



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: March 2020

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die... a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance”.

This passage of Scripture, drawn from Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2a, and 4, reminds us that, throughout our lives, we experience cycles, rhythms, and change. Life and death, night and day, planting and harvest — these are just a few of the patterns that we can see in ourselves and the world around us. The life of the Church is no different. We experience the joy of the Lord, but also the sorrow of pain, loss, and sin.

As we journey into March, we look forward to celebrating Easter, rejoicing that we serve a Risen Saviour. But before Easter, perhaps sometimes overlooked in the brightness of Resurrection morning, comes Lent. Lent begins six weeks before Easter, and is a time that Christians all over the world spend in self-reflection, remorse, fasting, and repentance.

If we are unfamiliar with this tradition, we may wonder: “What’s the point? Why contemplate grief, sorrow, and guilt? Aren’t we already free in Christ? Don’t we have the Joy of the Lord?” Yes, freedom and joy in God through Christ Jesus are realities of our present state; but so are the devastating effects of sin, both in the world around us, and in our own lives. In focusing solely on joy, one can feel as though there is no space to mourn, to feel and lament pain. One can lose sight of our sin, and how it separates us from God and each other when allowed to go unchecked. Is the Christian life always having a smile on our faces, or always feeling good about everything in our lives?

Penrallt Baptist Church, Holyhead Road, Bangor LL57 2EU
Tel: 01248 353355; *Email:* office@penrallt.org; *Website:* www.penrallt.org
Office open Mon–Fri 10am - 3pm; *Administrator:* Magnus Forrester-Barker
Secretary: Neil Rymer; 01248 713003; secretary@penrallt.org
Treasurer: Averil Francis; 01248 421744; treasurer@penrallt.org

Jesus didn't seem to think so. Isaiah calls Him "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief", and even tells us that, at the death of his friend Lazarus, "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). Jesus wept! He knew that He would raise Lazarus from the dead, that shortly there would be rejoicing, yet still, He wept. How amazing is that? Jesus, who was fully God, was also fully human. He knew loneliness, pain, heartbreak, and fear. He went through unimaginable suffering, even to death on a cross — and He did that to save us from our sin. We can all rest in the knowledge that "we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

We can sometimes lose sight of the value of pain. Without knowing remorse and grief over sin, we cannot truly repent and turn to Christ. In his guide for daily prayer, *Seeking God's Face*, Philip F. Reinders has this to say about the importance of Lent: "In our pain-averse culture, Lent stands apart by not shrinking away from suffering but cultivating in us the wisdom that growth often (some might say only) comes through suffering. In a time and place of religious freedom, where we mostly don't suffer for following Christ, Lent invites us to willingly identify with Christ's suffering through fasting or other forms of self-denial".

Maybe you've come here today with a heavy heart. Maybe you've come with troubles, grief, and tears. Maybe you've come keenly aware of all the ways you fall short of the glory of God, wondering if there is a place for you here. Jesus, Immanuel, God with us, bids you welcome. He tells you, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" (Matthew 5:4). Jesus calls you to follow Him, even through suffering and pain. But He never asks you to follow Him anywhere that He did not go first.

Michael Blok

Services This Month

1st March

10:30am **What Are You Going To Say To Jesus?** *Luke 5:1–11*
Preacher: Peter Cousins

6:00pm Communion Service
God loves me and nothing I can do will ever change that
Preacher: Magnus Forrester-Barker *Romans 8:31–39*

8th March

10:30am **Jesus: Grace, Truth, Love and Light** *John 8:1–20*
Preacher: John Thompson

6:00pm Café church service in the rear hall, led by John Thompson

15th March

10:30am **Go into all the world — including Bangor!**
An encouragement to local mission

6:00pm **The Spiritual Discipline of Fasting** *Matthew 6:1–24*
Preacher: Michael Blok

22nd March

10:30am **Inspiring faith that lasts**
Mother's Day all-age service led by Wendy Lemon

6:00pm **Faith plus Nothing equals Salvation** *Romans 1:14–17*
Preacher: Donald Poirot

29th March

10:30am Communion Service *Hebrews 9*
Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness
Preacher: Bob Woods

6:00pm **We believe in the Holy Spirit** *John 14:15–27;*
Preacher: Andy Lewis *15:26–27; 16:7–15*

Peter Cousins is a retired former minister of Penrallt. John Thompson is the pastor of Llanelwy Community Church and is our moderator during our current pastoral vacancy. The other speakers and service leaders are all members of Penrallt's congregation.

Dates for Your Diary in March

Mondays	7pm	Alpha Course.
Saturdays	8:30am	Prayer meeting in the Twrgwyn Room.
Wednesday 4	10:30am	Men's prayer meeting followed by coffee.
Friday 6	1:30pm	World Day of Prayer service at Penrallt.
Sunday 8	2pm	Service at Haulfre (<i>TBC</i>).
Wednesday 11	7:30pm	Monthly prayer meeting in the chapel.
Monday 16	10:30am	Church walk at Breakwater Country Park.
Saturday 21	9:30am	<i>Bible Unzipped</i> at Rhos-on-Sea URC.

Please see later in this newsletter for more about some of these events.

Children's Birthdays in March

18th: Hannah Gao

Church Office

Please note that the the church office will be closed from Thursday 26th March to Tuesday 31st March.

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Thursday 19th March

Please send information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org; 01248 353355). All notices (including alterations to standing information) should be submitted in writing (preferably by email) as early as possible.

Homegroups

Many of our folk meet in small groups during the week for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. We encourage you to join one of these groups if you are able to. *NB groups do not meet every week – please check with the named contact. All landline numbers below have the 01248 area code.*

Day	Time	Group Name	Contacts
Mon	7:00pm	Delta	Brian Wheatcroft (602516) Pat MacKenzie (670948)
Mon	7:45 – 9pm	Rhiwlas	Wendy & Andy Lemon (353743)
Tue	10am	Nilgiri	Joan Beer (353874)
Tue	7:30pm	Penlon	Sarah Jackson (714799)
Tue	7:30pm	Tyddyn Isaf (Menai Bridge)	Magnus Forrester-Barker (717570)
Wed	7:30pm	Nomads	Pat & Roger Borlace (713146)
Fri	10:30am	Llwyn Onn	Pat MacKenzie (670948)
Fri	10:30am	The Lydias	Ellie Jones (602289) Lesley Jackson (680330)

◇ **Bible Unzipped**

Saturday 21st March 9:30am

This is a theological learning community that meets monthly at Rhos-on-Sea URC Church. Bible Unzipped is entirely free though donations towards costs are welcome. This month the sessions will be on Discovering the Genius of OT Authors (led by Peter Cousins) and Discovering John the Baptist (led by Philip Nye). For more information, please speak to Roger Malone or Magnus Forrester-Barker.

◇ **Church Lunch**

Sunday 8th March

As usual, there will be a (free) bring and share lunch after the morning service, but this time it's on the second Sunday of the month, not the first! Please bring enough buffet-style food for yourself and one or two others. Visitors are very welcome (and are not expected to bring food).

◇ **Church Walk**

Monday 16th March 10:30am

This month's walk, led by Roger Borlace, will be around Holyhead Mountain. Meet at 10:30am at the Breakwater Country Park (postcode: LL65 1YG; OS grid ref. 226833). Wear boots and bring sandwiches. Contact Roger on 713146 or rborlace@hotmail.com for more information.

◇ **Interim Moderator**

During our current pastoral vacancy, Revd John Thompson, the Minister of Llanelwy Community Church, is serving as our Moderator. In addition to chairing members' and deacons' meetings, John will be preaching at Penrallt roughly once a month and will be in the office at times during the week. The day and time will vary, so please contact John (moderator@penrallt.org, 07931 150697) or Magnus (office@penrallt.org, 01248 353355) in advance if you would like to arrange a meeting. Please avoid contacting John on Saturdays, except in case of serious emergency, as this is his day off.

◇ **Monthly Prayer Meeting** *Wednesday 11th March 7:30pm*

Our monthly mid-week prayer meetings, for the whole congregation, usually take place in the chapel and last about an hour. This month's meeting is on Wednesday 11th March. The date of the following meeting is yet to be determined.

There is also a men's prayer meeting on the first Wednesday morning of the month, at 10:30am in the Twrgwyn Room and lasting about an hour. It is usually followed by coffee at a local hostelry. This month it is on Wednesday 4th March.

◇ **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: Adrienne Ferrada; Magnus Forrester-Barker (07890 109645 – or contact at the church office on 01248 353355); Gwen Hicks (353648); Geoff Moore (410582).

◇ **Pray for Penrallt Every Day**

We believe in prayer and encourage people to pray. You can send prayer request to our electronic diary via office@penrallt.org (there are also prayer cards in the church porch that you can fill in). Better still, you can receive the prayer diary straight to your inbox every Monday (or occasionally later in the week) by emailing the office now and requesting to be put on the list. For more immediate and interactive sharing of prayers, search on Facebook for *Penrallt Prayer Point* and send a request to join our group.

◇ **Rough Sleepers**

We do not recommend giving money directly to the rough sleepers in Upper Bangor. You will find labelled envelopes in the porch for a gift that will buy meal vouchers which are distributed to the homeless by the Cathedral; this certainly would be a more meaningful form of help.

◇ **Sunday Afternoon Services** *Sunday 8th March* **2pm**

Usually on the first Sunday afternoon of the month we usually take a short service at the Haulfre residential home in Llangoed (near Beaumaris). This month we are planning to go on the second Sunday (8th March) instead – please check with the church office for confirmation that the service is going ahead as scheduled. *We are also moving the start time slightly earlier than before, and the services each month will now start from 2pm rather than 2:15.* The service usually lasts around half an hour.

◇ **Reconciliation Weekend / Penwythnos Cymodi**

Caersalem Church in Caernarfon are hosting a three day residential workshop weekend on the subject of "Healing Hearts, Transforming Nations" on 19th – 21st June. The workshop, led by Dr Rhiannon Lloyd, is aimed to equip Christians to be agents of healing and restoration. It was first developed by Dr Lloyd in post-genocide Rwanda and is now run in many parts of the world. The workshop at Caersalem will be bilingual in Welsh and English. For more information or to register (which needs to be done by 20th April) please visit <http://caersalem.com/cymodi/>

◇ **World Day of Prayer** *Friday 6th March* *1:30pm*

The World Day of Prayer (formerly known as Women's World Day of Prayer; the name was changed recently to emphasise that it is open to anyone!) is an ecumenical prayer event taking place annually in March. This year's program is written by Christians in Zimbabwe and the service in Bangor is due to take place at Penrallt.

Focus on...



Phil McKelvie **Serving with Yorkshire Camps**

Hello all!

So, I'm currently half way through my year with Yorkshire Camps and I'd like to start off by thanking you for your support. What is Yorkshire Camps, I hear you ask? It is a place where young people, between the ages of 8 and 18, can come for an action-packed holiday, enjoy time outside doing different activities (we have quite the range of them up here!) or just playing games (and I wish you could see their faces when they find out they are about to play Capture the Flag!), but, more importantly, a place where they also hear about God and the wondrous act of mercy that we received through Jesus. Most of the young people tend to come as a part of a church group, but we also have a number of camps during school holiday times where anyone can sign up and come along, and then in March, May and June, we have a few schools coming for their residentials, most of which aren't Christian schools, which is very encouraging as for all them, it's the 2nd or 3rd time coming back.



With regards to what I've been up to, it's been a lot of physical work both inside and out! Since the new year came in, we've had a full, deep clean of the whole inside of the house (which was real hard work, there was so much dust!) and continued with all the work that needs doing outside. Recently, there has been a lot of work outside with all the storms that have been coming in; a lot of branches have been broken off and covered up some of the obstacles on a couple of our activities so



they've need moving away, some pesky rabbits have attempted to dig new home and given up, and so there are quite a few holes across the grounds that need filling in and there has been a lot of moss growing, so the power hose has been brought out to take that up, and this is a seriously cold job!

Each month I try to send out an update of how my time is going, if you'd like to receive this, please drop me an email at philmckelvie@hotmail.com.

Thanks again for all your support,

Phil