2020, we had an almost unbroken record of putting out at least one patrol per week throughout the year in all kinds of weather. The Covid lockdowns put a temporary end to that but we have been able to resume patrols in recent months, albeit with a somewhat reduced team and managing on average two or three patrols per month.



Bangor Street Pastors are just one small part of a much wider movement that started in South London in 2003 as a constructive Christian response to gang violence and has grown to encompass well over 200 locations across the UK and an increasing number around the world. The situations where street pastors operate are quite varied — from inner cities to small rural towns and villages — and the operational procedures are adapted to suit the situation, but the fundamental aim remains the same for all street pastors: to demonstrate the love of God in practical ways on the streets of our communities, with Listening, Caring and Helping as our watchwords and freely offering support to all we meet.

Street pastors are volunteers from local churches and one of the strengths of our witness is the way that Christians from different denominations (Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant) work together, with our unity reinforcing the message of God's love that we proclaim with our actions and, when appropriate, our words.

Sometimes we are privileged to see the fruits of our labours, whether in the practical sense of seeing somebody safely home to their front door or in the more eternal, and no less important, sense of hearing a testimony that interacting with street pastors has helped someone come, or come back, to a saving faith in Christ.

As well as street pastors, we have volunteer prayer pastors who, as the name suggests, support us in prayer. Specifically they pray with us and for us on patrol nights, and usually prepare food and drink to keep us going physically too.

You don't need to be a prayer pastor to pray for us. Please keep the street pastors (in Bangor and beyond) in your prayers. In particular, please pray for more volunteers (both street pastors and prayer pastors) so that we are consistently able to put out patrols week by week; we currently have three new recruits being trained but more are needed. Pray too for wisdom, stamina and grace, especially as we work through the cold (and sometimes rather wet and windy) winter months.

To find out more, speak to [Magnus](#) (the street pastor who wrote this article).