



Happy Christmas and Every Blessing for the New Year

Warm greetings as churches throughout Wales prepare to rejoice in Christ's birth. For Cytûn, the last few weeks have given us cause to offer thanks and praise over many things. First however, a matter of great concern....

The Christian Iraqi Community in Wales



Following a request for support from the Iraqi Christian community in Wales, Cytûn will hold a Vigil in Dewi Sant Church, Saint Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff between 6.00 – 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday 22nd December Cardiff. Your prayers for the persecuted Christian community in Iraq would be greatly appreciated. Our intention for the evening is to pray for Christians suffering

persecution in Iraq and to bring their plight to the attention of the Welsh press and media. All are welcome to the Vigil.

In this aspect of our work we are working closely, on an UK level, with colleagues at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland



Cytûn has invested a great deal of time of late working in partnership with colleagues at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. Cytûn staff took a lead particularly in enabling CTBI's Racial Justice Network to draft its new strategic document. Rhian Linecar attended CTBI's Faith and Order Reference Group in London and was asked to co-ordinate the Welsh response to questions - the answers of which will form the basis for the future work and direction of the Group. She also chaired CTBI's Writers

Group which met in London recently.

Free Church Council of Wales



The Free Church Council is delighted to have appointed their new President, the Reverend Gareth Morgan Jones. The November meeting of the Council marked the end of the three-year presidency of Martin Spain and the beginning of a new chapter in its life and work.

Council members praised the work of Martin Spain, who has worked hard to raise the profile of the free churches and the role of the President as a representative nationally in both ecclesiastical and non-church settings. Martin, Commissioning the New President and presenting him with the Chain of Office said that he looked forward to continuing to work with the Council under Gareth Morgan Jones' Presidency. Gareth thanked the Council for the honour of the appointment and looked forward to his three years in the role. All of us at Cytûn wish him every blessing for his term in office.

Witnessing

This Christmas, Cytûn sought to make member churches aware of the Cardiff Nativity project. It's a distinctive act of Christian witness to remind everyone of the Christmas Gospel narrative.

Cytûn staff have continued to support the work of member churches by attending synods, general assemblies and governing bodies focusing in particular on ecumenical matters. We have also supported local churches throughout Wales and beyond: Cardiff, Treforest, Pontypridd, Penrhawceiber, Wrexham and London.



Cytûn's witnessing work continues on a national level. A productive meeting was held in Builth Wells to help redesign the churches' presence at the Royal Welsh Show. A great deal was learnt from our experience of the 2010 Show focusing in particular on a sense of worship prayer and pastoral care. The work of the rural life chaplains was celebrated. Aspirations were also

discussed in terms of providing more space for worship. We would again ask for your prayers for this work.

The Cytun "Welcome to Wales" course was run between 6th and 8th October 2010 at St Michael's College, Llandaff by Cytûn's Policy Officer, Geraint Hopkins. Its aim was to introduce elements of Welsh culture, Christian heritage, language and socio-political history to Christian ministers who were beginning their ministry in Wales for the first time having moved to Wales from other parts of the world. The Course was attended by 16 ministers from four different denominations. The evaluation process showed that the course was widely welcomed and enjoyed, and is recommended for future use by the churches.

Cytûn seeks to witness to the Christian faith in Wales' Inter-faith context. The last meeting of the Inter-faith Council for Wales made progress towards arranging events for November's Inter-faith Week. Some events went well – especially in Wrexham – but other arrangements had to be postponed due to poor weather conditions.

Faith and Order Issues

Rhian Linecar has continued to lead the staff team in developing Cytûn's faith and order work forging considerable progress with the Commission of the Covenanted Churches. She has: supported the work of the Cardiff East Mission Council meeting, initiated work on the Commission's group on reviewing *Episcope*, reported back on her visit to the *Kirchentag* in Germany, began work on producing a new Commission booklet, taken steps to establish a resurgent Liturgical Panel and put in place a meeting to further the work of the Commission's Advocates. It is hoped that the Advocates will, over the next few years, enable tangible local ecumenical developments.

Work has also been completed in the service of the Free Church Council of Wales. Rhian contacted all 22 SACREs to check on current vacancies for Free Church members and circulated the information.

Church and Society Issues

The Cytûn International Forum was pleased to welcome to its last meeting the EC representative in Wales, Mr Andy Klom. Mr Klom outlined recent developments in the European Union, including the political changes

brought about by the Lisbon Treaty, expansion, issues facing the Euro currency and the representation of the EU in the field of international affairs, aid and development. Mr Klom answered questions and engaged in debate with the churches' representatives on the Forum. We are enormously grateful for his informative and thought-provoking discussion.

The Cytûn Policy Officer, Geraint Hopkins gave a report to the National Committee of Christian Aid. In his report, he spoke of the current state of ecumenism in Wales, the growing need for churches to speak relevantly on issues of public concern in Wales and engage with the National Assembly and other institutions, and the importance of maintaining pressure for the international aid budget in the difficult economic climate the world faces. Cytûn also provided a representation at the Christian Aid AGM in London.



Considerable progress has been made in a short time in furthering Cytûn's ambition to make Wales the UK's first "Nation of Sanctuary". The Welsh Assembly Government has taken the matter under consideration following the October meeting of the Faith Communities Forum and a positive response was gleaned from the December meeting of the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership which includes representatives from local authorities.

Cytûn continues to serve Wales' faith communities on the Welsh Assembly Government's emergency planning Resilience Group. Work has been initiated with a view to ensuring that local authorities have good church based contacts in the case of national emergencies.

Notes for Your Diaries

Please note in your diaries that the next meeting of the Cytûn Enabling Group will be on the 18th May 2011 in Carmarthen. Local and regional ecumenical groups are invited to send a representative.

All Things in Common: Just a final word in closing. The materials for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity are still available on line from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Every Blessing,

The Reverend Aled Edwards OBE
Chief Executive of Cytûn

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