



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: April 2014

From the Minister:

I keep a fish in my office. It interests me. It stimulates my curiosity. It looks nice.

And it's dead.

130 million years dead.

Approximately.

It's much easier to look after than a live one.

Not only is my beautifully fossilized fish deceased, it belongs to a species that disappeared from the fossil record in the Upper Cretaceous Period when dinosaurs roamed the land and Doctor Who was just beginning on the BBC. I enjoy it for a number of reasons, not least because it gives the lie to the popular version of 'Evolution'.

Let me explain.

I was trained originally as a physicist and absorbed quite naturally a physicist's view of evolution (we always write it with a small 'e'). We talk animatedly about the evolution of a hot cloud of gas, the evolution of a weather system or (my favourite) the evolution of a star. All stars begin as a cloud of gas which comes together to form a burning mass like our sun. What happens next depends on how big they are, but the smaller ones, for example, will expand into a Red Giant, and then turn into a White Dwarf before becoming a dead star we call a Black Dwarf. One thing is sure. All stars die. Stellar evolution ends in death.

In fact the evolution of anything ends in death, which is what I explain to my fossil fish. "Tell me about it!" he groans, staring out at me through stone eyes. Which is why I take issue with all popular views which portray 'Evolution' as the survival of the fittest (not even the most successful of species survives forever) or the inevitable progress of biological species. As over 99.9% of species are extinct, evolution hasn't been a great deal for them.

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"Don't I know it!" moans my fish.

It's amazing how atoms combine together to form complex structures like stars or planets.

It's amazing how atoms combine together to form biological life.

But evolution is a doomed process.

Everything dies.

Eventually.

Which brings me to Easter and why I was offering a sympathetic look to my fish.

There's only one event I can think of in history which contradicts evolution, and that's the Resurrection of Jesus. The Resurrection goes against the flow of cosmic history. Without it, the human species is as doomed as my fish. But with the Resurrection (worthy of a capital 'R'), evolution has been sliced open like a tin can.

It makes sense of our existence and opens the portals to life beyond the grave.

It teaches us that it's perfectly reasonable and sensible to engage in such counter-intuitive activities (as far as the selfish gene pool is concerned) as caring for the severely disabled, the dying or the outcasts. Our species is not doomed, and therefore valuing every single human being, nurturing every individual and creating better, stronger communities is a celebration of the death of evolution.

In fact, Easter is the day of the year when we stamp on evolution and triumph over it.

The Resurrection is the moment the roof opens to reveal eternity breaking into our lives. As my favourite gospel song, by Garth Hewitt, goes:

*For love has found a highway
And life has lost an end;
Nazareth's lost a carpenter
But the world has found a friend.*

Have a great Easter,

God bless,

Peter

Services This Month:

6 April

10:30am Speaker: Geoff Birch. *Acts 15:1-35.*

Religious strife initiated a gathering that changed the world.

2:15pm Service at Bontnewydd.

6:00pm Communion Service. Speaker: Elaine Green. *Mark 7:24-30.*

Challenging Women of the Bible: The faith of that foreign woman.

13 April (Palm Sunday)

10:30am **The Secret's Out.** *Mark 11:1-11.*

6:00pm Palm Sunday Prayer and Praise led by Deb Stammers.

20 April (Easter Sunday)

7:00am Cytûn service on Roman Camp.

10:30am Easter Sunday Family Service. *Matthew 27:57-28:10.*

Where not to look for Jesus and where to find him.

6:00pm **The Eternal Jesus.** *John 1:1-3.*

27 April

10:30am Communion Service. Speaker: Diane Holmes.

6:00pm Speaker: Jon Stammers.

Our Speakers

Peter Cousins is the minister of the church and is the speaker except where otherwise noted. **Dr. Diane Holmes** is a Baptist minister who has recently come to live near Brynsiencyn with her husband Nigel. **Elaine Green** is a graduate in theology, a member of Penrallt and a candidate for the Baptist ministry, who is currently a BUGB Lay Preacher and doing an MA in Contextual Theology. **Geoff Birch** is a retired Baptist minister, a member of Penrallt. **Dr. Jon Stammers** is a member of Penrallt with a PhD from Bangor University.

Church Lunch

We will host a church lunch on **Sunday April 6th**. Please bring enough buffet style 'finger food' for yourselves and one or two others.

Faith Café

After church on Sunday evening 6th April, we will host Faith Café for teenagers, students and other young adults. Starting around 7:15pm it is an evening of chat, interviews, music and discussions. There is a short programme at around 7:40pm after which you are free to leave or stay and chat. After this week, we will be breaking for Easter.

Dates For Your Diary:

Tuesday 1	7-9:30pm	Recording of our services for BBC Radio Wales.
Wednesday 2	10:30am	Men's Prayer Meeting followed by coffee in Options.
Saturday 5		Deacons' Away Day.
Monday 7	7:30pm	Church Members' AGM.
Friday 11		Revelation North Wales.
Monday 14	10:30am	Church Walk.
Thursday 17	1:30am	Wedding of Emyr Humphreys and Lilian Venancio in Penrallt.
	7pm	Maundy Thursday Passover seder in the Canolfan.
Friday 18	11am	Cytûn March of Witness.
	5-7pm	Good Friday Reflection.
	7:30pm	Cantabile Choir concert at St Mary's.
Sunday 19	7am	Cytûn service on Roman Camp.
Saturday 26	3pm	Talk by Roshni at Penuel about <i>Training Badagry Street Pastors</i> .
Monday 28	2pm	Pastoral Care Team meeting.
	7:30pm	Missions Group meeting at Sarah Jackson's house.

Further details of many of these events can be found in the Noticeboard section later in this newsletter.

Easter Activities:

Maundy Thursday (17 April)

7pm – Passover Meal in the Canolfan. Come and enjoy a simple meal with a traditional Passover seder. Tickets £5 adult/£2 child. For more details contact Sarah Jackson (email: sarah.jackson.home@gmail.com; tel: 01248 714799).

Good Friday (18 April)

11am – Cytûn (Churches Together) Walk of Witness down the High Street, starting at St. John's Methodist Church.

5-7pm – Good Friday Reflection. Good Friday is a thought-provoking day for many people; there will be an opportunity to think them through and maybe listen to God for yourself. There will be a time of quiet reflection in the Penrallt Sanctuary from 5 to 7pm. Come when you can — stay as long as you can. Listen well. There will prayer support if needed. Some refreshments will be available.

Easter Sunday (19 April)

7am – Cytûn Service on Roman Camp, followed by breakfast in Penrallt.

10:30am – All-age style service.

6:00pm – Evening Service.

News of People:

Congratulations to **Emma Holland**, daughter of Joy, who has had a baby girl, Callie.

Pray for **Elaine Green** who will be going before the North Wales Baptist Union on Tuesday 8th April as a candidate for regionally recognized Baptist ministry.

Children's Birthdays in April

11th: Samuel Adams

Weekday Events:

Please check with the contact people when there are meetings this month.

HG = Home Group

Day	Time	Details	Contacts
Tue	8:00pm	HG, Nilgiri	Joan Beer (353874)
Tue	7:30pm	HG Tyddyn Isaf (Menai Bridge)	Magnus Forrester-Barker (717570)
Wed	2:00pm	HG, Carers	Carol Morris (208407)
Wed	7:00pm	HG, Students	Ben Bowden-Pickstock (07872 531601)
Wed	7:30pm	HG, Bethesda	Jon & Deb Stammers (602868)
Wed	7:30pm	HG, Cymraeg	Owen & Nia Evans (352634)
Wed	7:30pm	HG, Maes y Dref (pm)	Anne Collis (353173)
Wed	7:30pm	HG, Nomads	Susan Cousins (353878)
Thu	10:30am	HG, Llanfairpwll (am)	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Thu	7:30pm	HG, Llanfairpwll (pm)	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Fri	10:30am-12pm	Cheeky Monkeys (parent & toddler group)	Joan Rymer (713003)
Fri	10:30am-12:30pm	HG, Maes y Dref (am)	Anne Collis (353173)
Sat	8:30am	Prayer Meeting	

Noticeboard:

◇ **Bible Unzipped...**

...is taking an Easter break. It will be back in May.

◇ **Cantabile Ladies' Choir**

Friday 18 April

7:30pm

The choir, along with their bell-ringing group, the Cantabile Chimers, will be performing a Good Friday Concert of Sacred Music to mark the closure of St Mary's Church, Bangor. The concert will be at in St Mary's at 7:30pm on Friday 18th April, with free admission and light refreshments (donations towards the work of the St Mary's Shelter will be welcomed).

◇ **Church Walk**

Monday 14 April

A fairly gentle and easy walk is planned, about five miles in length, near Caernarfon and the Menai Straits. Please meet at 10:30am at Fron Goch garden centre where the walk will begin and end to the delight of those who also enjoy gardening! Fron Goch is just south of Caernarfon, off the A487, postcode LL54 5RL. Bring a packed lunch if you prefer not to eat at Fron Goch. For further details please phone Mike and Sophy Tidswell, 01248 430932.

◇ **Homeless in Bangor**

Please do not give money directly to the homeless in Upper Bangor. We have found in the past that it has encouraged aggressive begging on the church premises by people who have a history of violence. You will find brown envelopes in the porch to put your gift in. This will buy meal vouchers which are distributed to the homeless by the Cathedral.

◇ **Men's Prayer Meeting**

Wednesday 2 April

10:30am

The men will meet for prayer as usual this month. Time spent in prayer will be followed by coffee in Options. All are welcome to join us.

◇ **Penrallt on BBC Radio Wales**

Tuesday 1 April

7-9:30pm

The BBC have asked us again to produce two services to be broadcast on Easter Sunday and Pentecost Sunday. These will both be pre-recorded on the same evening. Please turn up with loud voice, to lead our nation in praise!

◇ **Pastoral Help**

If you have pastoral concerns please contact Peter or else one of the other members of the Pastoral Care team.

Pat Borlace 713146
Judy Stammers 364394

Geoff Moore 410582
Helen Thomas 600174

◇ **The Prayer Room...**

...is open before and after the service for quiet prayer. Penrallt is a place of prayer, so make use of this sacred space.

◇ **Pray for Penrallt Every Day**

Sign up to receive our prayer diary by e-mail every Monday morning by sending your request to: office@penrallt.org.

If you have some subject for prayer, either send it in by e-mail, or fill in one of the pink cards, which are available in the porch, and place it in the visitors' cards box or give it to Peter or Magnus. Please note that in addition to the pink prayer request cards, there are also blue testimony/thanksgiving cards and yellow "Listening to God" cards that can also be filled in and submitted for the prayer diary.

◇ **Student House Available to Rent**

7, The Crescent (an ideal location for coming to Penrallt). Christian landlords. For details, please ring John & Anne Brine on 01708 701379 or 07956 853523.

◇ **Training Badagry Street Pastors** *Saturday 26 April 3pm*

Roshni Verghese was due to give a talk at the Cytûn AGM, which was cancelled due to bad weather, on her recent visit to Nigeria to train Street Pastors in the town of Badagry. There is now another chance to hear Roshni's talk, which will be given at Penuel on Saturday 26th April, starting at 3pm. This is a free talk and all are welcome to attend.

◇ **Women's World Day of Prayer**

The service on Friday 7th March for the Women's World Day of Prayer, prepared by the women of Egypt, raised £187.65, which will be used to further a variety of Christian charitable works in Britain and around the world. The Bangor English service was supported by the members of nine different churches. Our thanks to all who helped to make the service so memorable. Next year the service will be prepared by the women of the Bahamas.

From the Church Office:

Advance Notice: Christian Aid Week this year runs from Sunday 11th May till Saturday 17th May when we shall need volunteers to do house to house collections and street collections on the High Street or in Morrisons. Any time you can give to this will be much appreciated. Also we hope to host Quizaid for Cytûn on the Saturday evening, 17th. This is a well attended inter-church fun evening to round off the week's activities. If you wish to help in any way speak to Susan Cousins, tel. 353878.

Church Members' AGM: Please make every effort to attend this meeting on Monday 7th April. There will be a register in the porch as you come in — please sign yourself in and also make a note of any apologies you are bringing on behalf of other members.

Office Opening Hours: Please note that the church office opening hours will be changing from 1st April. The office will now be open daily (Mon-Fri, excluding bank holidays) between 10am and 2pm. We will endeavour to publicise via the weekly news sheets and monthly newsletter, as far as possible, whenever the office is due to be closed within these times.

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 19 April.

Please send information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org; 01248 353355)

NB email is the preferred way to submit information for the newsletter, if possible (and it is strongly recommended that you don't rely on verbal requests for items to be included)!