



Christmas 2009 Newsletter

Season's greetings. By the end of November this year, Cytûn had reached the high point of an extremely busy and productive period. We will take this opportunity to highlight a number of important developments as Wales' ecumenical instrument seeks to proclaim the Gospel in the context of a rapidly-changing Welsh world.

These days Cytûn places a significant emphasis on staging the churches mission together in a number of national festivals: the National Urdd Eisteddfod, the Royal Welsh Show, and the National Eisteddfod. This year, it was noted that the churches stand at the Eisteddfod in Bala was significantly busier. Cytûn is greatly indebted to the local churches for their hard work. Rhian Linecar promoted this work. As was the case last year, Cytûn managed to come to an arrangement with the National Eisteddfod ensuring free entry to the opening worship. We thank Sasha Perriam for ensuring that this scheme works.

At the end of September, Cytûn organised the Police Federation national memorial service at St David's Hall, Cardiff. Over a two-day period, a welcome was extended, especially to widows from Northern Ireland. This service comes to Wales every four years. It is believed that the occasion brings a blessing.



Since the summer, we have ensured a presence in church conferences, thereby seeking to offer accountability to the denominations. The task of improving Cytûn's website is proceeding, and we are pleased to note that the work of the committee established to raise money for a Welsh-language

Braille Bible has reached a new milestone. In particular we thank the members of Priordy Chapel in Carmarthen and the Bible Society for their good work in this endeavour. **Contributions may be sent to: Dr Watcyn James (Welsh Bible in Braille Appeal) 94 Ffordd Penygarn, Tycroes, Ammanford, Carmarthenshire SA18 3PF.**

A full report on Cytûn's activities was presented at the Annual General Meeting, held in mid October. With joy, the Presbyterian Church of South Korea in Wales was accepted as a member. Cytûn succeeds in working within the agreed budget. It was also pleasing to see, thanks to the contribution of Canon Bob Fyffe, General Secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, how Cytûn's work fits within a wider pattern. This close co-operation will continue. Since the AGM was held, other churches and denominations have expressed an interest in joining Cytûn.

Throughout these past few months, Cytûn succeeded in carrying out the usual ecumenical work of promoting local agreements and visiting local ecumenical councils. This work came to a helpful culmination in visiting local Cytûns of the North East in Buckley. By now, we have gained the approval of the Charity Commission for constitutional changes which make Cytûn more accountable to local ecumenical bodies.

We continue to work closely with the Commission of the Covenanted Churches and the Free Church Council. In this respect, significant work was accomplished regarding SACRE representation. A key meeting was also arranged with the leaders of the Covenanted churches.

Cytûn's Policy Officer continued to keep in regular contact with the churches about issues relating to the Assembly. Most notably, regular contact was maintained with Assembly officers regarding situations which could surface relating to swine flu. The recommendations of the All Wales Convention, chaired by Sir Emyr Jones Parry, have now been published. A number of churches have indicated a positive response. I was honoured to serve on the Convention, having been nominated by the Board of Cytûn. I am more than willing to discuss the report's findings in church meetings.

We strived to support the work of churches in public situations where Christians now find themselves serving in a multi-faith, multi-cultural context. We supported chaplaincies in universities in forming legal partnerships and constitutions. So far we have succeeded, through the work of a number of people, to ensure that health trusts aren't persuaded by secularists to force churches to pay for chaplaincies in hospitals. Also, Cytûn used the skills and contacts it has gained in immigration issues to ensure that a woman from Patagonia was given permission to visit her sister in Gwynedd.

As a Christian body, Cytûn cannot promote multi-faith worship, but we succeeded in responding positively to the encouragement of

churches to bring Wales' faith communities together, and to organise local, regional and national meetings. This co-involvement was celebrated in a dinner given by the Muslim Council of Wales as they bade farewell to Rhodri Morgan as First Minister of Wales. A successful Inter-faith Eisteddfod was also held the beginning of December. It was deemed right to support the stance of Swansea's Quakers when faced with a visit from the English Defence League. In their usual powerful way, the Quakers stood for an hour in a quiet protest, inviting the city's Christians and others to join them.



The vigil held on the streets of Newport on the following Friday will stay with me for a long time. I will never forget that moment, in a vigil which gathered together a host of Christians, Muslims, Jews and others of conviction, to strongly resist religious hatred, when together everyone raised small Welsh flags. These things don't come about easily. We must celebrate the excellent and crucial work of The Presbyterian Church of Wales' Community House in terms of bridge-building between people in Newport.

Local ecumenical groups are asked to note an important date. **On Friday 26 February 2010 at 11.30 a.m. Cytûn will hold its First Enabling Group at the Baptist College, Cardiff under the terms of our new constitution.** Local ecumenical groups are welcome to send a representative. If you wish to send a representative, you are asked to please contact Sasha Perriam beforehand.

Happy Christmas and Blessings for the New Year,

Every Blessing,

The Reverend Aled Edwards OBE
Chief Executive of Cytûn

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