



Newsletter: October 2026

Our lead article this month is written by Magnus, our Church administrator (and a church member).

A matter of perspective

This month I shall be celebrating what is euphemistically known in Penrallt as a “significant birthday”. Viewed from one perspective, I will (as usual) just be one day older than I was the previous day. From another perspective, I will achieve the somewhat less quotidian milestone of completing my first half century. I came to Bangor, just over half my lifetime ago, as a postgraduate student of mathematics. This entailed drinking copious amounts of coffee and thinking quite a lot about infinity (closely related to eternity!). As a result, I am well equipped to take consolation that, when compared with infinity, a number like 50 is actually quite small!

Our morning sermons this month will mostly continue the series we started in September, exploring Paul’s letter to the Colossians. Recently I have been reflecting that a real key to understanding Paul’s mindset lies in another of his letters, when he wrote to the Philippians that to him “*to live is Christ, and to die is gain*” (Phil. 1:21; NIV).

Paul recognised that nothing could compare to knowing Christ and that meeting Jesus face to face would be the pinnacle of his whole (eternal) existence. As a result, he could well write that “*whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ... I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ*” (Phil. 3:7; NIV — NB the word Paul uses in Greek is somewhat stronger than garbage!). He would whole-heartedly agree with the 20th Century American missionary / martyr Jim Elliott, who wrote in his journal (possibly paraphrasing Matthew Henry, the famous 17th Century Bible commentator*) that “He is no fool who gives away what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose”.

This is an excellent attitude to adopt, but of course we also do well to remember the other half of Paul’s statement, that “*to live is Christ*”. We can look forward to seeing our Lord face to face, but while we wait for that glorious day there is plenty to do as we seek to “*live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God...*” (Colossians 1:9; NIV).

Blessings,

Magnus

* I learned Elliott’s quote when I was a student but recently discovered that there is an almost identical phrase in Henry’s writing. It’s possible, though by no means certain, that Elliott was directly or indirectly quoting Henry (who in turn was quoting his own father). See <https://sharperiron.org/article/jim-elliott-was-not-first-to-say-it> for more about this.

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.

Sunday 4th October

All-age harvest service (see below)

Preacher: John Thompson

Sunday 11th October

Christ in you the hope of glory

Preacher: John Thompson

Colossians 1:24–2:7

Sunday 18th October

Alive in Christ and in Him alone

Preacher: Lesley Jackson

Colossians 2:8–23

Sunday 25th October (Communion)

Live the way of Christ

Preacher: John Thompson

Colossians 3:1–4:1

Harvest Service

As noted above, the morning service on 4th October will be an all-age harvest service. This will include a display of non-perishable food items that will later be given to the local foodbanks. If you would like to contribute items to this display, please bring them to Renew 57 on Thursday morning 1st October or bring them to the service itself.

The offering for this service will be donated to the BMS harvest appeal.

There will be a **Bring and Share Lunch** after the service, and we extend a warm welcome to visiting students and other visitors. Please bring enough food for yourselves, plus something to share with our visitors.

To help us serve food safely and cater for everyone:

- **Please don't bring meat or fish dishes** — the church lunch team will provide some cold meat and fish.
- Please prepare food hygienically at home and transport anything that needs to be kept cold in a **cool bag or suitable insulated container**.
- Cakes and desserts are very welcome! If using eggs, please make sure they are **fully cooked** and avoid dishes containing raw or partially cooked eggs.
- Please let us know what is in your dish, particularly any **allergens**, so that people can make an informed choice about what they eat.
- Vegetarian and vegan dishes are especially welcome as we would like to have a good variety of food for everyone.

Most importantly, bring something you enjoy sharing; we hope to have a lovely variety of food around the table! We're looking forward to celebrating Harvest and sharing fellowship and hospitality together.

If you're able to be part of the church lunch team, that'd be great — please speak to Perpetua (nkesach@yahoo.com).

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.*

Evening Services

After our summer break, evening services resume in September. We will now be holding one regular evening service each month, a communion service on the second Sunday of the month at 6pm. There will sometimes be additional services, but none are scheduled this month.

Sunday 11th October (Communion)
Christian living making good life decisions

Preacher: John Thompson

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 October

♦ 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.

♦ Francis 800 Programme: Saturday 3rd / Sunday 4th October

We are invited to join in a weekend of events to mark the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi. On Saturday there will be a quiet day in Bangor Cathedral from 11am to 4pm with live streaming; this will be followed at 5pm by evensong including the premiere performance of *Mab a'n Rhodded*, written by local composer Gareth Glyn and sung by the Bangor-based Kana choir. On Sunday there will be a mini-pilgrimage and lunch at Llanfaes, the location of the first Franciscan friary in Wales. Please contact the church office if you would like further details.

♦ **Cylch Penrallt Tots: Wednesdays, 9:30–11am**

This is our group for pre-school children and their parents/carers, running during the school term on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 11am, with access from 9:15am. £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. *Note that the group won't meet on 28th October, in half-term.*

♦ **Bangor YFC prayer meeting: Wednesday 7th October, 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.

♦ **Mission Prayer Meeting: Thursday 8th October, 7:30pm**

Our mission group meet quarterly on Zoom to hear news updates about our mission partners around the world and to pray for them. Contact the church office if you would like connection details for the meeting.

♦ **Pathways: Saturday 17th October (and 7th November)**

Penrallt is hosting the North Wales hub of the Pathways training course run by Cardiff Baptist College. It is divided into modules each split across two sessions. The October session will be the first in a two-part module on *Pathways into Baptist Identity*. The second half of this module will be on 7th November. It is necessary to book in advance (and pay) to attend these sessions, which can be attended on a 'per module' basis. For more information or details of how to register with the College, contact John Thompson (07931 150697).

♦ **Soul Sisters: Saturday 24th October, 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 meeting at Canolfan Penrallt (our rear hall) from 10:30 until noon. One of their members, Lesley Evans, is kindly giving a presentation on her research on slavery in Port Penrhyn. For more information, please contact Averil (francishac3@aol.com/01248 421744).

♦ **Men's Breakfast: Saturday 31st October**

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.

♦ Light Party: Saturday 31st October, 4:30–6pm

Penrallt's alternative to Halloween parties is a free family event with activities for those in primary or secondary school (accompanied by a responsible adult), including pumpkin carving (for over 11s), other crafts, games and food. Invite your friends and their families too. This year's theme is *Shine like stars in space*. There will be a prize for the person best dressed in a star theme or space theme (no halloween costumes please).

We would ask you to book places for your children as soon as possible, as this helps us to know numbers for catering purposes. To book, please scan the QR code or click the link to visit our booking page: <https://penralltbc.churchsuite.com/events/mqvmzcm3>



If you would like more information about the Light Party, or would like to offer to help, please contact Wendy Lemon (wendylemon@icloud.com).

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 Social Media

Announcements about Penrallt events, and other things that may be of interest to our congregation, can be found on our Facebook page, *Penrallt Baptist Church* (www.facebook.com/penralltbc). We also have Facebook groups:

- *Penrallt* (www.facebook.com/groups/2402772192) — a general group for information and social interaction;
- *Penrallt Prayer Point* (www.facebook.com/groups/302627593231755) — a private group to share prayer requests and encouragements.

Our YouTube channel, containing videos of sermons from our morning services, is also called *Penrallt Baptist Church* (www.youtube.com/@penralltbaptistchurch).

♦ 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 12pm** and on **Saturdays at 8:30am**; please contact the church office if you need the connection details for either meeting.

♦ 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

♦ 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 or the Monthly Newsletter

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.

The deadline for next month's newsletter is Wednesday 21st October. 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...

Bangor Street Pastors



Bangor Street Pastors are part of a worldwide network of Street Pastor Initiatives, all operating under the banner of the Ascension Trust, that seek to demonstrate God's love to our communities in practical ways by **listening, caring and helping**. Typically, street pastors have operated within the "night time economy", working alongside police, door staff and others to help people to stay safe while they are out and to get home safely. Here in Bangor, we used to go out on Friday nights, more or less every week, from about 10pm to 4am and we would tend to be busiest towards the end of the patrol, with a mixture of conversations and more practical help such as giving first aid or flip-flops, assisting somebody to find a taxi or walking them home.

Following a roughly two year break due to Covid, we returned to the streets to find that things on the whole tend to be a lot quieter, with fewer people out and about in the early hours of the morning and much less for us to do after midnight. Also, the individual street pastors are all somewhat older than we used to be and some were beginning to struggle with being out so late and for so long, not to mention that several members have retired from the team, leaving a current total of 8 active street pastors and two in training. Therefore, we now go out earlier in the evening (generally from 8pm to midnight), and usually only once or twice per month. We're still dedicated to listening, caring and helping but the balance has shifted so we now tend to help, and demonstrate our care and God's love, mostly by listening.

As well as the evening patrols, we have recently started working in Bangor Cathedral on Friday lunchtimes, between 12 and 2pm. This too is largely a matter of talking with people and especially listening to them. It has provided a good opportunity for one or two of our former team members, who had stepped down from doing evening patrols due to the physical demands of the work, to rejoin us, and we have two more recruits about to start training so that they can join us in the Cathedral. So far we've managed to field a team every week and we look forward to seeing how this work develops.

Our situation in Bangor is far from unique. More or less all SP groups around the UK are having to adapt to working with more limited resources (especially in terms of volunteers) and in quite a different social climate. Please pray that we would be inspired to find effective ways of continuing to share the Good News and that others would be inspired to join us.

On recent patrols we have met several people who remember us helping them 10 or more years ago. It's encouraging to see that our work has a longer-term impact than we often realise!

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)