



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter for March 2013

"You see, Peter," said the angel, as I listened dubiously, "we've decided to go on the marketing offensive and embed a few ministers in popular TV programmes. We've put you into QI!" And before I had time to squeak a protest I found myself on the panel of the comedy quiz show. In all honesty, I think the celestial spin doctors could do better than this. The Almighty has suffered millennia of complaints, scorn, disbelief and satire without ever having recourse to sinking to the level of his detractors. The sun rises on the unrighteous every day and they begin their dawn chorus of defamation of the one who gave them life in the first place. He must be used to it by now. But sometimes QI annoys me so I didn't mind a bit of pay-back time on air. Although, reflecting afterwards, I probably wasn't the best person to put there.

It was all going quietly. I was demurely keeping my counsel, offering the odd slightly humorous interjection, answering nothing, and smiling vaguely through the usual barrage of smutty jokes from the panel. Then came the depressingly typical moment when annoying atheist-in-chief Stephen Fry showed a video clip of some ugly predator that captures and devours its prey with vivid cruelty. It's always a lower animal which devours something of a higher order – a larvae chomping on a frog, a fungus dissolving a live ant. You know the kind of thing. And then the complaint (there is nothing worse than an atheist who only seems to have one argument.)

"You see!" exclaimed Fry, "*All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.* How can you believe in a creator who puts such obscene beasts on the planet??"

"Excuse me," I interrupted, "that's hardly a fair quotation is it? *All things bright and beautiful* was written as a children's song, and there's things we don't talk to children about in graphic detail. You don't see CBBC airing *Peppa Pig*, *Flying a Kite*, followed by the announcer with a smiley smiley voice saying 'and next is *How to Butcher Your Own Little Piggy and Turn its Entrails into Sausages.*'"

The audience laughed and applauded while Stephen Fry held up his hands in surrender and acknowledged that we do tend to tell children about the brighter side of life. But I was in full flow.

"And you're not consistent either. You're a bon-vivant who loves beauty, whether it be in the arts or in nature. You step outside into the fresh air of a verdant British countryside, breathe deeply and utter a sigh of satisfaction. You don't head for the nearest field, throw yourself head first into a cow pat and come up complaining that life stinks. At least not until someone mentions God and then you suggest the whole universe stinks."

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Secretary: Neil Rymer, 20 Brynteg, Llandegfan, Menai Bridge LL59 5TY (01248 713003)

Treasurer: Stephen Burrows, 39 Cil y Graig, Llanfairpwll, LL61 5NZ (01248 714048)

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"Now you're not being reasonable . . ." began Fry, and no, I wasn't being fair but this was pay-back time and I wasn't stopping. "Here's the thing. All those clips of ugly little creatures which feed on more sentient ones are just an unattractive line up of creatures you wouldn't allow into your world if you were God. But God is a lot more tolerant than you."

"I wouldn't let those things near my world!" announced the atheist-in-chief.

"Of course not, because your world isn't a real one." I replied. "It looks more like a model railway layout with God substituted by a middle-aged, middle-class bloke with a paint brush and half a ton of papier mache. Real worlds are dangerous places. And in the end, here's another thing: which humans would you let into your world? I'm sure your friend Alan Davies here would have place of honour as archangel in your scenes of celestial tranquility, but would I make the cut? Would you let troublesome vicars into your world? Once again, I'm sure God is more tolerant than you, so if given a choice between your world of ethereal perfection and God's messy universe, I'll choose to live in his, not yours."

And as some of the audience clapped, and the rest laughed, the producer's voice sounded in our ears.

"Ok, guys. Let's move on."

I wasn't invited back.

God bless,
Peter

SERVICES IN MARCH

March 3

10.30am ***The Human Condition: As Lost as a Sheep in a Bog in a Fog*** *1 Peter 2:24-25*

2.15pm Service at Bontnewydd

6.00pm Communion Service ***A love story with a bitter twist***
Genesis 29:1-30

March 10 Mothering Sunday

10.30am ***Marriage Matters*** *1 Peter 3:1-7*

6.00pm Roger Borlace: ***Motherhood (and Fatherhood)*** *Genesis 29:31-30:24*

March 17

10.30am Speaker: Simeon Baker

6.00pm ***Portrait of a Lost Soul and Portrait of a Soul Being Saved; Laban v. Jacob***
Genesis 30:25-43

March 24

10.30am Roger Borlace: ***Being nice to one another*** *1 Peter 3:8-12*

6.00pm ***On The Journey of Faith: When You're Staring into the Abyss***
Genesis 31:1-56

March 31 Easter Sunday

10.30am Family Communion Service.

6.00pm ***Jesus is risen.***

WEEKDAYS

Please check with the contact people when there are meetings this month.

HG = Home Group

Day	Time	Details	Contacts
Tue	8.00pm	HG, Nilgiri	Joan Beer (353874)
Tue	7.30pm	HG, Tyddyn Isaf, Menai Bridge	Magnus Forrester-Barker (717570)
Wed	10.30am	Men's Prayer Meeting	Peter Cousins (353878)
Wed	2.00pm	Carers' Home Group	Carol Morris (208407)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, The Nomads	Jess & Seamus Adams (421185) Susan Cousins (353878)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, Bethesda	Jon & Deb Stammers (602868)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, Penchwintan Road	David McCormack (07725 028074)
Wed	8.00pm	HG, Grŵp Cymraeg	Owen & Nia Lloyd Evans (352634)
Thu	10.30am	Post-Alpha Bible Study	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Thu	7.30pm	HG, Llanfairpwll	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Fri	10.30am - noon	Cheeky Monkeys	Joan Rymer (713003)
Fri	10.30 – 12.30pm	HG, 6 Maes y Dref	Anne Collis (353173) anne@collis66.freeseve.co.uk
Sat	8.30am	Prayer Meeting	

NEWS OF PEOPLE

Will and Betsan will be celebrating 60 years of Marriage on March 7th. Congratulations to you both.

After living in the same house on the Coed Mawr Estate for 49 years **Andrew and Jean Browne** will be moving to retirement accommodation in Lincoln to be close to their daughter Marilyn and the rest of the family. We will miss them both terribly and wish them God's richest blessing in their new home.

Joyce is home and recovering well from her surgery. **Marion** has been unwell and missing from church lately.

We are sad to report the death of **Pat Statham** on February 20th, and our condolences go to her family. Our condolences also go to **Janet Gough** and her family on the death of her father on February 13th, but we rejoice with her on the birth of her nephew, born on February 12th.

Congratulations to **Andy Wilson** on his engagement to Flora. The wedding is being set for late September or early October.

Children's Birthdays in March:

8th: Molly Wheatcroft; **12th**: Nicola Wheatcroft; **14th**: Ted Goodwin

NOTICEBOARD

- **Women's World Day of Prayer** **Friday 1 March** **2.00pm**
This year the service will be held at the church of Our Lady and St. James. Also, please note that there is a vacancy coming up for a representative for the English-speaking churches in Wales on the National Committee of the WWDP. It involves attending mid-week meetings in London several times a year. If you are interested in knowing more, Mrs. Mary Williams of St. John's Methodist Church is retiring from this post and can answer your questions (01248 353140).
- **Men's Prayer Meeting** **Wednesday 6 March** **10.30am**
The men will meet for prayer as usual, followed by coffee in Options.
- **Post-Alpha Group** This continues on Tuesdays at 7.00pm.
- **Fairtrade Fortnight 2103** **Saturday 9 March** **10.30 – 12.00**
Coffee Morning in the Canolfan. Fairtrade Cakes, Pancakes, Traidcraft, Real Easter Eggs and an end of season 'Created' sale stall.
Did you know that 50% of the world's hungry are farmers who are unable to earn a living from the crops they grow. They supply us with luxuries like cocoa, coffee, bananas and sugar and the majority do not get a fair price for their produce. Please come and support this event and see Mari Kelso (marikelso@yahoo.co.uk, 421783) or Sue Moss (smmoss@btinternet.com) if you would like to help. Profit from the morning will go the Fairtrade Foundation (fairtrade.org.uk).
- **Bible Unzipped.** **Saturday 9 March** **9:30am - 1pm**
Bible Unzipped continues monthly on a Saturday morning at Rhos-on-Sea URC. The themes for this term are: The Book of Hebrews and the Old Testament, Mission in the 21st Century and the book of Romans.
The course is free, and if you talk to Peter we can probably arrange a lift for you.
- **Bangor New Music Festival concert** **Monday 11 March** **7.30pm**
Castles, Poetry and Music. The percussionist Dewi Ellis Jones will join forces with Welsh Children's Laureate Eurig Salisbury in a programme which includes compositions and poetry by pupils from Llanberis and Caernarfon. Tickets £10, concessions £7, parent/student £5, under-18 £3.
- **Walking Group** **Tuesday 19 March** **10.30am**
From Moelfre a pleasant circular walk following the coastal path and country lanes (approx. 5 miles). Leave the A5025 at the roundabout at Llanallgo north of Benllech. After passing a couple of shops turn left and then left again into the car park. Any queries, please contact the Hebblethwaites on 01248 490581 or email paul.hebblethwaite@virgin.net
- **Course: Mindfulness from a Christian Perspective** **12 & 19 March**
A recent development in CBT has been the so called 'Third Wave' of therapies which include mindfulness, acceptance and commitment theory. These are based less on the controlling of our thoughts and emotions but more on the acceptance of how they are, and changing how we react to them. This acceptance of our

thoughts and emotions can be perceived as incompatible with the Christian faith and in these workshops we will take a critical look at how Christians can apply mindfulness in their lives. The biblical basis for this practice will also be examined and discussed. The workshop will include some practical meditations and discussion on how these can be integrated into our Christian lives. The practices will include some movement and sitting so comfortable loose clothing would be practical. In the final session other relaxation methods will be taught.

- **Men's Curry Evening** **Saturday 16 March 7.30pm**
The men will be holding one of their curry evenings on Saturday March 16th in the Canolfan. Simeon Baker will be the speaker, and the music will be provided by the brilliant young guitarist Matt Dawson. Price of the tickets is £6 (available from Magnus). Please bring a bottle of non-alcoholic drink.
- **Reminder: Parking next to the Church**
We rent six spaces in the car park next to the church and you are free to use them at any time. They are clearly marked "Penrallt" but if full please do not park in the other spaces which are rented by various other non-church people. On Sunday mornings our spaces are reserved for those with mobility difficulties so would everyone else please park in the Nursing School Car Park on Sunday mornings. You can park in Morrisons on Sunday evenings.
- **Penrallt on Facebook**
100 people are signed up to Penrallt's Facebook site. Join us.
- **Homeless in Bangor**
Please do not give money directly to the homeless in Upper Bangor. We have found in the past that it has encouraged aggressive begging on the church premises by people who have a history of violence. You will find brown envelopes in the porch to put your gift in. This will buy vouchers which are distributed by the Cathedral to the homeless.
- **The Prayer Room...**
...is open before and after the service for quiet prayer. Penrallt is a place of prayer, so make use of this sacred space.
- **Pray for Penrallt Every Day**
Sign up to receive our prayer diary by e-mail every Monday morning by sending your request to: office@penrallt.org.
If you have some subject for prayer, either send it in by e-mail, or fill in one of the pink cards, which are available in the porch, and place it in the visitors' cards box or give it to Peter or Magnus.
- **Pastoral Help**
If you have pastoral concerns please contact Peter or one of the other members of the Pastoral Care team.
Pat Borlace 713146, Judy Stammers 364394 Geoff Moore 410582
Susan Cousins 353878 Helen Thomas 600174

Deadline for next month's newsletter Sunday 24 March

Please send information to Gwyneth (gwyneth@brindley-wales.com or 352682)