



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: August 2021

Your spiritual DNA and your discipleship DNA

Jesus said in Luke 8v21:

"My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice."

In a recent sermon, I was reflecting on how our spiritual DNA and discipleship DNA is fundamentally different to our genetic DNA.

You are born with your genetic DNA. This will determine your appearance and some of your mannerisms. We often see this when we meet someone else's family members for the first time. We will perhaps say, 'you look like your mum' or 'you smile like your dad'! Your genetics will also affect your temperament and demeanour to some degree and it may even contribute some of your default behaviours. But Jesus says that our genetic DNA does not define our primary identity or our future disposition.

Our spiritual DNA, our identity in God, is not something which is determined by our genetics – nor is it determined by who our parents grew into either. When we become Christians, we are adopted into the family of God (Eph 1v5). That is a wonderful gift of God to us.

Here in Luke's gospel, Jesus says that we can all obtain the identity of a mother or brother of Jesus by hearing God's word and putting it into practice. We can be part of God's family. This means that we can know family intimacy with God himself. That family intimacy will also hopefully be attained to some degree within the family of God too, within the church. Being part of God's family also means we can have a deep family trust with God himself. Again, we would also hope to reflect some of that family trust within the family of God too, within the church.

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As we grow in faith, we hopefully grow in our resemblance of Jesus. This is expressed through our own personalities. We hope to display the family likeness of Jesus. Perhaps we can think of this as developing our spiritual DNA so that it becomes a discipleship DNA: Jesus being seen in and through us.

We are reflecting on how we grow as disciples. How we love, trust and follow Jesus. The goal is to become more like him. To point to his love, to draw others to his love and to lead others to him. For them to discover salvation and for them to go on their discipleship journey too. And all for the glory of God.

Blessings,

John

Please note that John will be away until Monday 9th August.

Children's Birthdays in August

26th: Reuben Tough

28th: Rees Allen

Not quite an August birthday, but Gwion Arthur Llewelyn Wright was born on 28th July 2021. We offer our congratulations to his parents, Ffion and Ryan, and welcome Gwion to the Penrallt family.

Church Office

The church administrator, Magnus, can be contacted on office@penrallt.org or 07934 231788 during the church office opening hours (10am – 3pm Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays). *NB Magnus is still working mostly from home at the moment, but the office hours still apply.*

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 22nd August

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

Services This Month

Our first two services in August will be in our now well-established pre-recorded format. The service pages can be followed at any time once they are up, but we recommend starting them at 10:30am on Sunday, then joining us for a chat on Zoom at 11:30am.

From 15th August we hope to hold all of our services in a hybrid format until further notice, with a small congregation in the building and others joining us on Zoom. For now it remains necessary to book a place if you want to attend in the building (booking links will be found on our website and emailed to the news mailing list). The services start at 10:30am on Sunday mornings except where otherwise noted. Children's activity packs should now be available each Sunday for those attending the service in the church building. Barring technical glitches, recordings will be available later on YouTube but we encourage you to join us on the day if you can.

Links to upcoming services, along with further information, can be found on our website (www.penrallt.org/services); there you will also find the pages for past services including recordings, where available, of live services.

Sunday 1st August (webpage)

What has God done for you? (Luke 8:23–39). Preacher: Lesley Jackson.

Sunday 8th August (webpage)

They laughed at him (Luke 8:40–56). Preacher: Peter Cousins.

Sunday 15th August (live)

Jesus sends out his disciples and the response of Herod (Luke 9:1–9).
Preacher: John Thompson

Sunday 22nd August (live)

Jesus feeds 5,000 (Luke 9:10–17). Preacher: John Thompson.
Join us for the dedication of Leo Crook.

Sunday 29th August (All-Age Communion Service) (live)

Back To School With God. Service led by Becca Williams, Wendy Lemon and John Thompson. Communion will be served in a covid-safe manner to those in the building; those on Zoom will need bread and wine (or equivalent) to fully take part.

Note that all this month's sermons apart from 29th August are part of our ongoing series, [Love, Trust and Follow Jesus](#). Previous sermons in the series can be found on our website.

◇ **Building**

You must book a place if you wish to attend a service or event in our building. Booking links will be found on our website and will be emailed to the news mailing list (please contact office@penrallt.org if you wish to join this). If you need to enter the church building for any other purpose, please contact the church office beforehand to obtain permission and arrange access.

◇ **Church Picnic and Walk**

We will meet in Llanfairfechan at **1pm on Sunday 1st August** for a socially distanced picnic and a short walk along the promenade. All are welcome but booking a (free) ticket is essential. More details on the booking page:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/penrallt-family-fellowship-picnic-and-walk-in-llanfairfechan-tickets-165181846349>

NB as our regular church family events are usually on the first Sunday afternoon of the month, we recommend checking our website or the [Penrallt Baptist Church Facebook page](#) in order to get the information before the newsletter arrives!

◇ **Children's Work**

Sunday school for 5–11s meets online on Tuesdays at 6pm via Zoom, but is taking a break in August and will restart in September.

◇ **Foodbank**

Bangor Cathedral Foodbank is open 2 – 3pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, operating from Tŷ Deiniol (the Diocesan Centre) next to Bangor Cathedral. A referral from another service is normally required to access the foodbank but they are able to give people up to two emergency food parcels without a referral. To find out more about how you can access or contribute to the foodbank please visit www.bangorfoodbank.org

◇ **Giving**

We quite understand that financial difficulties may impact your ability to give to the work of the church at this time. Please do not place yourself under additional financial strain. However, if you normally give to the weekly cash offering and would like to explore other ways of giving to the work at Penrallt, please speak to Averil, our Treasurer, who will be able to advise (treasurer@penrallt.org).

◇ **Hardship Fund**

The church has a small fund overseen by the minister 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. And 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. The groups currently meet on Zoom and other online platforms on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on Tuesday and Friday mornings (most groups meet weekly). Contact the church office to find out more or be put in touch with a group. Note that some groups will be taking a break or running a reduced programme over the summer holiday period.

There are contact, care and prayer groups to enable people to stay connected and receive prayer support even if they are not in a homegroup; these groups do not meet together but each one has a designated person to contact the other group members regularly. Once again, please contact the church office if you are not part of a contact, care & prayer group or a homegroup and would like to be.

◇ **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 (01407 840439), John Thompson (07931 150697).

◇ **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/302627593231755)
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)

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

- www.facebook.com/penralltbc
- www.youtube.com/channel/UCwK0_IPqAVqGKwQREg6JhHg

On our YouTube channel you will find videos of most of the live services we have held in the past few months (a few are missing due to technical issues) as well as sermons, Bible readings and occasionally other videos from our online services. If you missed [Becca's induction service](#) in July you will now find that on our channel, complete with the talk from Phil Davies for which the video didn't work in the service itself.

◇ **Praise at the Pier**

We will be joining together with the other churches of Cytûn for an afternoon of praise at Bangor Pier on Sunday 22nd August, starting at 3pm. Welsh Government covid restrictions will apply. Bring a chair or blanket to sit on the grass.

◇ **Prayer Resources**

Send prayer requests, thanksgivings and testimonies to our email prayer diary via office@penrallt.org – email this address, too, to subscribe to the prayer diary, which goes out every week (usually on Mondays). We also have a Facebook prayer group (see above) which allows more interactive sharing of prayer requests and updates, and prayer meetings via Zoom on **Wednesdays at 11:30am** (note that this is a new start time, half an hour earlier than before) and **Saturdays at 8:30am**; please contact the church office if you need the connection details for either meeting (which are also posted in the prayer diary every week). Both these meetings should continue running throughout the summer holiday season.

The Baptist Union have resources for prayer and reflection at www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/338269/Prayer_and_reflections.aspx and at www.nwba.org.uk/ with encouraging articles and stories, prayer broadcasts and reflections.

◇ **Youth Events**

Our youth activities usually take place on Thursdays at 7pm. They are taking a break during August but watch out for details of the exciting events coming up in the autumn. Our youth worker, Becca (youth@penrallt.org), is available to contact over the summer.



A scout camp somewhere in France, which Peter Calvert was helping to lead (see the Focus article on the next page).

Focus on...

Peter & Rachel Calvert **Serving with France Mission**



Pete & Rachel have been working as church planters in France for the past 16 years. For 10 years they were in Saint-Étienne, in the south of France. They moved to Blois, in the Loire Valley (central France), 6 years ago. The time is now coming to move on again, as their denominational leaders feel the time has come for them to wind down the work in Blois and move elsewhere. They expect to have moved by next summer though they don't yet know where (other than probably still in France), and they will quite possibly go into a pastorate rather than another church-planting project.

It is with some sadness that they prepare to leave. The church plant has never really got off the ground numerically and they have seen few people turning to Christ, but they had wanted to give it a few more years. It is also hard for their daughters, Anna, Sophie and Inès, who are very happy in their schools and friendship groups in Blois.

Their church is in the centre of Blois and they have been working closely with another evangelical church in the north of the town, which has been established for around 30 years. Blois North church has recently taken on a new pastor and the two churches will gradually merge their activities from the autumn, so the work there won't entirely come to an end. We can also trust that seeds have been sown in the last 6 years which God will cause to bear fruit according to his perfect timing, even if we have not yet seen the fruit for ourselves (and perhaps never will).

At the moment things are still busy. In July Pete was helping to lead a scout camp, which Sophie and Inès also attended (described as "good Bible times and lots of fun together despite Glastonbury-like mud at times!"), while Anna had her first experience as an assistant leader at the A Rocha eco-adventure camp with Rachel. After a very short break back at home, Anna headed off to her own scout camp while the others went on to the Interaction 1 Camp, for which Pete is the Camp Director and Rachel heads up the kitchen and cleaning team. This is a Christian camp for 10 – 13 year olds that takes place in a forest about 2 hours northwest of Blois (and yes, there is also an Interaction 2 Camp, which is for 14 – 18 year olds and takes place a week or so later.)



Also in July was the baptism of Eloi, a young man who came to faith through the witness of a friend following a dramatic car accident. Pete helped to lead the service.

Please continue to pray for the Calverts, both for the energy they need to get through another hectic summer and for the wisdom, peace and grace they need to end things well in Blois and move on to whatever the Lord has in store for them next.