



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: March 2022

I write as peace talks are held and nuclear forces in Russia are placed on high alert. As BP pulls oil investments out of Russia and as the world (rightly) tries to impose as many sanctions as possible on Russia and Putin and his allies for this abhorrent behaviour and the suffering caused. To try to persuade him to stop these hostilities.

A Ukrainian pastor writes, of himself, that on one hand he is frightened, devastated and helpless. On the other hand, the word of God takes him (after some time) from helplessness to Hope.

A Russian pastor recently wrote that he felt shame, fear and pain. Shame of his country's behaviour, fear for what might happen and pain for the lives that would be lost of people living in Ukraine. This included some of his friends. He continues to pray.

Let's also spare a thought to pray for wisdom and courage for Christians in Russia and for the many everyday Russians who would not want this at all. I remember spending an academic year with Belarusian friends who will be appalled and dismayed with what is going on.

I write as we pray for peace and as we encourage our government to act with sanctions. BMS World Mission are encouraging us to pray for Ukraine – for comfort and safety for those in shock. To pray for churches (including Baptist churches) which are being used as safe havens. For resources of food, fuel and money. For peace through the efforts of the international community. And that we join pastor Igor to 'keep believing that God will be glorified'.

<https://www.bmsworldmission.org/news/pray-for-ukraine/>

Penrallt Baptist Church, Holyhead Road, Bangor LL57 2EU

Tel: 07934 231788; Email: office@penrallt.org; Website: www.penrallt.org
Office hours: Mon–Fri 10am – 3pm; Administrator: Magnus Forrester-Barker

Minister: John Thompson; 07931 150697; minister@penrallt.org
Secretary: Owen Lloyd-Evans; 07941 612868; secretary@penrallt.org
Treasurer: Averil Francis; 01248 421744; treasurer@penrallt.org

In the words of the David Smyth from the Evangelical Alliance, "We pray for powerful words and miraculous actions – for de-escalation, peace and justice, repentance and restoration... We pray that the name of God would not be invoked in destructive nationalistic ways... We remember how Jesus spoke to heal the sick, calm the storm and raise the dead."

Help Lord, we pray. In the name of Jesus.

Exodus 34v6: "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness."

Blessings,

John

Please pray for...

- Ukraine.
- The NWBA Ministers' conference, Monday 7th to Wednesday 9th March.
- The deacons' meeting on 16th March.
- Alpha, especially the Holy Spirit away day on Saturday 19th March.
- Anything/everything else mentioned in this newsletter.

Children's Birthdays in March

15th: John Brindley

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). *NB Magnus is still working largely from home at the moment, but the office hours still apply. He will be taking some time off over the coming months, mostly on Wednesday afternoons.*

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 20th March

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

Services This Month

Our services at the moment are all in a hybrid format, with a congregation in the building and others joining us on Zoom, except where otherwise noted. It is not currently necessary to book places but please see the website for up to date information about services and Covid regulations (which are still liable to change at short notice). The link for the Zoom meeting and recordings of past services, where available, are also on the website.

Sunday services start at 10:30am. Children and young people go out part way through the service for Sunday school (Primary school / up to 11) or *Deeper* (Secondary school / 11 – 17); there are also crèche facilities available if you have very young children.

Sunday 6th March

Express Yourself: Let God use your abilities for his utmost glory.

Matthew 25:14–30. Preacher: Ama Eyo.

Sunday 13th March (Baptismal service)

Preacher: John Thompson.

This service is due to include the baptism that was postponed from February. Please speak to John, our minister, if you are interested in being baptised at a future date.

Sunday 20th March

The Holy Spirit #2: Being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 27th March (Mothering Sunday; All-Age Communion service)

Preacher: 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 participate.

The sermon on 20th March is the second of a two-part miniseries, the first part of which was on 20th February. The other sermons this month are not part of a series. Recordings will be available on our website.

Prayer Meeting: Wednesday 9th March at 7:30pm in the chapel. We will focus on praying for ourselves as a church and as individuals to be filled with sacrificial love just like Christ (1 John 3:16 – “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.”). For details of our weekly Zoom prayer meetings, see Prayer Resources later in this newsletter.

◇ **Alpha**

Our current Alpha course is running on Sunday evenings until around Easter. It is now too late for new guests to join this course but please keep praying for the guests and the team, especially for the Holy Spirit away day, which will be on Saturday 19th March. Please contact the church office if you would like to be informed when the next Alpha course is due to be running.

◇ **Baptist Leaders' Fellowship**

The next meeting of the Baptist Leaders' Fellowship is due to be a Zoom meeting on Friday 18th March with Glenn Marshall, a tutor at Northern Baptist College. Please contact the church office if you would like the Zoom details. Anyone in any role of leadership in any area of church life is welcome.

◇ **Building**

In line with current Covid regulations you don't need to book places for our services, sign in or wear a mask, but please be aware of the needs of others and keep an eye on our website services page (www.penrallt.org/services/index.php) and notices around the building for updates to Covid regulations and recommendations. If you are coming to the church building during the week, please contact the office to check whether anyone is there.

◇ **Church Fellowship Walk**

This month's walk, on Sunday 6th March at 1pm, will be to Aber Falls. Further details on the booking page: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/penrallt-fellowship-walk-tickets-260614052647>

The April walk will be to Castell Aberlleiniog (near Penmon) on Sunday 3rd April. See the booking page for more information: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/penrallt-fellowship-walk-april-2022-tickets-273862739827>

◇ **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 please visit www.bangorfoodbank.org

◇ **Giving**

At present we are not taking up an offering during our services but if you would like to give financially towards the work of Penrallt, our mission partners and other projects we support, there is now a donations box at the back of the chapel which you can use for that purpose. If you 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. Many of the groups are now meeting in person again, though some still meet on Zoom and other online platforms or in a mixed format. There are groups 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.

We also have 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.

◇ **Knitter Wanted**

Andrew March is looking for somebody to knit a replacement for a much loved and well-worn pullover. If you are interested please speak to Andrew directly or contact the church office.

◇ **Passion Play: Volunteers Needed**

Cytûn Bangor (<https://www.bangorcytun.org/>) are hoping to present a passion play on the streets of Bangor on Good Friday but need more actors to make this happen. There are opportunities for major roles and for bit parts in the crowd. Please contact the church office if you can help or want to know more.

◇ **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); Gwen Hicks (01248 353648); Monica Morris (01407 840439), Abi Penney (07776 270399); 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 Student Fellowship* (www.facebook.com/groups/195300234272943)

We also have a YouTube channel and a Facebook page (both called *Penrallt Baptist Church*), as well as another Facebook page for our young people:

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

◇ **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. To meet and pray with others, you are welcome to join our weekly Zoom prayer meetings on **Wednesdays at 11:30am** 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). We also have a monthly prayer meeting in the church building. This month's meeting will be on **Wednesday 9th March** in the chapel (see Services on p3).

◇ **Safeguarding Training**

We are running safeguarding courses on Saturday 5th March (level 2 in the morning and level 3 in the afternoon). Those who need the training have already been invited, but please speak to Wendy Lemon if you would like to know more or if you think should do the course but did not receive an invite.

◇ **Students**

We are delighted to announce that Becca Williams (our youth worker) has now been appointed as our new student co-ordinator too. Please pray for Becca and our students.

Students are encouraged to take part in church activities and join a homegroup. For more information about student activities, please contact Becca on students@penrallt.org or see our [Penrallt Student Fellowship](#) Facebook group.

◇ **Women's Fellowship**

Averil, Ellie & Lesley write: "For some time, people have been asking for a ladies fellowship where we can meet each other once a month over coffee, have speakers etc . We are inviting all ladies to join us on Saturday 12th March between 10:30am and 12 noon in the Canolfan, where we can discuss and plan a programme to suit everyone. We look forward to seeing you there."

[For those who are new to Penrallt, the Canolfan is our community centre, based around the rear hall where we have tea and coffee after services.]

◇ **World Day of Prayer: Friday 4th March**

This year's World Day of Prayer uses material prepared by Christian women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland on the theme *I know the plans I have for you* (Jeremiah 29:11). There will be a service in Welsh at Bangor Cathedral starting at 11am and a service in English at Penrallt, starting at 2pm; the latter will be simultaneously broadcast on Zoom – see our website for the link.

◇ **Youth: Ignite and Deeper**

Our youth activities are based around a Thursday night group called *Ignite* (usually meeting in the Canolfan at 7pm) and a Sunday morning group called *Deeper* (taking place during our morning services). Ignite is open to all, and is a social evening with games and activities; new invite flyers are now available — please take some to give to friends and family aged 11–18. Deeper, on Sundays, has opportunity to find out more about the Christian faith. Further details can be found on our youth website, www.penralltyouth.org, as well as our *Penrallt Youth Facebook page* and *Instagram group*. Contact our youth worker, Becca (youth@penrallt.org), for more information.

Becca is looking for complete games in good condition to add to the youth / church board game collection for Ignite, work with students and other activities. Please email her at youth@penrallt.org if you have any you would like to donate. They already have a few games so it would be worth checking if they already have ones you are planning to donate.

Focus on...

Claire Bedford

Serving with BMS in Chad

Claire Bedford has been in N'Djamena in Chad, West Africa since January 2016, following a year of French language study in France. Claire is working for BMS at Guinebor II hospital.



In the UK Claire worked as a hospital pharmacist and latterly as a prescribing advisor for GP practices. Claire's role in Chad is to continue the development of the pharmacy service at Guinebor II hospital. As well as having supervisory oversight of the pharmacy and the lab, Claire has been doing some administrative tasks alongside the Chadian administrator and other long-term mission workers.

The hospital continues to welcome many patients from all over N'Djamena, the rest of Chad and also from neighbouring countries, demonstrating the confidence people have in the care the hospital gives. Pray that this is a great witness to the patients of the love of Jesus in action.



Claire reports that it's always a joy to look back over the previous 12 months and give God praise for what has been accomplished. Whether that's the 14,000 people seen in outpatient clinic, the 5,000 people seen in the emergency room, the 1,949 babies born or the 65,000 lab tests performed, to God be the glory. Claire considers it a privilege to be part of God's work at the hospital. At a recent Board meeting, the Ethiopian chaplain recounted some of the many lives he's spoken Truth into and also shared the exciting news of

people coming to faith. The work at the hospital is often arduous for so many different reasons but this is the reason Claire and her fellow mission workers are there, so that people can hear about the Truth. If you're from the majority faith in Chad, becoming a Christian is almost always an extremely dangerous decision.

Thanks to a grant from BMS, the hospital is setting up a 'revolving drugs fund'. As pharmacist, Claire will take the lead on this. A 3-month supply of medicines will be procured using the grant money and then all the money generated by the hospital from the sale of these supplies will be siphoned off and kept to buy the next 3-months' worth. This should move the hospital away from the current method of stock procurement which relies on credit and the goodwill of their suppliers.

Claire has sent us the following prayer points:

- Wisdom for the Senior Management Team as they manage the hospital on a day-to-day basis and also think about the future and what God wants them to be doing
- New believers from the majority faith, as they live out life as Issa (Jesus) followers in a land where leaving your family's faith can have serious consequences
- For Claire as she tries to set up the revolving drugs fund, for wisdom and abundant patience
- Pray for the country of Chad as it's now already halfway through its 18-month transition period since the president died and the military transition council took over. Pray that wisdom and justice will reign in the hearts and minds of both military and civilians involved in the transition

For more information: <https://www.bmsworldmission.org/people/claire-bedford/>