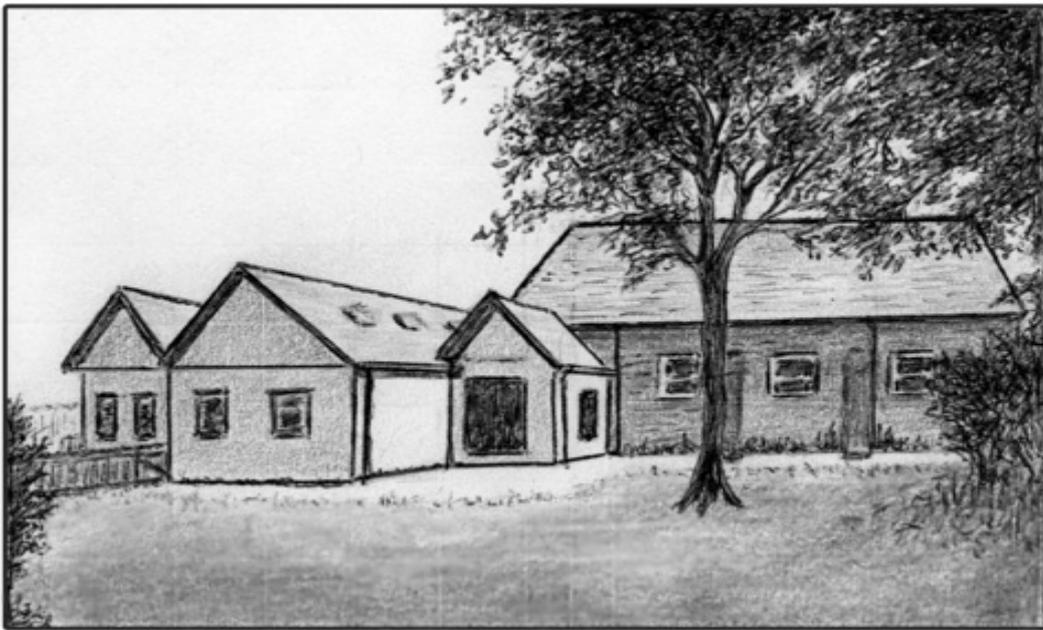


Grapevine

Newsletter of
Ebenezer Evangelical Church



“Be joyful always; pray continually;
give thanks in all circumstances, for this
is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5v.16-18 (NIV)

October/November
2015

EBENEZER EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Doctrinal Statement.

The church believes the fundamental truths of Christianity, as revealed in Holy Scripture, including the following:

- 1 The unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead.
- 2 The sovereignty of God in creation, providence, revelation, redemption and final judgment.
- 3 The divine inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy of Holy Scripture as originally given, and its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- 4 The universal sinfulness and guilt of human nature since the fall, rendering man subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
- 5 The full deity of the Lord Jesus Christ the incarnate Son of God, His virgin birth and His real and sinless humanity; His death on the cross; His bodily resurrection; His ascension; His present reign in heaven and on earth; and His intercession on behalf of the church.
- 6 Redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin only through the sacrificial and atoning death, once and for all time, of our representative and substitute, Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man.
- 7 Justification as God's act of undeserved mercy, in which the sinner is pardoned all his sins and accepted as righteous in God's sight, only because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, this justification being received by faith alone.
- 8 The need for the Holy Spirit to make the work of Christ effective to the individual sinner, granting him repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ.
- 9 The church as the body of Christ, both locally and worldwide, its members consisting of those only to have been born again through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- 10 The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in all those thus regenerated, producing in them an increasing likeness to Christ in character and behaviour, and empowering them for their witness in the world.
- 11 The future personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge all men, executing God's final just condemnation on the impenitent and receiving the redeemed to eternal glory.

(A further explanation of the things we believe is set out in the 1646 Westminster Confession of Faith)

A LETTER FROM THE MINISTER

Dear Friends,

Over recent weeks, we have witnessed the largest movement of people that has occurred in our lifetime. Thousands of people have been on the move every day, travelling from their homes in the Middle East to various countries in mainland Europe. The journey those people have made has not only been long, it has also been extremely difficult and dangerous. The question is, why have they been prepared to make such a journey?

For some within the crowds it has been an attempt to flee an extremely dangerous situation, for others it has been an attempt to leave a less prosperous situation. But whether the journey has been made in search of security or prosperity, it has been taken in the hope of finding a better place. No-one is going to embark on such a difficult and dangerous journey in order to reach a worse place, are they?

The interesting thing is that one person in the history of our world has done just that and that was Jesus. In leaving heaven for this earth, Jesus was embarking on a journey which was much longer and more difficult than anything we've seen in recent days. In leaving heaven, he was leaving a place of splendour and perfection, a place where he had known nothing other than love. In coming to this earth, he was coming to a place where he would experience poverty and hatred and betrayal and persecution, to the extent that wicked men would ultimately put him to death on a cross. The question is, why was Jesus willing to make such a difficult and dangerous journey in order to get to a worse place?

The Bible tells us that he was willing to do so out of love for poor, hopeless and helpless people like you and me. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor 8: 9). He was willing to make the journey to an infinitely worse place so that undeserving sinful people like you and me might one day reach an infinitely better place - the very heaven that he came from. And through trusting in what he has done, that heaven can be our eternal home.

Yours sincerely,
David.

Amongst Ourselves

Something exciting is happening, the whole place seems to have come alive with students, some here for the first time, whilst others are old hands and they know what to expect! Plenty of rain and sunshine, heart lifting views of the mountains on a clear day, the blue of the Menai Straits on a sunny day. Welcome to Bangor! And if you are a new student then welcome too to Ebenezer, a small family church with the big welcome! The church recently joined with the CU to provide the starters for the annual 'Grub Crawl' as part of Freshers Week.

This summer we held two of our joint prayer meetings in Benllech on Anglesey. It was also encouraging to see the Beach Mission team from Benllech at our Sunday services. Whilst our minister David Finnie was on holiday, we welcomed three visiting preachers; Oliver Allmand-Smith, Philip Eveson and Joe Nicholson. Oliver's sermon on Jacob's dysfunctional family from Genesis 27, 'The Mess, The Mystery and The Marvel' was especially memorable!

Other activities that have taken place this summer: our own young people have been away on EMW camps here in Wales, Richard Owens went to help on a WEC camp in Norfolk, Gareth Thomas and his team have visited agricultural shows in the area such as the Anglesey Show and JP Earnest has been taking beach missions in Tenby with the Open Air Mission.

Now the summer season is over and we are settling back into our normal routines. Our Fellowship Groups have recommenced; David's group meeting on Anglesey are doing a series on prayer, and John's group here in the Bangor area are exploring the life of Joseph. David will soon be commencing two new series on Sundays, in the mornings 'What the Bible says about.....' and in the evenings on the life of Abraham part 2.

Meanwhile, let's uphold in prayer and contact where possible our elderly members who can no longer attend our services; Marian, Jane, Myra, Nancy, Betty and Geraint.

John P Gough

Daily Prayer Points

Sunday *Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Ex 20:8*

Rejoice and praise God for this special day as we meet together with our Lord. Uphold the preacher, and all who contribute to making our time together a blessing. Also, remember the brothers and sisters who are unable to be present, and those who are visitors to our church.

Monday *...establish the work of our hands for us... Ps 90:17*

As we start our work let us ask the Lord to guide us and to strengthen us to do all as unto Him. Making the most of every opportunity, redeeming the time whatever we are engaged in, so that we shall not be ashamed at our Lord's Coming.

Tuesday *Let us not give up meeting together... Heb 10:25*

Tonight we meet for study and prayer. Let us prepare our hearts by our personal study and prayer so that we can contribute, and thus encourage one another.

Wednesday *...respect those who work hard among you..1 Thess 5:12*

Give thanks and pray for our church elders and deacons. Ask God to be a shield and refuge for those who are in the forefront of our spiritual work as a church.

Thursday *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners 1Tim 1:15*

Let us pray for the unbelieving members of our families. We long to see them saved and Jesus Christ's redeeming work extended.

Friday *...the grace that is reaching more and more people.2 Cor 4:15*

Pray especially for our outreach as a church. Remember the market stall, the Youth Club, the Sunday School, the preaching and our personal opportunities to share the gospel.

Saturday *You are the light of the world. Matt 5:14*

Pray that Ebenezer will be used by God to be a city on a hill that cannot be hidden. Pray with expectation that He will meet with us tomorrow.

Elen Walters

Missionary Prayer Points

Sunday: Emmanuel & Esther Durant, France. Pray for Emmanuel's ministry in various local churches. Remember the family's witness amongst friends and neighbours in Chambéry and pray that they might know God's help in deciding what to do next.

Monday: UCCF. Give thanks for the many contacts made during Fresher's Week. Pray that Christian students recently arrived will quickly settle in a church and that many non-Christians will have opportunity to hear the gospel. Pray for James, Catrin, Sam and others as they seek to lead the Christian Union. Remember Caitlin, Abi, John and Bethan in their work with the students.

Tuesday: Richard & Barbara Davies, Marseilles. Give thanks for the recent provision of accommodation for James and pray that he and Libby will come to believe the gospel. Give thanks for recent contacts and conversations and pray that these may be developed further.

Wednesday: WEST. Give thanks for a new intake of students at the college and pray that they may quickly adjust to college life. Pray for good relationships amongst students and staff, that they may all be a blessing and an encouragement to one another.

Thursday: Johnny & Ann McLean, Bangkok. Give thanks for the families involvement in the Thai church and pray that they may be a great encouragement to the local believers and vice-versa. Remember Ann's witness in school and Johnny's work with International Students.

Friday: Albania. Give thanks for the many gospel opportunities the church in Memiliaj has had over the summer, particularly in the camps. Pray that the sowing that has been done will bear fruit. Pray that the renovations to their building will not be hindered by unnecessary bureaucracy and that the project won't be a distraction to the ongoing, more important aspects of church life.

Saturday: Heledd Job & Baska Muchova, Slovakia. Pray for the unity and witness of the whole team and for the translation and future use of the Uncover John's Gospel.

David Finnie

Testimony of a Young Christian *by Dr Enid Vincent, Porth, Rhondda*

It is customary in recording a testimony to the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, to describe in some detail one's background, and the events leading to conversion. My own background is common to thousands in Wales today: born into a good religious home, familiar from early childhood with the activities of the Church and Sunday School, well versed in the Bible, and received into membership of the Church of Christ at the age of fourteen years, yet having no personal and real experience of the Saviour, and holding no definite convictions concerning the truth of Christianity. This situation is unfortunately as commonplace as it is tragic.



I first began to question my position and examine my beliefs with some interest when I was taught as part of the syllabus in Sixth-Form Science, the subject of "The Evolution of Species". This was taught as proven fact, and (not as in reality it is) as a mere human hypothesis, based on insecure and often untenable foundations. This was when the problem of the apparent conflict between Scientific Truth and Christian Belief first demanded my attention, and in my anxiety to solve the dilemma, I approached a man of scholarship and ability, and a personal friend. I sought assurance that in believing in Christ I was forgiven every sin and was safe from the wrath of God. But when I asked for bread, I received stone. The panacea offered for my trouble was this. "Don't worry." It became clear to me that my counselor had no real belief in the authority and infallibility of the Bible, but seemed able to accept and believe those parts which he considered reasonable while rejecting others that seemed paradoxical or to conflict with human reason. Such a position seemed to me tantamount to dishonest thinking, and I came to the conclusion then, that if the Bible were false in any part of its teaching, it could not be reliable in any particular. Thus my first conscious clash with the Modernist viewpoint

drove me to the agnostic camp, and I sat for some years in “the seat of the scornful”.

As a medical student at Liverpool University, through the efforts of a friend, I came into contact with a group of Christians. I found these people believed in the infallibility of the Word of God, and I was drawn to them by what seemed, at last, intellectual honesty and consistency in professing followers of Christ. I was even persuaded to attend a conference of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship at Swanwick, Derbyshire, in April 1948. There again I found many whose lives shone with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ; who had complete assurance that they were saved by believing on Him. To me they were living witnesses to the truth of Christianity. The Bible readings at that conference were on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians; the expositions being given by Bishop Frank Houghton of the China Inland Mission, a man whose humility of character made me think of the One who “humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”. As the truth of the doctrines of sin and of justification by faith were opened up to my mind, so I realized anew my own sinfulness and need of a Saviour. I praise God that I found, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, one who was able to save me. I found forgiveness of sin, cleansing in His blood, and the gift of new life in Him.

A testimony sometimes ends at such a point as this, but a babe in Christ must grow. Justification by faith is only the initial phase in God’s great plan of Salvation. It is only then that we can begin to enter into the further truths and promises of God. Jesus Christ is able to save, but he is also able to keep from falling, able to sanctify and able to satisfy. I can testify that I have found Him able indeed.

As he has promised to direct the paths of those who acknowledge Him in all their ways, so I can look back on the past nine years and see how His hand has led me. The path has often been strange, there have been trials and difficulties, as well as pleasant ways, but in it all His hand has been on my life to guide it. I will not deny that there have been occasions of backsliding and spiritual dearth, as well as blessed times on the mountaintops of Christian experience, but He has never failed in one of His promises, nor has He ever forsaken me. There have been periods of intellectual doubting and difficulty, but over and again the Word of God has proved true and reliable. The Lord has given increased and increasing responsibility, but He has also provided all the necessary strength and resources. Times of trouble have only deepened

the inward peace and joy that is mine in Him and have caused me to draw nearer to my Saviour. More and more I find that He satisfies me completely. He has blessed me abundantly in every sphere. I shall never cease to praise Him for all that He has done for me, and pray that many who are far from the Kingdom may yet come to know Him, whom to know is eternal life.

(This article first appeared in the Evangelical Magazine of Wales Vol.1, No. 7 Spring – Summer 1957 Dr Vincent is now a member of Ebenezer, Bangor.)



Introducing one of the new UCCF relay workers in Bangor

Caitlin Walsh

Where do you come from and what have you been studying over the past few years?

I was a student here in Bangor for three years and studied Psychology. I was brought up for most of my life in somewhere called Rugby in England. Since coming away to University,

Bangor has become a home to me and I am very happy to be staying on for another year as a Relay worker.

Tell us something about being a relay worker.

Relay is a voluntary year working with the universities and colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF). UCCF seek to support, encourage and equip Christian Unions (CU) to help them share the good news about Jesus Christ on their campuses.

Relay is a year of discipleship and training and as part of that I will help and encourage the Christian Union here in Bangor with their events as well as support individuals through one-to-one meet ups.

Throughout the year I will be studying some theology, books of the Bible

and learning primarily how we as Christians live in grace. Also I will be allowed to choose a topic that I want to study (elective study) which can be applied to an area of ministry.

How can we pray for you?

Please pray as I make the transition from student and CU leader to a relay worker. Please pray that I would be challenged and changed this year more into Christ's likeness.

Please pray that I would be sharing my life with those that I meet and build genuine relationships with people and for those who are not yet Christians that I would be a good witness to them.

The Father of Mercies

God is merciful by Nature. Mercy is grace or free favour to a person in misery. Misery is the magnet of mercy. And God is full of mercy; it is His heart and soul – His very name (Ex.34:6) He that is great in majesty is abounding in mercy. The sea is not more naturally flowing and wet, and the sun does not more naturally shine, than God naturally shows mercy. Mercy is His nature, it is Himself. "He delighteth in mercy" (Mic.7:18).

Richard Sibbes (1577-1635)

Visiting Preachers

November 1st Andrew Graham (Wrexham)

November 29th Stuart Olyott (Deeside)

DIARY DATES

Free coach trip for International Students: 10th October

Open Air: 31st October

Bible Exhibition: Week commencing 2nd November

Carol Service: 13th December

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Deacons

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REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAY	10.10am 10.30am 5.40pm 6.00pm	Prayer Meeting in annex. Morning Service. Junior Church (ages 4-10) during sermon. Prayer Meeting in Library. Evening Service The Lord's Supper 1 st Sun. evening & 3 rd Sun. morning.
TUESDAY	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting/ Fellowship Groups*
THURSDAY	10am	Ladies Bible Study*
FRIDAY	7.30pm	G.O.A.L Youth Club for ages 11-18.

*Meetings not held in the church – please ask for details.

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