



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: July 2021

Baptisms are back!

I am so thrilled that we are once again able to Baptise people at church. It feels like it has been a long time in coming. I completely understand, celebrate and affirm that the whole community has had to participate to enable us to prevent the Covid virus from spreading to protect the community and to protect the NHS. I also appreciate that the practices of all faiths and religions are impacted and everyone has to accept restrictions. It is appropriate that we at Penrallt have been cautious in our approach, prioritising our care for the community. However when Believer's Baptism was recently permitted in England and not in Wales, and at the same time in Wales swimming pools were opened, that felt a bit strange. At this time also, other faiths and denominations in Wales were permitted to continue with unspecified practices which 'required brief touch'. It felt that the community of those who practice believer's baptisms had been treated in an unbalanced way.

It is not the first time that Baptism has been unjustly frowned upon. Believer's baptism has been illegal during various periods of time in this country since the first Baptist believers started practicing Believer's Baptism in the 17th Century. When that happened, their whole families were often ostracised, and they faced reduced opportunities for education, employment and advancement in society. Thankfully we do not face anything like that today in this country. Of course, many suffer much worse across the world today as highlighted by the work of Open Doors and others.

But for now, Baptisms are back! Baptism has been described as 'the gift of the Baptist denomination to the World church'. In being Baptised we follow the practice of Jesus (Luke 3v21). We celebrate that our sins have been washed away (Acts 22v16). We are somehow incorporated spiritually into his death and

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are raised with him in his resurrection (Romans 6v4). To Baptise people is a command of Jesus (Mat 28v19). And much more. So if you are a Christian, do consider being Baptised while we have the opportunity!

But whilst Baptism is wonderful and is to be celebrated, Mat 28v19 also reminds us that Baptism is a part of a broader journey of discipleship and relationship. This incorporates spiritual rebirth through Jesus (...*Baptizing them...*), obedience of the teaching of Jesus (...*teaching them to observe...*) and living with Jesus – in relationship with him (...*I am with you always...*).

Blessings,

John

Please note that John will be away from Saturday 24th July and returning on Monday 9th August.

Children's Birthdays in July

5th: Odhrán Patton
9th: Daniel Goldsmith
13th: Reuben Dempster
17th: Dylan Dempster
24th: Leo Bevan

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 still working mostly from home at the moment, but the office hours still apply.*

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 25th July

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

Services This Month

We continue with a mixture of live broadcasts and pre-recorded services. For the live services we have a small congregation in the building, for which you must book a place if you want to attend (booking links will be found on our website and emailed to the news mailing list). You can also join us on Zoom or, barring technical glitches, watch a recording later on YouTube. The services themselves start at 10:30am on Sunday mornings except where otherwise noted. Children's activity packs should now be available each Sunday for those attending the service in the church building.

Pre-recorded service pages can be followed at any time, but we recommend starting those at 10:30am on Sunday too, then joining us for a chat on Zoom at 11:30am. Live services are noted on the list below; all others are pre-recorded.

Links to upcoming services, along with further information, can be found on our website (www.penrallt.org/services); there you will also find the pages for past services including recordings, where available, of live services.

Sunday 4th July: Live Baptismal Service

Jesus anointed by a sinful woman (Luke 7:36–50). Preacher: John Thompson. Join us for the baptism of Lloyd Chambers. *If you are attending the service in the chapel please be careful around the open baptistry!*

Sunday 11th June (Live)

The Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:1–15). Preacher: Ryan Wright.

Saturday 17th July, 2pm (Live): Induction of Becca Williams

Join us as we welcome and commission our new youth worker.

Sunday 18th July: Live Baptismal Service

Shine your light, Jesus with family complications (Luke 8:16–21).

Preacher: John Thompson.

Join us for the baptism of Ben Goldsmith. *If you are attending the service in the chapel please be careful around the open baptistry!*

Sunday 25th July (Communion Service)

Jesus walks on water (Luke 8:22–25). Preacher: Arwel Jones.

You will need bread and wine (or equivalent) to fully take part in communion.

Please check our website to find out whether the communion will be pre-recorded or live on Zoom, as this detail has not yet been confirmed.

Note that all the Sunday sermons this month are part of our ongoing series, [Love, Trust and Follow Jesus](#). Previous sermons in the series can be found on our website.

◇ **Baptist Leaders' Fellowship**

Despite the name, this is not just for leaders of Baptist churches. A Zoom meeting on Friday 16th July at 10:30am (finishing by midday). The speaker is Dr Rosa Hunt, co-principal of South Wales Baptist College; her theme is "I am right, and this I know, because the Bible tells me so" (i.e. Biblical interpretation and why we are sure we have it right).

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85312351458?pwd=UTVxczRldGtlepTSzVLMDFrdjgxUT09> (Meeting ID: 853 1235 1458; Passcode: 836147).

◇ **Building**

You must book a place if you wish to attend a service or event in our building. Booking links will be found on our website and will be emailed to the news mailing list (please contact office@penrallt.org if you wish to join this). If you need to enter the church building for any other purpose, please contact the church office beforehand to obtain permission and arrange access.

◇ **Church Meeting**

There will be a meeting for church members on Zoom at 7:30pm on **Monday 12th July**. Members should have received an email reminder about the meeting recently (please contact Magnus, office@penrallt.org, if you have not) and will receive the meeting papers soon. If you are not a member and would like to become one (or find out what Baptist church membership is all about) please speak to John (minister@penrallt.org) or Owen (secretary@penrallt.org).

◇ **Church Picnic and Walk**

We will meet at Treborth Botanical Gardens (next to the Menai Bridge) at **1pm on Sunday 4th July** for a socially distanced picnic (with games for children under 11) and a short walk around the gardens. All are welcome. Booking a (free) ticket is essential. More details on the booking page:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/penrallt-picnic-and-walk-botanical-gardens-tickets-160100562091>

NB as our regular church family events are usually on the first Sunday afternoon of the month, we recommend checking our website or the [Penrallt Baptist Church Facebook page](#) in order to get the information before the newsletter arrives!

◇ **Children's Work**

Sunday school for 5–11s meets online every Tuesday at 6pm via Zoom, for about 45 minutes, although there will be a break over the summer holidays. 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.

◇ **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. 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. The groups currently meet 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. Note that some groups will be taking a break or running a reduced programme over the summer holiday period.

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; 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.

◇ **Mission Prayer Meeting**

Once a quarter we have a prayer meeting to hear news updates from, and pray for, Penrallt's mission partners around the world. The next meeting will be on Zoom at 7:30pm on Wednesday 21st July.

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83300054475?pwd=cIM5cTJqNUVwOjZLaEJyYnlwaVpDUT09>; Meeting ID: 833 0005 4475; Passcode: 781584)

◇ **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)
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 Students* (www.facebook.com/groups/195300234272943)

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

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

◇ **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, and prayer meetings via Zoom on **Wednesdays at 11:30am** (note that this is a new start time, half an hour earlier than before) 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).

The Baptist Union have resources for prayer and reflection at www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/338269/Prayer_and_reflections.aspx and at www.nwba.org.uk/ with encouraging articles and stories, prayer broadcasts and reflections.

◇ **Youth Events**

Our youth activities take place on Thursdays at 7pm unless otherwise stated. This month we have:

- 1st July – Cakes on the pier
- 8th July – Beach volleyball and bonfire with marshmallows
- 15th July – Crabbing and fish & chips
- 22nd July – BBQ (4pm)

Please see our website or contact Becca (youth@penrallt.org) for more information. Also, don't miss Becca's induction on Saturday 17th July (more info on the services page earlier in this newsletter).

We are looking for a pool table for our youth – if you know of one that may be suitable, please drop us a line.

Focus on...

Liz & Sergio Vilela **Serving with BMS World Mission**



Liz and Sergio are located in Beira, Mozambique. They are working alongside the Mozambican Baptist Convention where pre-Covid, Sergio was helping to build capacity in mission training for nationals. Liz and Sergio met in Brazil whilst Sergio was a mission worker with YWAM. After marrying, they worked in Brazil for a year before being called to work in England. They spent three years as youth pastors at Saffron Walden Baptist Church, which is now their sending church. Liz and Sergio had always felt a call to mission overseas, so when their time at their church ended, they sought opportunities to work with BMS. They moved to Mozambique in 2013. They have two children, Chloe and Joshua.



Pre-covid, Liz was involved in PEPE, a pre-school initiative started by BMS. The initiative was run by churches in 60 disadvantaged areas across the country. Over 3,500 children from poor backgrounds had the opportunity learn basic lessons like colours, numbers and the alphabet in creative, interactive ways, preparing them for a good start in school. They were also introduced to stories about Jesus, so are growing in their knowledge of him, too.

Sergio was helping with the rebuilding of various PEPE buildings following Cyclone Idai in 2019. More recently he has been in the process of building two mills, one in Buzi and the other in Dombe, both towns badly affected by the cyclone. Building in Mozambique is not an easy process; the first phase is quite bureaucratic and they required permission from the local government for construction, which often takes a long time when obstacles are created in order to receive bribes. Needless to say, Sergio and his team are 100% against this practice! Praise God, the mill in Dombe was completed in early April. They then started building the mill in Buzi, which will hopefully soon be finished. Sergio and Liz want to thank everyone who has been praying and a channel of financial support for this project; the mills will make a big difference to many people in Mozambique!

It is a real struggle to be a teacher in Mozambique, with a class of up to 100 students and no teaching assistants, a lack of resources, a weak curriculum and many teachers work at two different schools each day. Hence a new project from the government to expand the national curriculum to be of a similar standard to international curriculums. In addition, teachers will be more closely trained and evaluated. It will be interesting to see how Covid-19 restrictions are affecting students' learning as many students now only go to school 2 days a week to reduce class numbers. However, smaller classes mean they are more manageable for teachers, students are given more individual support, the learning environment is more spacious and calm, creating a more positive and productive place to learn. This new project is a positive move to improve education standards so that each child has a greater chance and opportunity to fulfil his/her potential and have a better standard of living in the future.

The Vilelas returned to the UK for home assignment at the end of April, which required the family to stay in hotel quarantine for a couple of weeks – they report that it went as well as it could have gone! Initially their home assignment has consisted of virtual visits but they should be able to visit some churches in person now. Sadly, they won't be able to visit Sergio's sister in Portugal as planned, but the children are enjoying staycation time with their granny.

Liz and Sergio have asked us to pray for:

- the use of the mill in Dombe, that many people will be blessed by it and that God's name will be praised
- the rest of their time on home assignment, that it will continue to be a blessing for them and for others, and for a safe and easy journey back to Beira at the end of July
- all those involved in the education system in Mozambique, that this new project will produce positive results and that the Church will be a positive influence in educational facilities and in the lives of school staff and students.



For more information see: www.bmsworldmission.org/people/liz-and-sergio-vilela/