

*PENTREF
BAPTIST
CHAPEL*



**The Newbridge-On-Wye Newsletter
Pentref Baptist Church
December 2023**

The Christmas story is full of things that boggle the mind. An angel visiting a young woman in a remote village in the far corner of a small country on the edge of the Roman empire. A man, not sure what to make of his fiancée's growing bump, with divine dreams that this has not come about the way the rumours would have it. A dark night field lit up by the shimmer and song of myriad angels. Travelling wise men, horrible human atrocities, and in the midst of it all, a newborn baby, snug and sort-of-safe in a feeding trough, wrapped in strips of linen, brand new, and yet, present since before the beginning of all things. A story full of wonder, full of awe.

Perhaps you'd think that because I am a minister, this all makes perfect sense to me, but to be honest, there's loads in the Christmas story and in the rest of the story about God and God's people described in the Bible which either puzzles me, delights me, challenges me, or simply make me go: "Huh?" – sometimes all of them at the same time. There is a certain way in which God seems to enjoy doing things in the *least* likely way sometimes. I think becoming a little baby in a hostile world, dependent on the care and nurturing of a young first-time mother is perhaps one of the clearest examples of this. Another clear example is what happened on the cross: Jesus deciding to go all the way into the very darkest of darkness to blow up evil from the inside by the power of love. You might wonder, as I sometimes do, why did an all-powerful God decide to do things like that? Why not just fix things (there is enough to fix)? Why not just snap a few divine fingers and call the world (and us all) to order? Why *that way*??

I think free will has got a lot to do with it. Or to put it another way: Love is only love if it is given freely. It may require effort. It may demand sacrifice. But unless you are free to say no, your yes does not really count much either. We were made so that our love can be genuine. Not always perfect, but at least real. And it seems to me that the main way God works in this world is through people: People giving generously to relief agencies. Doctors devoting their lives to caring for those no one else values. Grandparents sharing stories with the next generation. Teachers. Bin men. Even unlikely folk like you and me, sometimes in ways we barely realise.

Christmas, when we can unearth it from beneath gift wrap and unrealistic expectations, is exactly such an opportunity to choose to love and to let the words the angels sang be true again in our day: "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people on whom God's favour rests!*" Choosing love is not always easy; Jesus' own life showed as much. Yet he came to us, as a gift from God, and invites us all to stop for just a moment to marvel at the mystery: God came to live among us to show us real love.

SERVICES AT PENTREF



Sunday	3rd	December	10:30am	Rev Misha Pedersen (Communion)
			6:30pm	Reflective Service
Sunday	10th	December	10:30am	Rev Misha Pedersen
			6:30pm	Carols by Candlelight
Sunday	17th	December	10:30am	Rev Steve Wallis
			6:30pm	Bring and Share Service
Sunday	24th	December	10:30am	Rev Misha Pedersen
			6:30pm	No Service
<i>Christmas Day 25th December 10:30 – A Short Service with Carols</i>				
Sunday	31st	December	10:30am	Rev Misha Pedersen
			6:30pm	Pizza, Praise and Prayer
<i>Every Sunday afternoon, there is a Zoom service at 4:30. For details please contact Rev Steve Wallis via steveoncomputer@aol.com</i>				
First Sunday in January				
Sunday	7th	January	10:30am	Rev Misha Pedersen
			6:30pm	Evening Service

Everyone is very welcome to join any of these services. If you have any questions, please contact the secretary: elsa.harflett.eh@gmail.com.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL FROM EVERYONE AT PENTREF!

What's on at Pentref?				
Date	Morning	Early afternoon	Late afternoon	Evening
Friday	1			
Saturday	2	Christmas Fayre		
Sunday	3	Morning Service	Zoom	Reflective Service
Monday	4			
Tuesday	5			
Wednesday	6	Coffee Morning		Bracken T Concert
Thursday	7		Creative Group	Iona Prayer
Friday	8			
Saturday	9			
Sunday	10	Morning Service	Zoom	Carol Service
Monday	11			
Tuesday	12			
Wednesday	13			Shared Meal
Thursday	14		Creative Group	Iona Prayer
Friday	15			
Saturday	16			
Sunday	17	Morning Service	Zoom	Bring and Share
Monday	18	Newsletter Deadline		
Tuesday	19			
Wednesday	20			
Thursday	21		Creative Group	Iona Prayer
Friday	22			WI in vestry
Saturday	23			
Sunday	24	Morning Service	Zoom	No Service
Monday	25	Christmas Service		
Tuesday	26			
Wednesday	27			
Thursday	28		Creative Group	Iona Prayer
Friday	29			
Saturday	30			
Sunday	31	Morning Service	Zoom	Pizza and Praise

The exact times of these events can be found in the newsletter. If you would like more details or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the minister or the church secretary.

You can find our details on the back of this newsletter.

NEXT COFFEE MORNING 6th DECEMBER 10:30



The Coffee Morning at Pentref is a great opportunity to support small local charities and community groups, meet old friends and make new ones while trying some of the cakes, biscuits and other goodies provided.

In November, Dr Fred Slater gave a short talk on the history of the Aberithon Turbary (known locally as “The Bog”) and updated those present on the nature reserve project. Following his speech, Bronwen Jenkins, a deacon of Pentref, and herself a biologist and volunteer for the Turbary presented Fred with a cheque for £100.

The next Coffee Morning takes place on **Wednesday 6th of December** from 10.30 till noon, where we will be collecting for Builth Wells Community Support who offer a transport scheme, prescription services, befriending and a foodbank etc which all cover the Newbridge area too.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE SATURDAY 2nd DECEMBER



On the 2nd of December from 10:30 till 4, local crafters will be at the chapel vestry with decorations, floral arrangements, and opportunities to find that special gift or card that will put a smile on someone’s face this Christmas.

Please come and support local creative people. The chapel will provide light refreshments at very favourable prices, giving you a chance to warm up and natter over a mince pie and cuppa. There will be children’s activities to give you a “break to browse”.

WHAT’S ON AT ALL SAINTS?

Rev **Lance Sharpe** says “*Nadolig Llawen*” to all and informs us that All Saints have a service on 3rd December at 11am and an Advent Carol service on the 20th at 6pm. There are Christmas Eve services at Holy Trinity at 10:30am & 11pm, Llanafan Fawr at 3pm, at Howey at 8pm and a 5th Sunday Special Service on 31st at 10:30 at Llanyre.

SHARED MEAL 13th DECEMBER



Last month, our shared meal was attended by a good crowd of people, who seemed to enjoy the moussaka on offer. Again, the puddings were donated by kind attenders and much appreciated.

On **Wednesday 13th December at 6pm**, everyone is welcome once again. The meal is free – donations appreciated but not required.

We may just be slicing potatoes all day, as we are offering potato dauphinoise, sausages, and vegetables. Be great to see you there!

NEED SOME SPACE?

We are delighted to be able to offer the use of the chapel and vestry to other groups and individuals, so if you need somewhere to have a meeting or a choir practice, please enquire about availability and our very reasonable prices by using the contact details for the secretary or the minister at the back of this newsletter.

It is lovely to begin to welcome more groups and independent activities in the chapel, from WI to workshops to exhibitions and fayres. Please do enquire or come and have a look around.

*Jesus says: Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.*

MEET THE DEFIBS!

The green defibrillator is on the side wall of the Post Office and his yellow friend is on the hill at Llysdinam, situated by the gate beside the road a bit further up than Cefn y Maes.

STAMPS AND COLLECTIBLES

There's a box at the Chapel for used postage stamps for **The Bracken Trust**. Likewise, collectible items can be forwarded to charities who will benefit from them. Thanks in advance.

CAROL SERVICE



Sunday 10th December 6:30 pm
Pentref Chapel, Newbridge, LD1 6LY

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NEWBRIDGE CREATIVE GROUP

**Thursday Afternoons
2:00pm – 4:00pm**



WINDOW ON THE WORLD

A taster session of 'Window of on the World', a series of talks, took place on the last Wednesday of October. Rev Ifor Williams of Erwood spoke about his work for the last 20 years with the Farming Community Network, the "Samaritans" for farmers. In order to illustrate their work without mentioning individual cases, Ifor drew a parallel to his own farming family history, touching on topics such as the lonely life of a farmer, health conditions and mental health, marriage relationships, weather, TB, and the complications of succession. Ifor works part-time milking and looking after the welfare of young stock on a neighbouring farm and was happy to answer questions from the audience. Rev Misha Pedersen thanked him at the conclusion of his very enlightening talk and followed with a prayer for the work of the Farming Community Network. Afterwards, everyone enjoyed a cup of tea and a chat. The next talk will be in late January.



THE BRACKEN TRUST SINGERS

A CHRISTMAS SING-ALONG CONCERT

6th December 7 PM
Pentref Baptist Church,
Newbridge-on-Wye, LD1 6LY

Tickets £5 on the door



Christmas Light Switch-On on Sunday 10th December:

Starting at 5:30 at the Golden Lion with Carols and followed by food
(or by the chapel Carol Service, if you want).

Each Sunday a small group of people from across the country meet on Zoom for a service. We share communion twice a month.

The service is slightly different from a traditional service in a chapel. We aim to get to know one-another and to share with and pray for each other.

WHAT WE DO

- * We pray together.
- * We read the Bible together.
- * We discuss together – trying to hear what God might be saying to us through the passage.

WHAT WE DON'T DO

- * There is no singing of hymns.
- * There is no music.



ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME AND JOIN US

This service may be particularly helpful if you are stuck at home for any reason or if your chapel only meets occasionally.

SPOTLIGHT

*Sunday School
but not Sunday School*

Fun and playful 'Sunday School' at 10am normally on the 2nd and last Sundays of the month. All children welcome to join us.

We play games, dress up and dramatize one of the great stories from the Bible. We also sing songs with actions, do a bit of craft and write our own prayers. We want things to be fun, engaging, and practical, so sometimes, we will go outside too. We really hope your child or grandchild would want to join us. We currently have 3-4 children joining our small group and we really want more friends!

The next dates are: **10th December, 24th December and 14th January at 10am in the chapel** – come in through the vestry door.

We are in Advent on the **10th of December** – a time of waiting. Are you good at waiting? In the evening, it's the carol service and we may be helping to decorate the chapel with candles too.

Christmas Eve, the **24th of December**: How do we make sure we have room for Jesus? We help each other decorate the last bits in the chapel and see if the donkey, the camel and the angels are ready for Jesus to arrive.

14th January: Does God speak to children? What does the voice of God sound like? What would you do if you heard it?

It's always better with friends, so if you know of a primary school aged child who would like to come, please bring them along so they can see whether they like it.

Children need to be accompanied by a responsible adult.

JESUS SAYS: I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep."

Hello there! I'm Misha, the minister at Pentref Baptist Chapel. Please get in touch if I can be of help in any way. Life as well as faith, humdrum or crisis, there isn't anything too big or small.



If you'd like a chat or need support, please don't hesitate to contact me and we can arrange a visit to your home or a meeting in a neutral location if that suits you better.

I'm happy to pray for you, your family, or any concerns you might have – simply send a message, give me a ring, or drop a note in. Likewise, if you would like us to pray together, I'd be delighted to do so.

If you or a relative are going into hospital and would like a pastoral visit, please let me know and we can arrange that, or where it is not possible, I can help liaise with my chaplain colleagues in the NHS to make sure you have the support you need.

Please do not hesitate to drop a note through the letterbox at The Manse (next to the chapel) or to send an email, text, or WhatsApp message if we can help. All messages will be treated with discretion.

Tel: 07432 530983 or 01597 821581

Email: mishatheminister@yahoo.com

If you would like to include an event in future issues, please contact either Misha (minister) or Elsa (church secretary).

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elsa.harflett.eh@gmail.com

You can also find us on the internet at:

www.newbridgebaptistchurch.co.uk

or on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/pentrefnewbridge

January 2024 Edition Deadline: Monday 18th December 2023

Please send to mishatheminister@yahoo.com