



Newsletter: July 2026

Joseph, rowing, resonances and Jesus

It amazes me that the story of the life of someone who lived 3,500 years ago can have so many resonances with our lives today. As it is often said, "People are people!". The story of Joseph may have happened in the time of the Egyptian Pharaohs and pyramids, but as we reflect on Joseph's life there is so much that is relevant to our lives today and much that the Bible can teach us and remind us about.

We've seen God's faithfulness. We've looked at the dangerous power of envy. We've seen faithfulness and strength in resisting temptation. We've seen how God is always with us and how God cares about our work and how he is sovereign even in a non-Christian world. We've also seen that God can still be at work in us and in the world around us. Even in prisons and in the most unexpected of situations. Then seeing God's plans coming to fruition miraculously in Joseph's life. We will then see the incredible story of forgiveness and the development of reconciliation and blessing for God's family.

At the end, Joseph then looks back. He is aware of the difficulties he has been through and yet he gives testimony to how God was at work. Joseph's own life turned out quite well in the end, but Joseph also points to God's greater plan. God has miraculously been working the background to save his people and provide for them.

My grandfather (Rev. John Noel Schofield, also a Baptist Minister), used to say, "The Christian life is like rowing a boat and having Jesus in the boat sitting in front of you. Jesus is telling you how to steer the boat as you move backwards. As you row the boat, you are looking at where you have been, but you have to trust Jesus as He can see where you are going". We need to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and trust God.

Romans 8v28: "In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Most importantly, we see that God has been at work throughout history to manifest his salvation purposes through Jesus. In the providence of God, Jesus is the eternal saviour of any who would turn to him and receive him. He loves us perfectly and he will always be with us. We fix our eyes on Him.

Blessings,

John

Penrallt Baptist Church, Holyhead Road, Bangor LL57 2EU

www.penrallt.org

Minister: Revd. John Thompson; 07931 150697; minister@penrallt.org

Secretary: Jan Ablett; 07703 188632; secretary@penrallt.org

Treasurer: Cathy Fooks; 07729 892303; treasurer@penrallt.org

Administrator: Magnus Forrester-Barker; 07934 231788; office@penrallt.org

(office hours: Mon – Fri, 10am – 4pm)

Morning Services

Sunday morning services start at 10:30am with an option to join on Zoom if you are unable to join us in the building (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 – 18); a crèche is also available for younger children. The children and young people stay in for all-age services; the crèche is still available. In the summer holidays we aim to keep services shorter and alternate between all-age services and ones where the children up to 11 go out for activities together part way through the service and the older ones stay in for the whole service, with a sermon series on people changed by Jesus.

Sunday 5th July

Joseph #5: Two Journeys towards reconciliation
In this service we will be saying goodbye to Grace O' Boyle and praying for her as she leaves Bangor YFC.

Preacher: John Thompson
Genesis 42-44 (excerpts)

Sunday 12th July

Joseph #6: Forgiveness and reconciliation

Preacher: John Thompson
Genesis 45

Sunday 19th July

Joseph #7: Recognising God — Reunited and Blessed
This service will include an infant dedication.

Preacher: John Thompson
Genesis 46

Sunday 28th July (11+ Communion Service)

A fisherman changed by Jesus (Peter)

Preacher: John Thompson

Service Videos

Recordings of sermons from morning services are generally available both on our [YouTube channel](#) and on our own [website](#). Please contact the church office if you would like a link to recordings of full services. We would ask you, please, to refrain from taking photos and videos during our services due to safeguarding concerns.

Fellowship Event

After our morning service on the first Sunday of the month, we usually have a walk together but in the summer we go to the beach instead (weather permitting). On 5th July we are making a second attempt to go to the beach at Rhosneigr, cancelled by rain in June. We will have a chance to sit, play, wander around and generally enjoy the sandy beach surroundings. Parking is free and it's a ten to fifteen min. walk from cars to the beach. We won't take the mini bus so if you are able to provide lifts please let Jenny (fellowship@penrallt.org) know.

Evening Services

Evening services usually start at 6pm and last around an hour; unlike our morning services, they are not normally broadcast on Zoom. There is no evening service on the first Sunday of the month. After Codi Mawl on 12th July (see below), we are taking a break from evening services over the summer and will restart in September.

Information in this newsletter is correct, as far as possible, at the time of publication. Please see our website (www.penrallt.org/news/) for revised newsletters and more up to date information, as details are subject to change.

Other Events in July

◇ Mission Prayer Meeting: Tuesday 30th June, 7:30pm on Zoom

Our mission group meet quarterly on Zoom to hear news updates about our mission partners around the world and to pray for them. The current meeting is not strictly in July but has been brought forward to avoid a clash with the Bangor YFC prayer meeting on the originally published date of Wednesday 1st July! Contact the church office if you would like connection details for the meeting.

◇ Bangor YFC prayer meeting: Wednesday 1st July, 7pm

We will be hosting a prayer meeting for Bangor Youth For Christ in the Twrgwyn Room at Penrallt (please use the side door to come in). This is a space for us to come together across churches, backgrounds, and generations to pray with one heart and one purpose: to see the lives of young people in Bangor transformed by the love of Jesus. All are welcome.

◇ Renew 57: Every Thursday, 10:30am–12:30pm

Renew 57 is a space for the whole community, on **Thursday mornings, 10:30am to 12:30pm in Canolfan Penrallt** (our rear hall/community centre), free of charge (including refreshments). Bring a hobby to share with someone else or simply sit and chat over a cup of tea or coffee and some toast. A separate prayer space is available for quiet reflection, with optional opportunities to be led in short gentle contemplative prayer at the beginning and end of the session. 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. To find out more, please speak to Simon (s.lambourne565@btinternet.com) or Magnus (renew@penrallt.org) or drop in and see for yourself.

◇ Cylch Penrallt Tots: Monday afternoons in term-time, 1pm

This is our group for pre-school children and their parents/carers, running during the school term on Monday afternoons from 1 to 2:30pm. £1 per adult (with up to 3 children). Toys, fun play and activities. Snack, tea and coffee. Songs for tots in English and Welsh. Come along for a good space to safely play, to have fun, and to enjoy some good company together. *Please note that the group will not be meeting on Monday 20th July, the last day of term.*

◇ Church Members' AGM: Wednesday 8th July, 7:30pm

The Annual General Meeting for church members will take place in the building and on Zoom on Monday 8th July. The papers will be circulated to members before the meeting.

If you are not a church member and would like to know more about membership, please speak to either John (minister@penrallt.org) or Jan (secretary@penrallt.org).

◇ **Soul Sisters: Saturday 11th July, 10:30am**

Soul Sisters is Penrallt's women's fellowship group, that meet once a month for a varied programme of activities to which all ladies are welcome. This month they are visiting the RSPB at Conwy (LL31 9XZ) where there are circular trails, bird hides, lagoons, etc. Entrance fee is £6, with plenty of parking and a café or picnic area. We are hoping to share cars and if anyone would like a lift please contact Averil (francishac3@aol.com). Bring your binoculars.

◇ **Messy Church: Sunday 12th July, 3–5pm**

This is a free family event where we will explore our theme through crafts, games, activities and a meal. This time we are looking at Noah, trusting God's promises and Jesus.

The activities are aimed at children aged between 3 and 11, but there is a crèche space for younger ones as well as games that teenagers will enjoy, so bring the whole family! **Please note: all under 18s will need to be supervised by an adult at all times for safeguarding reasons; similarly adults will only be admitted if accompanying children.** To help us with numbers, please register your children for the event at <https://penralltbc.churchsuite.com/events/rrleegli> or scan the QR code, which will take you to the same page.



◇ **Codi Mawl: Sunday 12th July, 7pm at Penrallt**

A bilingual (Welsh/English) service, hosted jointly by Caersalem (Caernarfon), Goleudy (Llangefni) and Penrallt. This time we are hosting. Refreshments will be served beforehand from 6:30pm and translation facilities are available for those who do not speak Welsh.

◇ **Baptist Leaders' Fellowship: Monday 13th July, 10:30am**

The next meeting of the BLF will take place at Prince's Drive Baptist Church, Colwyn Bay. Andy Glover will be leading, on the topic of "Rooted in the Word and Alive to the Spirit". Andy has been minister of Hoole Baptist Church, Chester, for over 25 years, and is on the leadership of Fresh Streams. The BLF is open to anyone in any leadership role within the church. Tea and coffee will be served before the meeting, from 10am.

◇ **Worship and Prophecy Evening: Thursday 16th July, 7:30pm**

John 10:27 — "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me."

A safe, healthy and scripturally sound space for listening to God and hearing from him for each other and for our church family. Spend some time worshipping in His presence together. Develop your prophetic spirituality and bless and encourage one another and the church as we tune into the voice of our Good Shepherd. This will take place in the chapel and is open to all within the Penrallt community. For more details, contact Abi Penney (07776 270399).

◇ **Funeral of Phil McKenna: Tuesday 21st July, 1:30pm at Bangor Crematorium**

We were saddened to hear of Phil's death last month following a long illness, and we continue to hold Eileen and the family in our prayers.

◇ Men's Breakfast: Saturday 25th July

Our men's fellowship group usually meet on the last Saturday of the month for food and friendship at Ian Ablett's home in Caernarfon between 9 and 11am. All men are welcome. Please contact Ian (ianablett57@gmail.com) or the church office for details, or to offer/request a lift.

Children's Birthdays in July

5th: Odhran Patton

16th: Juanita Wulengeme

Thanks

Judith Bousfield would like to thank everyone who supported her tea and cake event at Llanfaes last month. A total of £550 was raised for Save the Children.

Other Information

◇ 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. Note that he sometimes works from home or is out for meetings, so you are advised to check before travelling in to the church building.

◇ 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.

◇ Giving

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

◇ Hardship Fund

The church has a small fund to help people in need. If you find yourself in financial difficulty or know someone else who 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 Cathy Fooks (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 relationships with the Lord and with one another. There are groups on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and on Tuesday and Friday mornings, meeting weekly or fortnightly in person, online or as a combination of the two. We also have “contact, care & prayer” to enable people to stay connected even if not in a homegroup. A member of the pastoral care team (see below) would contact you every few weeks to ask how you are and if you’d like to receive prayer support. Please get in touch with the church office if you are not part of contact, care & prayer or a homegroup and would like to be.

◇ Mission Co-Ordinators

Owen Lloyd-Evans and Nia Evans are our Mission Co-ordinators and may be contacted by email on missions@penrallt.org for more information about our mission partners around the world. The [Focus](#) article at the back of the newsletter each month also shines a spotlight on one of our mission partners or some other mission-related activity.

◇ Pastoral Help

If you have concerns about your own or someone else’s welfare, please contact a member of the Pastoral Care Team: Ian Ablett (07759 718931); Jan Ablett (07703 188632); Magnus Forrester-Barker (07890 109645); Pat MacKenzie (07594 419979), Geoff Moore (01248 410582); Monica Morris (07827 472637), Abi Penney (07776 270399), John Thompson (07931 150697). Please pray for the PCT as well.

◇ Penrallt on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube

We have three Facebook groups — *Penrallt* (www.facebook.com/groups/2402772192) is a general group for information and social interaction; *Penrallt Prayer Point* (www.facebook.com/groups/302627593231755) is a private group to share prayer requests and encouragements; you can probably guess the target audience of *Penrallt Students* (www.facebook.com/groups/195300234272943)!

We also have a YouTube channel and a Facebook page (both called *Penrallt Baptist Church*):

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

◇ Prayer Resources

Send prayer requests, thanksgiving and testimonies to our weekly email prayer diary via office@penrallt.org — use this address, too, to subscribe to the prayer diary, which usually goes out on Mondays, or Tuesdays in the event of bank holidays. 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. *Please note that after 11th July the Saturday prayer will take a break for the summer holidays and will resume in September.*

◇ Prayer Team

We would love to pray for you and pray with you. We believe that God transforms people's lives. Praying for people and regularly asking God to fill them with the Holy Spirit is a key part of this for many people. We have a team available for personal prayer, wearing blue "Prayer Team" lanyards, at most services. This is often at the end of the service, sometimes during communion or at other times; if you would like prayer please find a member of the team at any time and they will be able to offer to pray with you in an appropriate space, often as a pair.

If you are a church member and would like to be on the prayer team please speak to John or Jan. Our Pastoral Care Team are able to offer a further level of support (see *Pastoral Help* above). Please don't hesitate to approach John or another member of the Pastoral Care Team.

◇ Students

We love to welcome students as part of our church family. For more information about activities for students, or just for a friendly chat, please feel free to drop us an email to students@penrallt.org. Also, don't miss our Penrallt Students Facebook group.

◇ Youth

Our mid-week youth group, *Youth.*, is run by Bangor YFC with volunteers from Penrallt, Mosaic and other churches. This runs on Thursday evenings at Penrallt during term-time, from 7pm to 8:45pm, and is open to all youth (11–18). It features games and activities, with a gentle presentation of Christian values and principles. Registration is required, and can be done at <https://tally.so/r/noqO4Z>.

Our Sunday morning youth group, *Deeper*, takes place during the morning service, with the young people (11–18) going out part way through the service to study the Bible and apply it to their lives.

For more information, email us at youth@penrallt.org.

Notices for Sunday Mornings

The notices in morning services are collated by Magnus in the church office, so if you would like a notice included please send it by email to office@penrallt.org by no later than noon on the Friday. All notices are included at the discretion of the duty deacon who presents them at the start of the service.

Notices for the Monthly Newsletter

The deadline for next month's newsletter is Wednesday 22nd July. Please send information to Magnus at the church office. All items should be submitted in writing, preferably by email, as early as possible.

News Mailing List

Sign up to receive email notification (and a PDF link) when the newsletter is published each month, as well as other news updates from time to time. To join or leave the list please send an email to office@penrallt.org.

Focus on...

Peter and Rachel Calvert

Serving with Perspectives and A Rocha in France

Dear friends at Penrallt,

This time last year, we were preparing to move house ; feeling a little nostalgic about leaving Blois, Romorantin and the people we had come to love.

We have so many reasons to thank God for the way he has led and provided for us in our new place of ministry, Le Blanc Mesnil, just outside Paris. Peter is very much enjoying the challenges and responsibilities of leading a multicultural church in a lively suburb; training up younger leaders, supporting more mature initiatives, building relationships with other local churches.

This year has been very much about listening, observing, getting to know people and prayerfully seeking to understand our context. The next challenge is to help the church to develop a more active presence within the town, to discern how we can better serve our neighbours and testify to the hope we have in Christ.

Peter will be directing a youth camp (Interaction B) in August, and would appreciate prayers for that.

For Rachel too, this year has been a time of growth and challenge as she has been filling in for the national director of A Rocha France, who was on sabbatical. He is now back at work, and we are in a process of discernment around future rôles. Rachel would like to be able to pass on the baton as chair of the board at the end of 2027; which means identifying a future potential chair. Your prayers would be appreciated for this. For those of you who aren't familiar with A Rocha, we are a Christian organisation engaged in caring for God's creation, particularly through nature conservation, education and theological reflection alongside churches.

Thank you to all at Penrallt for your support and your prayers!

Peter and Rachel