



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter for January 2014

"Peter," my alarm clock said in a polite voice, "It's time to wake up."

"Go away!" I snapped.

"No Peter," my alarm clock replied with measured patience, "I am not programmed to go away. I am an alarm clock. Alarm clocks do not move. They stay in place and inform you when it is time to wake up and get out of bed."

"Well stay where you are and shut up!"

"Peter, You're being unreasonable. You know it's my purpose in life to do this."

"And I have no purpose for the next hour except go back to sleep!"

"Peter," and if alarm clocks could sigh this one would have, "I sincerely advise you to get up now. You will no longer feel tired once you are up and functioning."

"As if you would understand *Tired!* You only understand *'off'* and *'on'*"

"Peter," and I'll swear the thing grew a halo at this point, "God wants you up because you need to pray this morning."

"Ah," I replied, somehow finding a verse of scripture in my befuddled brain, "you mean, 'Arise o sleeper and Christ will give you life.'?"

"No, Peter, I was thinking more of 'Watch and pray that you do not enter into temptation.'"

I silently cursed the relative who gave me a scripture-quoting alarm clock for Christmas.

I must have momentarily drifted off again because I was snapped back to the waking world by the alarm clock's annoying monotone.

"Peter, this is achieving nothing. You will have to get up."

"Yeah, yeah, I know. Because I could be up and praying by now if I'd listened to you."

"And what, may I ask, is your objection to praying?"

I groaned.

If there's one thing worse than a talking alarm clock, it's one that can beat you in argument. This one would probably have beaten me at chess too.

"I don't have any more objection to praying than I do to getting up," I answered carefully. Not that I was scared of offending the digital fascist flashing 7:06 in my face, but I didn't want to offend God who really

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would take some answering at this point. "My feeling is that I know I must do both, just not right now."

"And, Peter, that's how you get to go through life without praying. There'll come a moment when you have to get out of bed however you feel. But you can always put off praying. Circumstances are going to leave you with no possibility of staying in bed very soon. But only the most dire straits will force you to pray."

"Yes, yes. I see that. I'm just hoping that God isn't as demanding as you are."

I rolled over and pulled the quilt over my head.

"Peter," said the alarm clock without a trace of menace in its voice, "you do know I can turn into a telephone and ring if you are too obstinate?"

"OK," I whimpered, "I'm getting up."

"Then I am satisfied," said the alarm clock with condescending grace.

"And before you nag me anymore," I conceded, "I'll give my prayer life an overhaul once I've had my breakfast."

The alarm clock slipped quietly into 'time' mode and I'll swear I heard it chuckle.

Join us in our evening services if you too fancy a 'prayer overhaul'.

God bless,
Peter

THANK YOU: With this edition Gwyneth Brindley is stepping down as editor of the monthly news letter after 32 years of service. Yes, you read that correctly. 32 years and nearly 400 editions. Thank you Gwyneth! You are greatly appreciated. (Please send material for future newsletters to Magnus on 01248 353355 or office@penrallt.org.)

SERVICES IN JANUARY

(In the morning services we will continue looking at the book of Acts, while the evening services will follow the theme "Praying through life" as we aim to deepen our prayer life together. Expect interactive Bible Study, videos and homework.)

5 Jan

10.30am ***Why is God's Kingdom dangerous and untameable (to unbelievers)? Ans: Because it's based on forgiveness.***
Acts 9:1-19

2.15pm Service at Bontnewydd

6.00pm Communion Service: Roger Borlace ***One thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal.***
Phil.3:13,14

12 Jan

10.30am

Go for it, God!*Acts 9:32-43*

6.00pm

The brutally simple question. Do we pray enough?*Luke 18:1-9***19 Jan**

10.30am

Gwyn Parry.

Do you get it?*Mark 8:14-21*

6.00pm

The Overcomers' Prayer*Exodus 17:8-13***26 Jan**

10.30am

Communion Service

Acts 10:1-28

6.00pm

Reconnecting to God through Scripture***Our Speakers in January***

Peter Cousins is the minister of the church. **Roger Borlace** is a retired Baptist Minister, a member of Penrallt. **Rev. Gwyn Parry** is the minister of Kinmel Bay Church. www.kinmelbaychurch.org.uk

CHURCH LUNCH

We will host a church lunch on **Sunday January 5th**. Please bring enough buffet style "finger food" for yourselves and one or two others.

Faith Café

After church from Sunday evening 12th January we will be again hosting Faith Café for students, teenagers and other young adults. Starting around 7:15 pm it is an evening of chat, interviews, music and discussions. There is a short programme at around 7:40 after which you are free to leave or stay and chat.

<i>SPECIAL DATES IN JANUARY</i>
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Monday 6

7:30pm

Church Members' Meeting

Wednesday 8

10:30am

Men's Prayer Meeting followed by coffee in Options

Saturday 11

9:30-1:00

Bible Unzipped in Rhos on Sea Presbyterian Church

Monday 13

7:30pm

Worship Committee at Magnus' house.

Thursday 23

7:30pm

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service in Penrallt (see below for more details of other meetings).

Monday 27

7:30pm

Missions Group Meeting

Tuesday 28

Alpha Reunion

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

- Monday 20** 7.30pm in the Cathedral – Opening Service with guest speaker Rev Keith Clements (former General Secretary of the Conference of European Churches)
- Tuesday 21** 2.00pm in the Friends Meeting House, Dean Street
- Wednesday 22** 7.30pm in Pendref, High Street
- Thursday 23** 7.30pm in Penrallt
- Friday 24** 7.30 pm in Our Lady and St James'

WEEKDAYS

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	10.30am	Men's Prayer Meeting	Peter Cousins (353878)
Wed	2.00pm	Carers' Home Group	Carol Morris (208407)
Wed	7.00pm	Students' Homegroup (in Peter's office)	Ben Bowden-Pickstock (07872 531601)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, The Nomads	Jess & Seamus Adams (421185) Susan Cousins (353878)
Wed	7.30pm	HG, Bethesda	Jon & Deb Stammers (602868)
Wed	6-9pm	HG, Maes Y Dref	Bryan & Ann Collis (353173)
Wed	8.00pm	HG, Grŵp Cymraeg	Owen & Nia Lloyd Evans (352634)
Thu	10.30am	Post-Alpha Bible Study	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Thu	7.30pm	HG, Llanfairpwll	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Fri	10.30am - noon	Cheeky Monkeys	Joan Rymer (713003)
Fri	10.30 – 12.30pm	HG, 6 Maes y Dref	Anne Collis (353173) anne@collis66.freeseve.co.uk
Sat	8.30am	Prayer Meeting	

NEWS OF PEOPLE

Malcolm Stammers had open heart surgery just before Christmas and is recovering. **Ian Kelso** is much recovered after his surgery.

Hearty congratulations to **Sarah Plum** on her accreditation as a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist by the British Association of Behavioural & Cognitive Psychotherapies.

Children's Birthdays in January:

1st: Ben Thomas; **3rd:** Belle Owen; **18th:** Jay Mapatac; **19th:** Sian Snyman;
20th: Miriam Harmens; **25th:** Amy Owen; **30th:** Luke Hearth

NOTICEBOARD

- ***Men's Prayer Meeting*** ***Wednesday 8 January*** ***10.30am***
The men will meet for prayer as usual on Wednesday morning. Time spent in prayer will be followed by coffee in Options. All are welcome to join us.

- ***Penrallt Walking Group*** ***Monday 20 January*** ***10.30am***
The church walking group is meeting outside the pub in Llanddona at 10.30 on Monday Jan 20th to go for a short ramble, down to the beach, along to the car park, and back up the fairly steep road to the pub, after which we're invited to the home of Roger & Pat for a simple lunch of soup, bread and cheese.
If you need help with transport, ring Roger & Pat, 01248 713146.

- ***Bible Unzipped***
Bible Unzipped is run by a group of local ministers who have a passion for Biblical Theology. Its aim is to unpack Scripture with those interested in learning more than can be offered in a Sunday sermon. It also equips those leading in the church with some tools for studying and teaching from the Bible. The histories of the texts themselves, the different ways they have been interpreted and their use for contemporary life and personal devotion will be considered.
Bible unzipped meets monthly on a Saturday morning at Rhos-on-Sea URC from 9:30am to 1pm, usually on the second Saturday. Each morning includes three sessions which develop a theme through the term. The themes for this term are: Mark's Gospel, Bible Translation and The Time Traveller's Guide to the Reformation (taught by Peter).
The course is free and Peter has room in his car for 4 others if you are interested.

- ***Vote For Street Pastors***
Help Street Pastors obtain a grant of £3,500 by voting for them online. The money comes from assets seized from criminals under the Proceeds of Crime Act and funds from the Police and Crime Commissioner and is available for community projects to help cut crime and reduce antisocial behaviour. Vote and ask your families and friends to do so.
Please visit the website:
http://www.north-wales.police.uk/contact/your_community_voting.aspx
You can vote either through the medium of English or Welsh. You are asked to select your area; please select "Gwynedd", scroll down to "Bangor Street Pastors", click "vote for this project" and then confirm your vote.

➤ ***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 vouchers which are distributed to the homeless by the Cathedral via St Mary's Shelter. The total so far collected is £4518.

➤ ***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.

➤ ***Pastoral Help***

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

Pat Borlace 713146; Judy Stammers 364394; Geoff Moore 410582
Helen Thomas 600174

Deadline for next month's newsletter Sunday 19 January
Please send information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org or 353355)

FOCUS ON...

Street Pastors – from Bangor to Badagry

Having served as a Street Pastor within the Bangor team since its inception three years back, I felt particularly blessed when asked to consider going to Badagry, Nigeria to train, commission and launch the sixty plus street pastor delegates, marking the first SP initiative in Nigeria and indeed in the African continent. Our team from the Ascension Trust was made up of Pastor Jimi Adelede, a Nigerian by birth himself, as project leader, Michael Freeman and I as trainers. I could write volumes on the extremely tense daily living we did as the direct consequence of political unrest, terrorism, total lack of law and order, excessive presence of guns and check points and the overwhelming corruption; one never felt safe. But then that would negate the sheer delight of working with these simple, lovable people from the little town of Badagry about forty miles north of Lagos.



The town struck us as dirty, dusty, poor and chaotic but in a way we fell in love with it as days went by! The temperature was soaring over 39 degrees with the humidity to match. We had to rewrite the training materials in such a way that we do the whole lot in four days working from 3 to 7pm as most people came after work and nobody went out anywhere after 8pm unless one wanted to be picked up and put in prison or get shot at. Considering that the UK street pastors complete their training over a period of months, covering

the lot in around twenty hours was no mean job. But what an enthusiastic bunch of people they were! They sucked it in! They were so committed, enthusiastic! Despite the fact that Michael and I had neither met nor trained together before, we managed to deliver the training creditably; a testimony to the prayer support we had from our UK bases. As indeed was the achievement of each detail in totally adverse surroundings – the shipment of uniforms did not arrive until the very last minute; once they did come, transporting it in our car was tricky as we had to pass through eleven check points manned by gun waving soldiers who could have opened the car and removed some, most or all of what we were carrying or indeed any one of us. The power of prayer again! We were not searched once and we remained safe!

Unlike us in the UK they will patrol the streets from 4 – 7pm as that is the period when people are out on the streets. After 7pm it is not safe to be out. The guys and girls were so eager to get to the streets; we commissioned 49 of them after four days' training and then patrolled the streets with them over the next four days. Believe me they will have a lot to do as drinks and drugs are so freely available; many young people are out there wandering aimlessly often being picked up the police. We visited the male prison, the memory of which will haunt me for a long time. Human bodies packed into windowless, airless rooms at escalating temperatures; you can imagine the stench! Empty, hopeless eyes staring at us; they could be there for a long time as the judiciary and justice system is collapsing. Some of them asked us to pray for them, we did despite a number of others starting to chant loud to drown our prayers.

My overall impression of the event? The work was hard under scary, gruelling conditions but entirely blessed; I feel that I was there as part of God's plan. People were right in warning me not to go but whilst there I felt protected by prayer; it has been a privilege to have been part of a momentous move, a triumph of Christians over a lot of evil. Please pray for the safety and developing work of the Badagry street pastors. Their work is so desperately needed.

Roshni E Verghese