



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: January 2016

*"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year
Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown"*

(poem by Minnie Louise Haskins, popular during the early years of World War II)

I wonder if you have a picture in your mind of the man who stood at the gate of the year – would he be ancient, white haired and bent in an Old Father Time sort of way? In my mind the man who stood at the gate of the year looks like my old English teacher, Mr Butterfield. It was Mr Butterfield who gave me a love of all things wordy and poetic and Shakespeary, and Mr Butterfield had a catch phrase all of his own. Whenever he set us some work to do, and we looked like we were flagging, or getting bogged down, which was often, he'd always say... **"Press on"** in a sort of strange monotone that only Mr Butterfield could do, although it didn't stop us trying. **"Pressss ooonnn"** he would say, and **"Preeesssss ooonnnnn"** we would say to each other, behind his back, giggling.

And to us sixth formers (that's year twelve in modern-speak) – sorry Mr Butterfield – to *we* sixth formers (that doesn't sound quite right either) Mr Butterfield was more ancient, more white-haired, more bent over than Old Father Time's great granddad – hence, for me, the likeness to the man who stood at the gate of the year. So we sixth formers were really surprised when, 25 years later, we organised a school reunion, Mr Butterfield was actually alive and writing us a letter saying that he couldn't come for health reasons, but he wished us well and urged us, no doubt with a twinkle in his eye, to **press on!!**

Well it was Mr Butterfield who taught me about irony after all, but also about encouragement, because – and it took me long enough to realise – that every time that Mr B was saying to us **Press on** he was quoting Paul's words about knowing Christ and the power of his resurrection in Philippians 3:12 :-

"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one this I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus."

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What a great message from the man at the gate of the year. As a church we've been reflecting on new beginnings ever since we said goodbye to Peter in September and now here we are at another new beginning: a new beginning pretty infamous for resolutions being broken virtually as soon as they are made, because the changes we want haven't happened straight away. We are at a new beginning where to look back is easier because to look forward into the scary unknown is so much harder. It's a time when it would be easy to flag or get bogged down. And Paul says to us – don't look back, but look to what is ahead, and *press on* – keep going. Keep going as a church focused in its search for a new minister, keep going as a community of love open to new gifts of the Spirit, keep going towards what God has planned for us. Keep going towards whatever is ahead, because, even though it is still unknown, it's all part of the prize for which God has called us.

*"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year
Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.*

*Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way..."*

Happy New Year
and Preesss ooonnn!!!

Diane

Services This Month:

Note that in January we are beginning a sermon series in the morning services on the Fourth Book of Psalms and a series in the evening services on the Parables of Jesus.

3 January

- 10:30am Speaker: Roger Borlace *Jeremiah 31:31-34*
God's Covenants With Us
- 6:00pm Communion Service Speaker: Bryan Collis
The Rich Man & Lazarus *Parables #1: Luke 16:19-31*

10 January

- 10:30am Speaker: Diane Holmes
A Song for All Times *Songs for God's People #1: Psalm 90*
- 6:00pm Speaker: Neil Rymer
The Prodigal Father *Parables #2: Luke 15:11-32*

17 January

- 10:30am Speaker: Phil Jump
- 6:00pm Speaker: TBC
The Good Samaritan *Parables #3: Luke 10:30-35*

24 January

- 10:30am Speaker: Geoff Birch
Under His Wings *Songs for God's People #2: Psalm 91*
- 6:00pm Speaker: Jon Stammers
The Parable of the Talents *Parables #4: Luke 19:12-27;
Matthew 25:14-30*

31 January

- 10:30am Communion Service Speaker: Trevor Casey
Songs for God's People #3: Psalm 93
- 6:00pm Speaker: Deb Stammers
Trouble at the Vineyard *Parables #5: Luke 20:9-19*

Our Speakers This Month:

Phil Jump is the Regional Minister for the North Western Baptist Association, **Trevor Casey** is the minister of Sussex Street Baptist Church, Rhyl. The speaker for the evening of 17th January is yet to be confirmed. The other speakers are all members of Penrallt.

Dates for Your Diary:

- Sunday 3** 2:45pm Service at Plas Garnedd residential home in Llanberis.
- Monday 4** 7:30pm Deacons' meeting (NB the church members' meeting has now been postponed to 1st February).
- Saturday 9** 9:30am-1pm Bible Unzipped at Rhos on Sea URC.
- Monday 11** 7:30pm Search Group Meeting.
- Monday 18 - Friday 22** Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: **Salt of the Earth**
- Monday 18th January 7:30pm at St John's Methodist Church
Opening Service
- Tuesday 19th January 7:30pm (*venue to be confirmed*)
Let the stone be rolled away
- Wednesday 20th January 9am – 6pm (*venue to be confirmed*)
Day of prayer for refugees
- Thursday 21st January 7:30pm at Berea Newydd
The witness of fellowship
- Friday 22nd January 7:30pm at Our Lady and St James
Hearts burning for unity
- Monday 18** 10:30am Church walk from Bangor to Bethesda.
- Monday 25** 7pm Alpha Course starts at the Belle Vue.
- Saturday 30** 9:30am Penrallt Railway Group construction day.

Please see the Noticeboard section of this newsletter for more about most of these events.

News of People:

Mari Roberts is recovering well following major surgery last month. Please pray for her full healing and recovery. Please continue to pray, too, for **Joan & Tony Mason** and for **Eileen & Phil McKenna** in their ongoing health struggles.

Congratulations to **Andy Lemon** for being appointed as the deputy head of mathematics in Ysgol John Bright (Llandudno).

Colin & Monica Morris will be spending 8 weeks working with street children in India in January and February. Please pray for them. If you would like more information, please ask Magnus.

We are delighted to welcome **Trudie & Duncan Tough** (with Reuben) back from PNG for the birth of their second child expected in February; it is wonderful to have them back with us in Penrallt for quite some time.

Children's Birthdays in January:

1st: Ben Thomas 3rd: Belle Owen 18th: Jay Mapatac
19th: Siân Snyman 20th: Miriam Harmens 25th: Amy Owen

Weekday Events:

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

HG = Home Group

| Day | Time | Details | Contacts |
|------------|-----------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Tue | 7:30pm | 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 | 7:30pm | HG, Bethesda | Jon & Deb Stammers (602868) |
| Wed | 7:30pm | HG, Nomads | Pat & Roger Borlace (713146) |
| 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) | Ceri Walker (07581 452098) |
| Fri | 10:30am-12:30pm | HG, Maes y Dref | Anne Collis (353173) |
| Sat | 8:30am | Prayer Meeting | |

Noticeboard:

◇ **New Year Alpha Course, and Something New** ????????????????

Yes, questions. We love to have them on ALPHA. And we love to have guests to ask them! So please think about anyone you know, your neighbours, friends, colleagues, who you could invite to be guests on ALPHA at Penrallt, starting on Monday 25th January (NB this year's course will be on Monday nights, except the second week when it will be on Tuesday 2nd February). And **what's new?** It's the **Course venue...** at **The Belle Vue** pub, just next to Penrallt. Thinking is one thing, praying is crucial. So to help you pray for ALPHA, there will be available during January small prayer cards which are aids to praying for ALPHA. Please visit the ALPHA stand in the Canolfan on Sundays where you will find a member of the Team who will be happy to help with any questions you may have.

◇ **Bible Unzipped** *Saturday 9th January 9:30am-1pm*

Bible Unzipped aims 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. We meet monthly on the second Saturday morning at Rhos-on-Sea URC from 9:30am to 1pm. Each morning includes three sessions. The course is free. This month's programme: *Four Gospels, One Message (Part I)* (Philip Nye); *How to have confidence in Christian contemplation* (Rob Beamish); *Great Worship Services I: Welcoming the Ark (a time-traveller's guide)* (Jon Stammers).

◇ **Church Lunch** *Sunday 3rd January*

Please bring enough buffet style food for yourselves and one or two others.

◇ **Church Walk** *Monday 18th January 10:30am*

We'll meet at 10:30 outside Debenham's in Bangor for a four hour walk to Bethesda, via the cycle track and Ogwen Bank. It's a flat, easy walk, so sandals will be adequate, weather permitting. Walkers are advised to bring a packed lunch, and money for the cafe and the bus back to Bangor. Alternatively those who wish can walk back by a shorter route.

◇ **Faith Café**

A big thank you to everyone who made soup or gave bread, cheese or cakes last term. Faith Cafe will start again on January 17th and we'd love to hear from you if you could make soup or contribute any of the above. Please see Mari in church or contact her (Mob. 07443038183, marikelso@yahoo.co.uk or 421783). Thank you!

◇ **Men's Prayer Meeting** *Wednesday 6th January 10:30am*

Time spent in prayer will be followed by coffee in Options. All men are welcome.

◇ **Ministry in Spirit (Training for Prayer Ministry)**

We are aiming to hold a three session course on "Ministry in Spirit" around the end of January and beginning of February, following on from the taster session in December (though you don't need to have been to that to attend the course). Dates and venue to be confirmed according to take-up. Anyone interested should speak to Andrew March (email dtp4you13@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

◇ **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: Pat Borlace (713146); Adrienne Ferrada; Gwen Hicks; Geoff Moore (410582); Lawrence Moss (713793); Judy Stammers (364394); Helen Thomas (600174).

◇ **Penrallt Railway Group**

The PRG will be holding a construction day in the Twrgwyn Room on Saturday 30th January, from 9:30am, to continue work on our model railway layout. You are welcome to join us. For more information please contact Andrew (tel. 01286 871630) or Lawrence (tel. 01248 713793).

◇ **Pray for Penrallt Every Day**

We believe in prayer and encourage people to pray. You can send prayer request to our electronic diary via office@penrallt.org (there are also prayer cards in the church porch that you can fill in). Better still, you can receive the prayer diary straight to your inbox every Monday (except bank holidays) by emailing the office now and requesting to be put on the list. For more immediate and interactive sharing of prayers, search on Facebook for *Penrallt Prayer Point* and send a request to join our group.

◇ **Rough Sleepers**

The church's policy is not to give money directly to the rough sleepers in Upper Bangor. Be warned that some of them can be aggressive. You will find brown envelopes in the porch for a gift that will buy meal vouchers which are distributed to rough sleepers by the Cathedral.

◇ **Sunday Afternoon Services**

We visit residential homes in the area once a month on a Sunday afternoon, alternating between Haulfre (in Llangoed, on Anglesey, starting at 2:15pm) and Plas Garnedd (in Llanberis, starting at 2:45pm), usually on the first Sunday. This month we are due to visit Plas Garnedd on **Sunday 3rd January**.

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 24th January.

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

All notices should be submitted in writing (preferably by email) as early as possible.

Focus on...



Street Pastors in Bangor and Beyond...

Most Penrallt folk are familiar with the name. But who are we? What do we do, really?

We have heard many interpretations of the name, on the streets of Bangor, most notably, "You guys are f.....g crazy but nice; you can't be real!" Seriously?

There we are, out on the streets, regularly on all Friday nights and most Saturdays; a team of four from different churches and denominations; no matter what the weather; from 10pm to 4am or thereabouts; till the last person has gone home from the street. The Street Pastors are a symbol of peace, calm, stability, safety, non-judgemental attitude and practical support, bringing the church into the centre of our troubled, anti-social and broken community. In essence we take the church to the streets; we do not preach the gospel, we do not attempt to convert people, we do not refrain from helping anyone despite their faith or lack of it, their age, race or sexual orientation. We give answers to questions regarding these issues but from a totally neutral perspective; of course we do talk about our Lord if asked deeply searching questions. We believe that the streets of our towns are places of opportunity to help and care for people; to show people love through small acts of practical care; we potentially soften and absorb the aggression and foul language that dominate many lives.

So, a bit of history? The Street Pastor initiative started as the churches' response to the drugs, gangs and gun crime scene and subsequent violent deaths in our inner cities; it was spearheaded by the Ascension Trust under the leadership of Revd Les Isaac in 2001 after his visit to Jamaica to experience the work being done there by two pastors – Bobby Wilmot and Bruce Fletcher. In 2003 the UK initiative of the Street Pastor movement was launched in two areas in London – Lambeth and Hackney with 18 street pastors, 15 women and 3 men. Today the Ascension Trust has, in the UK, over 13,000 trained Street Pastors and the movement has spread right across the world. We are proud to be part of that; we are even more proud to be Bangor Street Pastors.

In Bangor there are currently 29 trained, active Pastors and the number is increasing. Cytûn (Churches Together) has oversight of it but we are managed by a Management Committee and led by a Co-ordinator; seven of us are Team Leaders who will lead the team of four each night we are out. In accordance with our 'urban trinity' (the Church, Police and Local Government) structure we work with all three on a voluntary basis. We have developed excellent relationships with all aspects of Bangor's night life – the local people, student population, door staff, Police officers and so on – and are well regarded for our impartial, prejudice free and helping presence which in itself is a de-escalator in many potentially violent situations. We quietly move along the streets of upper and lower Bangor keeping watch over bare footed, drunk and struggling-to-stay-on-their-feet girls, cantankerous boys trying out bravado and men and women on the verge of collapse or fist fight! Night life in Bangor! You have got to see it to believe it! The language – if you remove the letter F from their alphabet a lot of them will be totally speechless! We wonder if most of them remember a thing the following morning. We have no weapons, no enforcement powers but we have positive regard and love in our hearts; and practical stuff in our kits – flip flops, lollipops, plasters, space blankets, lighter, body warmers, sick bags, water – all in great demand. We look out for trouble, we walk lonely girls and troubled boys home, we help people to secure taxis, we direct many to train and bus stations, we clear up bottles and broken glass, in a dire emergency we call the police or ambulance, we respond to requests from the police or door staff; all in a night's work.

We would not be able to do what we do without the support – spiritual and food-wise – of our Prayer Pastors who hold us up in prayer whilst we are on patrol.

We consider it a privilege to be twinned with our brother and sister Street Pastors in Badagry, Nigeria.

Anyone like to join us or support us by becoming a prayer pastor? Talk to us.

God bless

Roshni