



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: July 2022

Joy

During the devotional at the beginning of a meeting recently, we were invited to reflect on joy and share our experiences of joy. This followed on from Psalm 66 which begins: "Shout for joy to God, all the earth!". Thinking of my own experiences of joy and taking these to God was both spiritually uplifting and emotionally therapeutic. One of the 5 ways to wellbeing is to "Take notice: remember the simple things that give you joy". We came across this recently in our training for our renew wellbeing drop-in café — and I reckon it works!

In terms of my own recent experiences of joy, I was immediately drawn to the joy that I had recently seen on TV news. Joy on the faces of some refugees from Ukraine. They had come here to Wales and were now able to celebrate the birthday of one of the children with their new hosts. There were snippets of their story in the broadcast, and I was then struck by the palpable joy. A sense of relief and release of joy which was on their faces. What a great joy for them to be able to celebrate this birthday in safety and security. An oasis of celebration after a difficult journey. We pray for them and for all refugees that they find peace and healing as they create new foundations for the future.

I was also drawn to the joy that I had gleaned from the Bible as a surprisingly strong theme as we've worked through our current series in Acts 3–6. This early community of believers had an irrepressible sense of joy. Joy that they had encountered divinity in and through Jesus. Joy that they were saved and reconciled to God. Joy that God was active in and through their community. That God was bringing healing, salvation, grace, revelation and love to them and to any who would receive the good news of Jesus.

In thinking about worship CS Lewis wrote, "I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment".

Penrallt Baptist Church, Holyhead Road, Bangor LL57 2EU

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Psalm 66 concludes with "God has surely listened and heard my prayer. Praise be to God."

Let's get into the habit of taking a pause to praise God.

Blessings,

John

Renew 57

Anyone and everyone is welcome to come to Penrallt on a Thursday morning, where the Canolfan (rear hall) is open from 10:30am to 12:30pm. Bring a hobby to share with someone else, have a cup of tea or coffee and some toast and a chat. There is a separate prayer space (in a different room) available throughout this time for quiet reflection with optional opportunities to be led in short gentle contemplative prayer in the prayer space at the beginning and the end. This is a place where it is "OK not to be OK". An opportunity to give some attention to our mental and spiritual wellbeing. This is running as a pilot until mid-July and we are hoping to keep it going through the summer. Please pray for John and the team.

TFT event: Saturday 2nd July

A speaker from the True Freedom Trust is coming to speak on the topic "Understanding and supporting people who are Bible-believing Christians, are gay and are celibate". This is on Saturday 2nd July, 10:30–12:30. Coffee will be available from 10am. Please register with the office that you are coming by email to office@penrallt.org and feel free to bring a guest along with you. This is not designed or intended to be an open event for the public, rather it is aimed at the congregation of Penrallt and will be assuming some understanding of the Christian faith. Please ask John for more information.

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.*

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Tuesday 19th July

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

Morning Services This Month

Our morning services continue to be in a hybrid format, in the building and on Zoom. Please see the website for up to date information about services and any Covid regulations which may be in force. The link for the Zoom meeting and recordings of past services, where available, are also on the website.

Morning services start at 10:30am on Sundays. 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. During the school summer holiday (from 24th July) the children and young people will remain in the service; activities will be provided for the children and the services will be aimed to engage the young people as well as the adult congregation; parents will be able to take their children through and use the crèche toys in the hall if they need to.

Sunday 3rd July

A Community with a message of hope and healing.

Acts 5:12–21. Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 10th July

A Community defining themselves in the light of the resurrection.

Acts 5:17–42. Preacher: Donald Poirot.

Sunday 17th July

A Community organised for growth.

Acts 6:1–7. Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 24th July

A man who told me everything I ever did.

John 4:1–30. Preacher: Lesley Jackson.

Sunday 31st July (Communion service)

You can't stop God loving you.

Romans 8:31–39. Preacher: Magnus Forrester-Barker.

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 first three sermons this month conclude our series on Community based on the early chapters of Acts. Recordings of the sermons in the series can be found on our website.

Evening Services

Following a successful start in May and June, we are continuing to trial some different evening service formats until the Summer holidays. Some might work, some might not, but we are looking at using that Sunday evening slot to be of use to as many people as possible. Owen (secretary@penrallt.org) would welcome any feedback — but be gentle! And then we will evaluate.

Each of these services will start at 6pm and most are expected to last around an hour to an hour and a half. Note that unlike our morning services, these will not be recorded or broadcast on Zoom. Also, there will not be an evening service on the first Sunday of the month; instead we will continue our fellowship activities in the afternoons, though in July this will be replaced by the Cytûn *Praise at the Pier* service (see below).

Here is the programme for Sunday evenings in July:

Sunday 10th July

Monthly prayer meeting led by Andrew March.

Sunday 17th July

Reflective service led by members of the Delta homegroup.

After 17th July we will be taking a summer break from evening services and aiming to restart in September.

Praise at the Pier

We will be joining with the other churches of Cytûn Bangor at Bangor Pier on Sunday 3rd July at 3pm for *Praise at the Pier*. This short service will include songs and hymns chosen by members of the various churches.

Children's Birthdays in July

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

◇ **Alpha**

We are planning to run our next Alpha course on Wednesday evenings from 28th September. The course will run for 11 weeks. Please pray for Wendy B and the team as they prepare for it, and pray about who you might invite as a guest.

◇ **Baptist Leaders' Fellowship**

The next meeting of the Baptist Leaders' Fellowship is on Friday 15th July, 10am, at Old Colwyn Baptist Church, followed by a soup and bread lunch. The speaker will be Amy Turner from Gobaith Môn, talking about "Youth Work and the Next Generation". This meeting is open to anyone in any position of leadership in a Baptist church in North Wales.

◇ **CAP (Christians Against Poverty) help with debt in Bangor**

There is now a CAP centre (Menai Debt Centre) in Bangor. This helps people who are struggling with debt. The first step is to call the free help line number: 0800 328 0006 (Monday–Thursday 9:30–5:00, Friday 9:30–3:30).

◇ **Church Fellowship Events**

We are not having fellowship events on the first Sunday of July or August. On 3rd July we encourage you instead to go to the Cytûn *Praise at the Pier* event (see previous page). We hope to restart with a beach trip in September.

◇ **Church Meeting**

Our church members' meeting is taking place in the building and on Zoom at 7:30pm on Monday 4th July. Members should by now have received the meeting papers (and Zoom details) by email. If you are not a church member but would like to find out about membership, please speak to John or Owen.

◇ **Foodbanks**

Bangor Cathedral Foodbank is open 2 – 3pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, operating from Tŷ Deiniol (the Diocesan Centre) next to Bangor Cathedral. 'They are able to give people up to two emergency food parcels without a referral from another service. To find out more please visit www.bangorfoodbank.org

Mosaic church also have a Foodbank at Coed Mawr Community Centre, which is open 9:30 – 11 on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings. Contact Christine King on 07734 667011.

◇ **Giving**

We have resumed taking up an offering during our morning services. There is also a donations box at the back of the chapel which you can use if you would like to give financially towards the work of Penrallt, our mission partners and other projects we support. To explore other ways of giving, please speak to Averil (treasurer@penrallt.org) who will be able to advise.

◇ **Hardship Fund**

The church has a small fund 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. 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. There are groups on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on Tuesday and Friday mornings (most groups meet weekly). 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. Please contact the church office if you are not part of a contact, care & prayer group or a homegroup and would like to be.

◇ **Men's Fellowship**

Our men's fellowship group generally meets on the first Wednesday evening of the month. On 6th July at 6pm we are going for a panad at the café on Bangor Pier, followed by a stroll up Bangor Mountain and a brief visit to Magnus' new house in Hirael. Please contact Magnus (office@penrallt.org) for more details.

◇ **Mission Prayer Meeting**

The Penrallt Missions Group will be meeting on Zoom on Wednesday 27th July to hear news updates on our mission partners and pray for them. All are welcome to join us. Please contact Magnus if you would like the Zoom details.

◇ **Open The Book**

Cytûn have an 'Open the Book' team that goes into Hirael school to deliver the dramatized Open the Book Bible Stories and they need more team members. Open the Book is an initiative by the Bible Society. This is a fun and effective way to support having a Christian presence in assembles at primary schools – especially as it has been agreed by educational authorities. This is a very effective ministry and is a great way for Penrallt to continue our links at Hirael too. Please speak to Sarah or John if you are interested and we can you in contact with the team leader (who is at St John's Methodist).

◇ **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/30262793231755)
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/UCwK0IPqAVqGKwQREq6JhHg

www.facebook.com/penralltbc

www.facebook.com/penrallyouth

◇ **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 (01248 750232), Abi Penney (01766 890624); John Thompson (07931 150697). The team are meeting on 19th July — please pray for them.

◇ **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 more interactive Facebook prayer group (see above). 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. Our monthly prayer meetings in the church building are on the second Sunday at 6pm; the next one is 10th July.

◇ **Soul Sisters (Women's Fellowship)**

The next meeting will be on Saturday 9th July from 10:30am at Averil's home, with coffee, cake and lunch for those who wish to stay. The address is Bryngoleu, Llanddaniel, LL60 6DY and there is a lay-by opposite the house with space for 5–6 cars. If it is raining we will meet at Canolfan Penrallt instead. If you would like further details, please contact Averil (01248 421744, treasurer@penrallt.org). A warm welcome is extended to all women, including family and friends. Numbers for lunch would be appreciated.

◇ **Youth: Ignite and Deeper**

Our main youth activities are a Thursday night group called *Ignite* (usually meeting in the Canolfan at 7pm) and a Sunday morning group, *Deeper* (during our morning services). Ignite is open to all, and is a social evening with games and activities. Deeper provides opportunity to find out more about the Christian faith. Find out more on our youth website, www.penrallyouth.org, as well as our *Penrallt Youth Facebook page* and *Instagram group*. Contact our youth worker, Becca (youth@penrallt.org), for more information.

Focus on...

Colm & Catherine Ó Brolcháin

Serving with OM Ireland

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"

2 Corinthians 12:9

Dearest friends,

What a year we have all seen! We are grateful for the opportunity to share what the Lord has been building since our last report. We serve with Operation Mobilisation in Ireland. Colm drives a Big Red Bus as an evangelism tool and Catherine supports the team as a pastoral carer.

We took the opportunity to take an 8 week sabbatical for the first time and we saw the Lord bring us into a place where some issues were revealed but we also gained a deeper revelation of Jesus' sufficiency. Of course we did have some downtime; quite a number of visits to cafés for tea and cake, finding some new walks and a wonderful time at a cottage by the sea in Wexford.

First, some exciting news! We are delighted to tell you that OM in the UK has invited Colm and the Big Red Bus to be part of their 2 week outreach for the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham from July 26th to August 9th. We want to invite you to join this outreach just down the road! <https://www.om.org/int/opportunities/commonwealth-games-option-1-uk>

The bus has been invited again by the Community Council in Carna Connemara, to be part of the *Féile Mhic Dara*, a two day celebration of Saint Mhic Dara the patron saint of the Fishermen in that area. The bus went once before and many, many people had faith conversations and received New Testaments. It is miraculous that the village committee has invited this blatantly Christian bus to their festival, Praise God!

It will be "all hands on deck" here at the office, we are really excited that we will have more teams coming in July and August, there is always such a buzz on site as we train and care for them before we launch them out to work with the Irish Churches! We have a team from "Exodus", returning to us after a successful initial partnership last summer with the Exodus Organisation in Northern Ireland. A team of 8 teenagers are coming in July to help a small church in Roscommon run a Bible Kid's camp. We have another team of 8 joining us for the last week of July, all from Switzerland. They will serve a small church in Mullingar to help with evangelism during the National traditional Irish music festival, the *Fleadh Cheoil*. The streets and venues will be full of people and at previous events there were lots of opportunities to share faith.

Catherine continues to come alongside about 30 adults on our team, some are singles but most are families. She visits them in their own homes or for coffee in their nearest town. She is also part of any resolution needed in any conflicts that arise. Praise God as we see people willing to seek the Lord, submit to His word and move forward in a more Godly manner.

One stressor for many people on our team is the need for visa approval to remain in Ireland and it has been a joy to see the Lord making a way; one team member has just been granted Irish Citizenship and two families are now eligible to apply to be Irish citizens



Thank you dear friends for praying for us and supporting us over the last year.