



## Harvest Season 2010 Newsletter

Warm greetings as churches throughout Wales rejoice in a time of thanksgiving. For Cytûn, the last few weeks have given us cause to offer thanks and praise.

First, a special invitation as we look to the future....

### Special Invitation

The Cytûn AGM and Enabling Group will be held in Llandudno United Welsh Church from 11.30 a.m. on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October. Local and regional Cytûn groups and councils of churches are invited to send a representative to attend the AGM. Following the customary AGM business during the morning, the afternoon session will discuss how Wales can perhaps become a "Nation of Sanctuary" focusing on the care of displaced people.



The afternoon meeting will also discuss the following draft Memorandum of Understanding with Local and Regional Ecumenical Councils, Partnerships and Projects.

'Cytûn undertakes to encourage and pray for local and regional ecumenical councils, partnerships and projects and to provide support, while current staff deployments and financial resources are available, by:

- seeking to ensure that the Enabling Group is able to filter local and regional priorities into the Cytûn Workplan agreed by the Board,
- communicating regularly through quarterly newsletters and denominational papers,
- providing public liability insurance cover for one off events held locally in Cytûn's name with the knowledge and written agreement of the national office,
- highlighting significant ecumenical developments as a means of encouragement,
- providing initial administrative support and advice in drafting local ecumenical arrangements, sponsoring bodies and memoranda of understanding between member churches and denominations,

- providing, within reasonable means, speakers for ecumenical meetings and services,
- providing initial support and advice regarding local or regional devolved public affairs issues which command a broad ecumenical concern,
- helping to arrange church visits to the *Senedd* building in Cardiff Bay,
- conveying information from the Welsh Assembly Government's emergency planning group,

Cytûn asks local and regional ecumenical councils, partnerships and projects to encourage and pray for Wales' national ecumenical instrument and to provide support, where possible, by:

- seeking to distribute newsletters and ecumenical information effectively,
- seeking to enable Cytûn to learn from good practice and to highlight news of significant local ecumenical activity,
- seeking to help the Cytûn Enabling Group by endeavouring to shape its agenda and informing its debates.'

The meeting will also discuss the manner in which local and regional groups can best be invited to become formal members of the Cytûn Enabling Group during the coming months. **Those wishing to attend the AGM are asked to contact the Cytûn Office by Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October.**

### Recent Highlights

Cytûn worked recently with Westminster Abbey to help ensure that Wales was well represented at the Vespers held on 17<sup>th</sup> September to welcome Pope Benedict to the UK. The Abbey had invited Cytûn Board Members and representatives from our International and Racial Justice Networks.

### A Time of Thanksgiving

Building on the success of the Urdd Eisteddfod in Llanerchaeron, it was great to see so many turn in to the churches' tent at the Royal Welsh Show in Builth and the National Eisteddfod in Ebbw Vale. There was a real sense of coming together and of celebration. At these national events, Cytûn was able to profile several aspects of the churches' work and mission. A few are highlighted here...



At the Royal Welsh Show, the Church in Wales launched its Rural Issues Hub by Bishop John Davies presenting a copy to Elin Jones, the Welsh Assembly Government's Rural Affairs Minister. The Hub was based on feedback from the Church's Rural Life Advisers and clergy who serve in rural parishes. It aims to bring people together to find robust and creative

ways to regenerate rural communities.

Cytûn was also able to profile the invaluable work of Christian Aid by providing a place for Jeremiah Mouli's home – indicating how people in the developing world live.

Thanks is also given for the work of the Churches' Rural Life Advisers. Following the Royal Welsh Show, they reported back on their work to the Cytûn Board in September.

Cytûn is also deeply indebted to the churches of Ebbw Vale and the surrounding locality for their fantastic work during the National Eisteddfod in August. We give thanks not only for the rich fellowship we all enjoyed and shared worship but for all the hands on hard work they did in preparing refreshments and ensuring that the tent was well adorned and maintained. Being a bilingual national ecumenical instrument, it was encouraging to see two linguistic communities working and worshipping together.

We thank God for the rich blessings we experienced this year and ask for your prayers as we seek to provide a platform for the work of the churches in witnessing and providing pastoral care at these national events in the future. Please pray for Rhian Linecar as she takes the staff lead for Cytûn concerning this work.

### **Building Towards the Future – Faith and Order**

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.

It is encouraging to know that a number of Cytûn member churches and denominations within the Covenanted Churches have agreed to continue their support for the Commission. Specific proposals have been put to the churches and they will be thought through during the next few months focusing on ministry, local projects and new liturgies.

Work has also been initiated on collecting denominational versions of a Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome and Commitment for use in Wales.

## Building for the Future - Church and Society

The National Assembly and the UK Parliament do not sit during the summer months. The processes of government however, continue to progress apace.

Our Policy Officer, Geraint Hopkins, has focused in particular during the past few weeks on enabling the churches to respond to a consultation by the Department of Culture and Cadw on the future of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, and the prospect of in-year cuts to the scheme. A co-ordinated effort is being mounted by the Cytûn Churches Property Advisers Group, which discussed the matter at its last meeting.

It is generally agreed among the faith communities that the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme is a vital source of assistance to those who care for listed place of worship. It is easily understood and straightforward to apply for and is a source of support for all listed buildings. It encourages repair rather than alteration. That is the position currently being put to government, and we await with some concern for announcements about the future of these vital funding streams to the churches.

Cytûn has also continued to serve Wales' faith communities by contributing to the work of the Welsh Assembly Government's Community Resilience Meetings which seek to prepare for national crises and emergencies. A contribution has also been made towards the preparations for the Ryder Cup.

Geraint has also been active in preparing for Cytûn's Welcome to Wales Course.

**All Things in Common:** Just a word in closing. The materials for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity are now 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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