



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: February 2022

Your best days may still be ahead of you!

Who do you think of when you think of amazing comebacks? When someone was thought to be past it, and then they came back to do something amazing. Perhaps a sporting figure. Maybe Alex Higgins who won the snooker final in 1983 after coming back from an overdose, rehab, and almost losing his first match. Perhaps Liverpool coming from back 3-0 down in the first half to win the European Champions League in 2005? Or perhaps you think of a rock band – like Status Quo rumoured to be planning yet another comeback in 2023!

The Bible is full of amazing comebacks. Perhaps the greatest figure of the Old Testament, Moses, committed murder and ran away to live in the desert for 40 years. God then called him to a 'comeback' to lead the people of God out of the land of Egypt amidst miraculous signs and wonders of God's power. Or one of the disciples, Peter. He failed his Lord - denying Jesus and running away after promising that he would stay. Jesus called Peter to a 'comeback' to be one of the most significant leaders of the New Testament Church. You could count David, Jonah and many others. Or Caleb who followed God faithfully, and late in life led his tribe to victory. We should also mention the thief on the cross who turned to Jesus and trusted in him for salvation in the last hours of his life. He wasn't able to do anything to show for it, and yet he is remembered throughout history as a sign of God's incredible grace.

You might be feeling a bit flat right now and feeling that things are difficult. And you might be right. But, as Mark Elder said speaking at Fresh Streams to encourage leaders in Baptist Churches, 'Even if right now at this moment you feel like toast, your best days may well be in front of you.'

The amazing thing about the gospel is that God never runs out of giving us second chances.

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Describing Jesus, the prophet Isaiah writes (ch 42), "A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope."

Jesus has amazing plans and purposes for us. For all of us. Let's keep trusting in him and stepping out in faith to do the things he calls us to do – large or small.

Blessings,

John

Cytûn AGM

The Cytûn (Churches Together in Bangor) AGM will take place on Tuesday 15th February on Zoom, starting at 7:30pm. The guest speaker is Revd. Deb Stammers, minister of Holyhead Baptist Church. Everyone is welcome. Zoom link to follow.

In-Person Events

For all events and activities due to be taking place in person, please check with the organiser or on the website before attending for any up-to-date Covid regulations, cancellations or moves to online events.

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 February

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 February

Frontline 5: Together We Grow. Preacher: John Thompson.

Sunday 13th February

Preacher: Arwel Jones (Capel Caersalem, Caernarfon).

Sunday 20th February (Baptismal service)

Preacher: John Thompson.

Please speak to John, our minister, if you are interested in being baptised at a future date.

Sunday 27th February (Communion service)

Preacher: Siân Rees (Director of EA Wales).

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 6th February is the final part of our Frontline series on whole-life discipleship and mission, based on material from the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC). The remaining sermons this month are not part of a series.

Prayer Meeting: Wednesday 9th February at 7:30pm in the rear hall (please come in via the side door, as the CU are using the chapel for their mission meetings that week). For more details of this and our weekly prayer meetings, see Prayer Resources later in this newsletter.

◇ **Alpha**

Our Alpha course started on 30th January and will run in the church building on Sunday evenings until around Easter. For the first few weeks it is not too late for guests to join so please keep inviting your friends and praying for them. Please pray for the Alpha team as well.



◇ **Building**

In line with current Covid regulations you don't need to book places for our services but you must still sign in on arrival, wear a mask (unless exempt) and comply with other Covid regulations (see www.penrallt.org/services/index.php). 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, on Sunday 6th February at 1:30pm will be a flat walk from Bangor Nature Reserve in Tal-y-Bont towards Abergwyngregyn along the coastal path (and back). Although flat it is a mud path rather than tarmac and can be narrow in places. Booking is required for Track & Trace purposes; more details on the booking page: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/penrallt-fellowship-walk-tickets-236250831597>

The March walk will be to Aber Falls, on 6th March. Further details on the booking page: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/penrallt-fellowship-walk-tickets-260614052647>

◇ **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**

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 front of the chapel (near the ramp) 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.

◇ **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 February** in the rear hall, as the CU are using the main hall for their events week; please enter by the side door. We will focus on praying for growth and fruitfulness on our frontlines, based on Colossians 1:3-14.

◇ **Safeguarding Training**

We are running safeguarding courses on Saturday 5th February and Saturday 5th March (level 2 in the morning and level 3 in the afternoon each day). 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 welcome students to Penrallt. You are encouraged to take part in church activities and join a homegroup. For more information about student activities and how Penrallt can support you, and vice versa, please contact John on students@penrallt.org or see our [Penrallt Student Fellowship](http://www.facebook.com/penralltstudentfellowship) Facebook group.

◇ **World Day of Prayer**

This year's World Day of Prayer falls on Friday 4th March and Penrallt will be hosting a service for the churches of Bangor. The time and other details are still to be confirmed but the service will be on the theme "I know the plans I have for you" and will be based on material provided by Christian women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

◇ **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.

Please pray for...

- The deacons' meeting on 16th February
- The CU mission week from 7th February (see next page for details)
- Open The Book and Bangor Street Pastors, as both these groups are seeking to restart their activities as soon as possible (and will be needing new volunteers to join their teams, so please prayerfully consider if you could be one of them — contact the church office if you would like more information).

Children's Birthdays in February

7th: Afan Hedd Whitton

10th: Rosa Tough



Bangor University Christian Union "Human" Events Week



As a CU coming into February we are turning our attention to our events week (7th-11th February).

There looked to be some uncertainty as to what the week would look like with the restrictions that were in place in the new year. We are, therefore, so thankful to God that there are no longer limits on the numbers at our meetings and that this year's events week will look to be fairly 'normal'.

In the weeks running up to our events week the CU are praying and preparing. We have been using our weekly main meetings to learn how to utilise the resource of *Uncover Mark*, putting an emphasis on personal evangelism, as well as looking to the Bible to show why and how evangelism is so important. We are also blessed with the support of the local churches in Bangor in joining with us to pray for the upcoming events.

Our mission statement as a CU is to give every student the opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel of Christ. We have had incredible opportunity's across the last year to share this gospel with God bringing more people than we would ever expect along to our events in October and November but our prayer in the coming month is that people would not just come and hear but they would respond to the gospel, that we would see lives saved.

From 7th-11th February there will be two events each day: A more casual and apologetic style 'lunch bar' each afternoon in Paddy's pub and an evening event which directs students to look more at themselves, held at Penrallt. Our theme across the week is Human with a specific focus each day (Human Design; Human Meaning; Human Pain; Human Community; Human Love). We know that these events do not come together through our own strength but through the Lord and prayer is such a vital way to support the CU. We would ask that you pray for:

- - The students God will bring along, that he would work in their hearts and open their eyes. That they will be saved.
- - The speakers coming, as they prepare God would be directing them.
- - CU members, in their enthusiasm for sharing the gospel and their boldness in speaking with friends.
- - Energy and strength through what will be a tiring week.
- - Protection from Covid (there are currently some cases in the CU so we pray they won't spread).
- - God's provision in the practicalities. We know he is gracious and good.

Thank you for your support! If you would like more information, you can follow the CU Instagram @bangorchristianunion or to receive the CU prayer letter please email: cu@undebbangor.com