



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: September 2020

Confidence in God

Have you ever looked around and thought, what, on Earth, is God doing? Have you ever wondered whether God really is in control? Have you ever wondered whether faith and prayer really makes any difference or whether we are just placating our subconscious with religion. As coronavirus continues and no end appears to be in sight, we are recalibrating our expectations. Should we recalibrate our expectations of God too? Should we jettison faith and revert to religion?

The book of Ephesians screams NO. William Barclay describes this letter as the 'Queen of the Epistles'. John Stott states of it, 'Nobody can read it without being moved to wonder and worship'.

We start a new series looking at Ephesians chapters 1–2 and the early life of Moses in Exodus chapters 1–6. Paul explodes with the amazing glory of God. The doxology in verses 3–14 in the original text is a single sentence. He starts and he just can't stop as he describes all that God has done and is doing in the lives of believers. It's like he doesn't take a breath. I tried that and got from v3 to v7a (NIV). Let me know how far you get trying to do it all in one breath.

In one sweep, Paul inspires us with God's plan to save us, to help us to become more like Jesus and to secure a place for us in heaven eternally. He then continues from v15 with God's plan for the Church, his revelation and power. He looks back at how God has transformed us – and continues to do so by his grace. He then celebrates how the cornerstone of Christ Jesus brings us all together. One loved Church. In unity. Under God.

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God is in control, but it doesn't always feel like this in real life. It often didn't feel like this for the people of God enslaved in Egypt. It doesn't always feel like that for us today. But God bids us to trust in Him. He has a plan. He is at work. God bids us to believe in his power to redeem, to transform, to heal and to save. Eternally. He calls us to humbly, but courageously step out in faith. To trust in him. In his love, grace, truth and by his Holy Spirit to 'be' and to pray and to live for His glory alone.

Be confident in God.

John

Children's Birthdays in September

6th: Aoife Theobald 16th: Reuben Stevens 25th: Ned Allen

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 working from home at the moment but office hours still apply. Even if you have his other phone numbers, please do not use them for work-related purposes except in case of emergency.*

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Wednesday 23rd September

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

Services This Month

Our services continue to be held online in the form of web pages with a mixture of videos and text, available at www.penrallt.org/services/. The services can be followed at any time but we recommend doing them at 10:30am on the Sunday morning if you can, for a greater sense of connection with the rest of the congregation.

Every Sunday, we hold a Zoom meeting for those who wish to join in a chat after the service, starting at 11:30am and lasting around half an hour. The link to join the chat will also be found on the page for each service. We often break into smaller groups for part of the chat time, from about 11:45am.

Except where otherwise noted, the preacher for all our services this month will be our minister, John Thompson. All the sermons will be in our new series, "Be Confident in God"

6th September: *Be confident in God* (Ephesians 1:1–2; Exodus 1).

13th September: *Be confident in God's plan for his people* (Ephesians 1:3–6; Exodus 2:1–10). Preacher: Donald Poirot

20th September: *Be confident in God's plan for you* (Ephesians 1:7–10; Exodus 2:11–24).

27th September: *Be confident in God's eternal plan* (Ephesians 1:11–14; Exodus 3:1–15). Communion service.

If you missed any of the sermons from our recent series on *Listening to God*, or you just want to listen to them again, you will find them at www.penrallt.org/sermons/series.php?sid=Listen (the page includes links to the audio recordings and videos as well as the service pages on which each sermon first appeared).

◇ **Building**

Please note that our building remains closed until further notice. As we are in the process of developing a Covid-19 Risk Assessment and Covid secure protocols, please do not enter the church premises at the current time. If it is absolutely essential for you to do so, please contact the church office for advice. Please do not enter the church building until you have permission to do so.

◇ **Congratulations**

We offer our congratulations to Gill & Mike Jamison on the arrival of their latest grandchild, Leo – born on 14th July to Fiona and her husband Jordan Revah in Switzerland.

◇ **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. With the current lockdown and living in an area whose economy is dependent on tourism some of our members may suddenly find themselves in financial difficulty. If that is you or someone you know, do tell 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**

Our homegroups and contact, care & prayer groups are continuing to function, using Zoom and other technologies to keep us connected while we are unable to meet physically. We encourage you to join a group if you are not already in one. We have groups meeting on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Contact the church office to find out more or be put in touch with a group.

◇ **News Mailing List**

If you would like to join (or leave) the mailing list to receive an emailed link to each month's newsletter when it is published, as well as other news announcements, please contact the church office on office@penrallt.org.

◇ **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); Gwen Hicks (353648); Geoff Moore (410582); John Thompson (07931 150697).

◇ **Penrallt Members' Meeting**

Our next church members' meeting will take place via Zoom on Monday 12th October at 7:30pm.

◇ **Penrallt on Facebook**

We have two Facebook groups: *Penrallt* (www.facebook.com/groups/2402772192) is a general group for information and social interaction, while the aptly named *Penrallt Prayer Point* (www.facebook.com/groups/302627593231755) is specifically to share prayer requests and encouragements.

◇ **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) and a Wednesday lunchtime prayer meeting via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/201027611?pwd=ZzhiZ2xjRmVjTTVnOStERXh5YnZ0Zz09> (NB the link is only active while the meetings are running, from noon on Wednesdays for about 45 minutes; if you have trouble with the sound you can connect to the meeting by phone – please contact the church office if you need the details).

The Baptist Union have prayer broadcasts on Sunday and Wednesday evenings at www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/338268/Prayer_broadcasts.aspx, as well as other resources at www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/337630/Coronavirus.aspx and at www.nwba.org.uk/ with encouraging articles and stories, prayer broadcasts and reflections. The Evangelical Alliance provide a weekly prayer on Thursdays, available at www.eauk.org/what-we-do/prayer-centre/coronavirus-prayer, along with other useful articles on their website.

◇ **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).

◇ **Thanks from NWBA**

The North Western Baptist Association (NWBA) would normally send out a certificate to thank churches for their support of Home Mission but are unable to do so this year as their offices, and most churches, remain closed. Instead they have put together a video to convey their thanks: <https://youtu.be/Mz4PtsS1hqs>

◇ **Youth event**

We are planning a youth event in our marquee on 19th September. Please speak to Luke or James for more information.

Chris & Anna Hembury

Serving with Hull YFC, via the Church Mission Society

Chris and Anna live in the Boulevard area of Hull where people are known for their no-nonsense attitude and honest vulnerability, an area suffering from high unemployment, child poverty, addiction, mental and physical health problems, prostitution and increasing racial tension. People feel a crippling lack of self-worth. But it's an area full of buried treasure, untapped potential and dormant creativity.

Chris and Anna are part of the Hull YFC team. Before the Covid-19 pandemic they were involved in supporting children, young people and families, through activities such as youth club, breakfast club, after school club, summer camp, mums group, baby group, 'natural detached' (otherwise known as walking about in the neighbourhood so they can "bump into" people), assemblies, classroom support, school Governor, weekly community meal, Matt's House, community garden, one to one, support for the local Church and other charities, working with people in addiction and women involved in street prostitution, bible studies, discipleship. Not to mention the form-filling, court/housing/safe-guarding case conference/council office-accompanying and the incalculable "cuppa and a chat"s.

In particular, Chris and Anna support the group who are living in Matt's House, a house for mission and serving the local community. Anne also helps run Orts, a sewing collective where women from all walks of life can support each other, learn and create together.

However, as you might imagine, the coronavirus has severely disrupted what is very much a relational ministry. Reflecting on the lockdown, Chris and Anna say:

"We have been used to being givers and bringers of hope, the hope we have in Jesus. We have at times been innovative and ingenious in the ways we have gone about sharing our faith. That said, we have at times struggled to help people to connect."

We are on a journey into the great unknown, but known by Jesus. We are discovering how to engage; on the flip side, one of the hardest tasks at this time is discovering that it may be difficult to engage, and being okay with that. We might call it furlough, a sabbatical or, for some, a mission field.

Like most people across the world we have had to deconstruct the way we live our lives. These are uncertain, unsettling times. Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1). Faith is required."

For more information, please see

churchmissionsociety.org/people-in-mission/anna-and-chris-hembury/