



Penrallt Baptist Church

Newsletter: January 2018

Dear God,

It's about 2017.

I have things to say but I don't know how, because you're God and I'm just me. I know you know this, but I still want to try. I hope that's all right.

It's been a tough year. Sometimes, I have thought I have given up on you. Sometimes, I have thought you have given up on me. Is it too honest to say that, God? I feel bad, but sometimes I really think that I have known better. Over the last year there have been situations you could have intervened in and places where you could have brought hope in my life and in others. Why didn't you, God? Why didn't you do what I think you should have done?

Now I really feel terrible. I shouldn't have said that. I don't mean it and yet... I sort of do. I keep seeing faces on the news that speak of terror and violence and despair. My troubles seem nothing then, but yet they are still there. It is all so overwhelming. So many people are suffering. So. Many. People. I am struggling, Lord, to see your hand and hear your voice in it all.

These are not the things I talk about in the queue for coffee after the Sunday service. Instead I'm writing them in the January newsletter. I want to shout my doubt in print. But, the truth is, God – I'm shouting from my knees.

Here I am, Lord – my arms stretched out and my faith quivering in my hands. In spite of everything you are and have done, I still can't believe you have grace for the writer of these faithless words. But you do, don't you? You actually do. You even get it. You understand. You are waiting for me to finish so that you can remind me who you are and what you have promised. I want to erase everything I have written here, but you say, no – let it stand... and then fall. And I will Lord, because you are truly everything and when it is all over, you are always there. My feelings will ebb and flow but your gracious presence will remain constant.

So, about 2017. It's in your hands, not mine. It's about you, not me and you are good. I can't make promises about 2018. But you can. You have. You have. I just need to say, "thank you" and stand on them.

"But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds." (Psalm 73:28; NIV)

Saturday 27th January: 'Walk Through the Old Testament' with Paul Keeys. A journey from Genesis to Malachi – 39 books in 6 hours. This journey will follow the historical events as they happened, 77 steps all actively enacted. It will be an experience not to be missed, bringing the Old Testament to life, revealing how God has influenced His people here on earth and how the people responded to God.

Walk through the BIBLE

Penrallt Baptist Church

Saturday 27th January 2018

10:00am – 4:30pm

What's the big idea?

Putting together

The BIG PICTURE

Of the Bible

Bringing the Bible to life

OLD TESTAMENT

Tickets for the event are available from the Walk Through the Bible website (www.bible.org.uk) or at the door for £14, but you can get them for just £10 by booking in advance through the Penrallt office; the ticket price includes a workbook; please bring a packed lunch. Please speak to Neil or Magnus if you would like to book a ticket (NB you will need to pay before you receive one!). Children aged 11–16 can attend for free if accompanied by an adult (but will not receive a workbook unless buying a ticket). The event is not suitable for younger children.

Advance notice: there will be a similar event for the New Testament on Saturday 3rd March.

Services This Month

We are delighted to have our minister, Freddy, back with us briefly before he returns to London for surgery later in the month. We also look forward to welcoming our mission partner, Kathy Russell, as she completes her service with BMS. The other speakers this month are all church members. In the evening services towards the end of the month we will begin an occasional series on the book of 1 Timothy.

7th January

10:30am Speaker: Freddy Farias-Palacios

Being real with God

Psalm 73:28

6:00pm Communion Service

Speaker: Freddy Farias-Palacios

John 13:1–17

The challenge of sharing God's love

14th January

10:30am Healing / Thanksgiving Service led by Roshni Verghese and the Pastoral Care Team.

Big God, small voice

6:00pm Speaker: Roger Borlace

Jesus' naming and presentation

Luke 2:21–40

21st January

10:30am Speaker: Kathy Russell (BMS)

Legal and justice ministries in Mozambique

6:00pm **Introduction to 1 Timothy**

28th January

10:30pm Communion Service

Speaker: Donald Poirot

Remember Me

1 Corinthians 11:24

6:00pm Speaker: Magnus Forrester-Barker

Stay put — stay focused

1 Timothy 1:3–11

Dates for Your Diary

Saturdays	8:30am	Prayer meeting in the Twrgwyn Room.
Wednesday 3	10:30am	Men's prayer meeting followed by coffee.
Monday 15	10:30am	Church Walk at Bryncir.
Thursday 18	7:30pm	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (WPCU) Opening Service at Emaus.
Monday 22	7:30pm	WPCU service at Berea Newydd.
Wednesday 24	10am–4pm	WPCU prayer day for refugees & climate change at Bangor Arts Initiative Gallery (Deiniol Centre).
Thursday 25	7:30pm	Monthly prayer meeting in the chapel.
Friday 26	7:30pm	WPCU service at Our Lady & St James (co-hosted by Penrallt).
Saturday 27	10am–4:30pm	Walk Through the Old Testament.
Monday 29	7:30pm	Missions Group prayer meeting at Sarah Jackson's house.

Please see the Noticeboard section of this newsletter for more about many of these events. The Walk Through the Old Testament event is described on p2.

News of People

Our Minister, Freddy Farias-Palacios, is with us for the start of the month but is due to be returning to London for surgery on 9th January. Our prayers go with him and we look forward to his return to Bangor as soon as possible.

Lesley Jackson is due to be having surgery towards the end of the month and Eve Malone is still going through chemotherapy. James Goodman has pneumonia. Please hold them all in your prayers.

Congratulations to Roshni Verghese on the birth of her latest grandchild, Micah, born to Emma and Thierry shortly before Christmas.

Children's Birthdays in January

25th: Rebecca Gao

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Sunday 21st January.

Please send information to Magnus (office@penrallt.org; 01248 353355). All notices should be submitted in writing (preferably by email) as early as possible.

Homegroups

Many of our folk meet in small groups during the week for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. We encourage you to join one of these groups if you are able to.

NB homegroups generally do not meet on the week of the monthly prayer meeting and may not meet all other weeks – please check with the homegroup facilitator. All phone numbers below have the 01248 area code.

Day	Time	Group Name	Contacts
Tue	7:30pm	Nilgiri	Joan Beer (353874)
Tue	7:30pm	Tyddyn Isaf (Menai Bridge)	Magnus Forrester-Barker (717570)
Wed	2:00pm	Carers	Carol Morris (208407)
Wed	7:30pm	Nomads	Pat & Roger Borlace (713146)
Thu	10:30am	Llanfairpwll (am)	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Thu	7:30pm	Llanfairpwll (pm)	Sue & Lawrence Moss (713793)
Thu	7:30pm	Ogwen Valley	Brian & Kate Wheatcroft (602516)
Fri	10:30am– 12:30pm	The Lydias	Freda Birchall (371316) Lesley Jackson (680330)

Noticeboard:

◇ Church Lunch

Sunday 7th January

We will, as usual, have a church lunch on the first Sunday of the month. Please bring enough buffet-style food for yourself and a few others.

◇ Church Walk

Monday 15th January 10:30am

The walk will be an easy linear walk along Lon Goed, an ancient tree lined track. It's about 8 km long, starting at Bryncir (A487, Caernarfon to Porthmadog road) and finishing near Afon Wen. Meet at 10:30 in the carpark at the end of Lon Efon cycle track. It's signposted, turn right in the middle of the village. The first third is along country lanes then on to Lon Goed which is a bit wet in places. (Boots preferable.) As usual bring a packed lunch and your bus pass if you have one. It might be possible to go back to Criccieth on the bus. Further details from Ian and Mari. (421783).

◇ **Faith Café** *Sundays* *4–5:45pm*

Faith Café, aimed principally at students, runs before the evening service during university term-time. It is a place to meet around free hot drinks, soup, bread and a variety of cheeses, to chat, play games and talk faith – a chilled out space that's perfect to bring your flatmates to. For more information about this and other student activities, please speak to Matt Dawson, our student co-ordinator (students@penrallt.org). Faith Café for this term will start on 21st January (*TBC*).

◇ **Monthly Prayer Meeting** *Thursday 25th January* *7:30pm*

Our monthly mid-week prayer meetings are for the whole congregation and all are warmly encouraged to attend. The meetings usually take place in the chapel, and last about an hour. The next meeting after this is due to be on Tuesday 13th February. We also have a weekly prayer meeting on Saturday mornings at 8:30am, which usually lasts slightly less than one hour.

◇ **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: Adrienne Ferrada; Gwen Hicks (353648); Geoff Moore (410582); Lawrence Moss (713793); Judy Stammers (364394); Helen Thomas (600174); Roshni Verghese (07967 320048).

◇ **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 (or occasionally on Tuesdays) 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. 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; this certainly would be a more meaningful form of help.

◇ **Sunday Afternoon Services**

We usually visit residential homes in the area once a month on a Sunday afternoon, alternating between Haulfre (in Llangoed, near Beaumaris, starting at 2:15pm) and Plas Garnedd (in Llanberis, starting at 2:45pm), usually on the first Sunday. This month we will be going to **Plas Garnedd** on 7th January.

◇ **Used stamps for Baptist Missionary Society**

BMS World Mission can raise funds from the sale of used postage stamps (as well as coins, medals, & other collectibles). PLEASE trim stamps leaving about a ¼ inch border. Packets of stamps may be left in the church office, clearly marked "Stamps for BMS".

◇ **Wanted: Christian Aid Organiser for Cytûn**

Bangor Cytûn (Churches Together In Bangor) are looking for a Christian Aid Organiser to oversee the preparations for Christian Aid Week in May (the work needs to begin imminently!) and work with the individual churches' Christian Aid reps. Please speak to Deb or Judy Stammers for more information.

◇ **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (WPCU) is an annual event observed by churches across the world in mid-January, when we come together to pray and discuss contemporary issues faced by the global church. This year's theme is *That All May Be Free* and is based on material prepared by churches in the Caribbean. Details of the events in Bangor (which run over slightly more than a week this year!) are listed in the *Dates for your Diary* section earlier in this newsletter. More information about WPCU can be found at <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2018/>

Advance Notice - Forthcoming Events in February

Please note the following dates of events that will be described in more detail in the February newsletter:

Thursday 8th February – Cytûn AGM at Penrallt, 7:30pm.

Guest speaker: Rev. James Morgan, Chaplain of HM Prison Berwyn.

Saturday 24th February – Visit of Rev. Dianne Tidball, President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, to Princes Drive Baptist Church, Colwyn Bay, 9:30am – 4pm. (Free event – bring your own lunch.)

Penrallt Baptist Church, Holyhead Road, Bangor LL57 2EU
Tel: 01248 353355; *Email:* office@penrallt.org; *Website:* www.penrallt.org
Office open Mon–Fri 10am - 3pm; *Administrator:* Magnus Forrester-Barker

Minister: Rev. Freddy Farias-Palacios, 13 Bryn Eithinog, Bangor LL57 2LA; 07506 710694; minister@penrallt.org
Secretary: Neil Rymer, 20 Brynteg, Llandegfan LL59 5TY; 01248 710; secretary@penrallt.org
Treasurer: Stephen Burrows, 39 Cil y Graig, Llanfairpwll LL61 5NZ; 01248 714048; treasurer@penrallt.org