



# Penrallt Baptist Church

**Newsletter: January 2021**

## ***A Living Hope in the midst of difficult and uncertain times***

We are once again in the midst of turmoil with the pandemic. For many it has been a very difficult Christmas, for others it has been lovely to meet with a handful of extra people over Christmas. However we have spent Christmas, we are all concerned about the health of Britain – and of Wales in particular as we start this new year. Our hope for positive outcomes this next year is up and down. As the vaccines start to be deployed we are hopeful that there might be a lift in the prospects of all – particularly the most vulnerable. Yet we also hear of rising levels of coronavirus and worrying new strains. We pray that God would help us to deploy these vaccines. We pray that God would prevent further mutations of the virus and that God would enable us to overcome it as a country, as a continent and as a world together. We pray that we would be able to provide adequate medical care and care for the mental health of the vulnerable people in our nation and in other nations too.

But most of all, in the midst of this, our hope in God remains constant. God has already rescued us from sin and evil and death. We have an eternal hope irrespective of disease, illness or any circumstances. This hope can never be changed, because it has been pre-ordained, and procured by God. This is a living hope.

1 Peter 1v3: "In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup> In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. <sup>7</sup> These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith – of

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greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

Our hope is in Jesus. Jesus is living. So, we have a living hope. And nothing can change that.

We hence commit ourselves to God once again. We choose to follow him once again at the beginning of a new year. We choose to put God first in our lives. We believe that irrespective of our circumstances, God loves us and we can trust him with our souls, with our hearts and with all of our lives.

Blessings,

*John*

### **Church Office**

The church administrator, Magnus, can be contacted on [office@penrallt.org](mailto:office@penrallt.org) or 07934 231788 during the church office opening hours (10am – 3pm Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays; **the office will be closed on Tuesdays in January, February and March**). *NB Magnus is working from home at the moment but office hours still apply.*

### **Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January**

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

### **What's in a name?**

Here's a little bit extra that didn't fit into our Focus article this month (see final page).

If you've ever been to New Park Street English Baptist Chapel, Holyhead, you may have noticed that it isn't actually on New Park Street (it's on Newry Street). Furthermore, there isn't even a New Park Street in Holyhead.

There is a Park Street (and an Upper Park Street and Lower Park Street). Was the church formerly located there before moving to new premises, much as Penrallt took our name when we moved from Penrallt Isaf to Holyhead Road?

Good guess, but no! It is actually named after New Park Street Chapel in London, where renowned preacher C. H. Spurgeon was the pastor (before they moved to bigger premises and became the Metropolitan Tabernacle) and is so named in honour of the fact that Spurgeon himself laid the foundation stone for the chapel building in Holyhead in 1860.

## ***Services This Month***

All our services remain online for the moment. All are open to everyone, including students. Please feel free to browse the online services — the service pages are available at any time once they are up (usually by the day before the given date), but we recommended starting them at 10:30 on Sunday mornings, which should let you finish just in time to join us on Zoom for a chat straight afterwards at 11:30am (visitors are welcome and you can join without a camera if you prefer). More details and links will be found on our website: [www.penrallt.org](http://www.penrallt.org).

### **3<sup>rd</sup> January:**

*Trusting God and covenanting with God in difficult and uncertain times.*  
Nehemiah 9. Preacher: John Thompson.

### **10<sup>th</sup> January:**

*Hope requires the long view.*  
Romans 5:1–8. Preacher: Peter Cousins.

### **17<sup>th</sup> January:**

*Who hath believed our report?*  
Isaiah 53. Preacher: Donald Poirot.

Also on 17<sup>th</sup> January: Café Church (6:30 – 7:30pm). An interactive informal service on Zoom with a brief reflection, discussion in smaller breakout groups and live music. Particularly popular with students and young people.

### **24<sup>th</sup> January:**

Topic TBC. Preacher: John Thompson.

### **31<sup>st</sup> January:**

Communion service. Topic TBC. Preacher: John Thompson.

The communion will be live on Zoom at 11:30am (followed by a chat as usual). You will need bread and wine (or equivalent) to fully take part.

## ***Children's Birthdays in January***

7<sup>th</sup>: Jeffrey Packwood

25<sup>th</sup>: Rebecca Gao

### ◇ **Building**

We are hoping to be able to restart some activities in our building soon but for the moment please do not enter unless absolutely necessary and even in that case please contact the church office beforehand.

### ◇ **Café Church: 17<sup>th</sup> January at 6:30pm**

Our monthly Sunday evening Café Church is an informal, interactive service taking place on Zoom, with a brief reflection, discussion in smaller breakout groups and live music. A link will be available on the church website.

### ◇ **Children's Work**

Sunday school for 5–11s meets online every Tuesday at 6pm via zoom. We are working through the parables currently. We start with a check in to see how everyone is, then do a game of some kind that links to the parable, read the parable from the Storyteller Bible and then have a prayer activity linked to the parable. We end with one or two worship songs. It usually lasts about 45 minutes. We have 7 children attending regularly and others who are interested but have not made it yet.

There is a Facebook messenger group used by families in the church for general communication and support. We share information about church activities for children and families but also use it to support one another with whatever is happening.

Please contact the church office if you would like to join in.

### ◇ **Church Members' Meeting: 11<sup>th</sup> January at 7:30pm**

Our church meeting will once again take place on Zoom and details will be sent to church members by email. If you are not a member and would like to be, or want to know what church membership is all about, please speak to John (minister@penrallt.org) or Owen (secretary@penrallt.org).

### ◇ **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](http://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. While we are unable to meet physically, the groups are meeting 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.

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; unlike the homegroups 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](http://www.facebook.com/groups/2402772192))  
a general group for information and social interaction
- *Penrallt Prayer Point* ([www.facebook.com/groups/302627593231755](http://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](http://www.facebook.com/groups/195300234272943))

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

- [www.facebook.com/penralltbc](http://www.facebook.com/penralltbc)
- [www.youtube.com/channel/UCwK0\\_IPqAVqGKwQREg6JhHg](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwK0_IPqAVqGKwQREg6JhHg)

### ◇ **Prayer Resources**

Send prayer requests, thanksgivings and testimonies to our email prayer diary via [office@penrallt.org](mailto: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 Wednesday lunchtimes at noon and Saturday mornings at 8:30am (please contact the church office if you need the connection details for either meeting).

The Baptist Union have prayer broadcasts on Wednesday evenings at [www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/338268/Prayer\\_broadcasts.aspx](http://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/338268/Prayer_broadcasts.aspx), as well as other resources at [www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/337630/Coronavirus.aspx](http://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/337630/Coronavirus.aspx) and at [www.nwba.org.uk/](http://www.nwba.org.uk/) with encouraging articles and stories, prayer broadcasts and reflections.

### ◇ **Shopping**

Do you need help with shopping? Or does someone you know need help with shopping? We would love to help. We have a small team of volunteers able to shop for those cannot get to the shops themselves. If you would like to use this service, or join the team, please contact the church office ([office@penrallt.org](mailto:office@penrallt.org)).

### ◇ **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2021 has been prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland. The theme that was chosen, *Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit*, is based on John 15:1-17. Cytûn Bangor is conducting all its activities for the week via Zoom – please try and join our brothers and sisters from the other churches for one of the following events:

- 7:30pm on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January: Opening Service led by the Cathedral.
- 7:30pm on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January – short worship and discussion groups led by Mosaic and Emaus.
- 1:00pm on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January – short worship and discussion groups led by Berea Newydd and St John's.

Zoom links to be confirmed closer to the time.

### ◇ **Youth Work at Penrallt...**

... is relaunching soon – see the website for further details.

Focus on...

## Home Mission



### Supporting Baptist ministries across the UK

Home Mission exists to help Baptist churches across Britain to share God's love with their communities. Of all Home Mission projects, the closest to home for us is New Park Street English Baptist Chapel in Holyhead. Their minister, Deb Stammers, was a church member at Penrallt until she moved to Holyhead to start a placement two years ago as part of her ministerial training, which finished earlier this year.

Deb actually has a dual role. New Park Street, like Penrallt, falls under the auspices of the North Western Baptist Association (NWBA) within the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB). Deb's work there is partially supported by a BUGB Home Mission grant. Since this autumn, she is also a *Gweinidog Cenhadol* ("Missions Minister"), working with the Baptist Union of Wales (BUW) in Welsh-language chapels across Anglesey and supported partly by the BUW Home Mission fund. Deb is still finding her feet with the BUW job – a process made significantly more difficult by the covid restrictions.

Unsurprisingly, the work in Holyhead is largely online at the moment, with services live on Facebook on Sunday mornings and midweek groups on Zoom and Facebook. Plans to go back to the building have been temporarily disrupted by lockdown. Nonetheless a large part of the work involves encouraging and equipping the congregation to get rooted in their community and reach out to the people around them. They have an estimated 500 front doors within a 5 minute walk of their congregation (who, by and large, live a lot closer to one another than Penrallt's).

Please pray:

- For peace, clarity and an effective ministry to the local community in times of great uncertainty, with covid and the as-yet largely unknown effects of Brexit on Holyhead.
- That those who have joined online activities will make the transition as face-to-face activities are resumed (but give thanks that they have seen growth in the church community as a result of the forced move online).
- For growth in the work with children and families, and a more missional outlook for the church as well as greater participation in services.
- For Deb as she balances her BUGB and BUW roles.
- Give thanks for the provision of a lovely house for Deb and the family – a spacious vicarage in Holyhead rented from the Church in Wales.