

Cytûn

Eglwysi Ynghyd
yng Nghymru
Churches Together
in Wales

Newsletter

Advent/Christmas 2023

Wales' church leaders meet together to consider future direction of the ecumenical movement in Wales

After a hiatus of several years, partly due to the pandemic lockdown, over fifteen church leaders gathered in Shrewsbury at the end of October, to discuss the future direction of the ecumenical movement in Wales.

The day began with a Bible study directed by Professor Susan Durber, European President of the World Council of Churches, with the letter to Philippians as the subject for discussion.

A short presentation followed by Rev Aled Davies on the presence of the Churches at our national holidays over the summer, and also a presentation by Rev



Gethin Rhys on the demographic landscape regarding religion in Wales as highlighted by the results of the 2021 census.

But the main purpose of the day was to build personal connections and to discuss five questions that had been put to the leaders arising from the Rev Lloyd Jones memorial lecture delivered by Cytûn's Chief Executive, Siôn

Brynach, in August. These discussions took place in five small groups.

A report from the meeting is currently being prepared, which will be published on the Cytûn website in the new year. The Trustees of Cytûn will then discuss that report at its next meeting in February.

Challenge in Lloyd Jones memorial lecture for our church leaders to consider the future of the ecumenical movement in Wales: "Scaling the second mountain: the future for ecumenism in Wales?"

The Rev Lloyd Jones' memorial lecture, delivered by Cytûn's Chief Executive, Siôn Brynach, during the Llŷn ac Eifionydd National Eisteddfod, has been published on the Cytûn webiste.

The lecture was delivered at the invitation of Rev Casi Jones, Lloyd's widow, and Rev Rosie Dymond, Rector

of Uwch Gwyrfai Ministry Area, and delivered at St Beuno's Church, Clynnog fawr.

Speaking recently, Siôn said:

"It was a great privilege to be invited to deliver this lecture at St Beuno's church where Lloyd had previously been Rector. Lloyd and



I were co-workers and friends years ago and our paths crossed from time to time in the years since. His loss is still felt intensely, and I hope that the title of the lecture would have raised a smile on Lloyd's face as an ecumenist of conviction, and a lover of mountains too.

"The lecture is a challenge for our church leaders to consider the future of the ecumenical movement in Wales and the direction of Cytûn in particular. Our constitution makes it clear that this can only be done by the leaders of the churches who are members of Cytûn – in collaboration with our trustees. I hope these groups will tackle the task joyfully, robustly and with open and calm hearts."

The lecture, in English and in Welsh can be found here: <https://www.cytun.co.uk/hafan/en/lloyd-jones-memorial-lecture-published-scaling-the-second-mountain-the-future-for-ecumenism-in-wales/>

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The 2023 Welcome to Wales course breaks record for number of participants

33 people attended this year's Cytûn Welcome to Wales course – a record number, and around 15% higher than in recent years, immediately following the lockdown periods. Seven denomination or organizations were represented among those present.

The 48-hour course included sessions on interfaith issues, ecumenism in Wales, education in Wales, an introduction to the Welsh language, policy issues as well as visits to the Senedd in Cardiff Bay and St Fagans Museum. The team were led through Wales' history at St Fagan by the Rev Christopher Gilham from Pembrokeshire. It was great to have one of Cytûn's friends, Peredur Owen Griffiths MS welcoming the team to Cardiff Bay and another – Ynyr Roberts of Brigyn – providing a musical interlude.

The feedback at the end of the course was extremely complimentary, with the crew genuinely enjoying the introduction to the historic, political and ecclesiastical landscape of Wales. The 2024 Cytûn Welcome to Wales course will take place 2-4 October at the Sports Wales Centre, Cardiff and if you would like further details, then please email Sasha Perriam: post@cytun.cymru



The Royal Welsh Show and National Eisteddfod

It was great to return to Royal Welsh Agricultural Show in July and to visit the Llŷn and Eifionydd National Eisteddfod in Boduan in August.

In Boduan 7400 visitors drank teas or coffees on the stand with 160 volunteers from the local churches assisting. One of the hallmarks of our attendance at the Urdd Eisteddfod, the Royal Welsh Show and the National Eisteddfod is the co-operation seen between the denominations as well as other organisations, and it was wonderful to have the company of organisations such as A Rocha, the Bible Society and Christian Aid at them, with the Rev Andrew Sully, of Christian Aid leading a morning worship session at both the Royal Welsh show and the Eisteddfod.

It was also good to accommodate the Chaplains at the Royal Welsh, as they undertake such important work amongst the stallholders



Rev Andrew Sully, of Christian Aid

and visitors during the four days of the show. The Cytûn trustees have now confirmed that the work of coordinating these events will continue to be in the hands of the Rev Aled Davies, and Mrs Delyth Davies until 2025. We look forward to welcoming you again in summer 2024.



World-Wide Day of Prayer

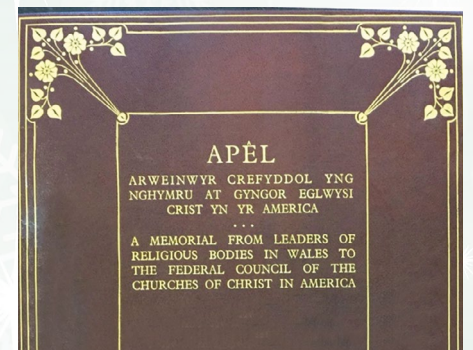
Thank you to the Welsh sub-committee of the World Wide day of Prayer for their generous grant to support Cytûn's work promoting the Christian faith in Welsh. It was much appreciated.

1925 Welsh Churches Peace Appeal to America – Centenary Project

The staff of the Welsh Centre for International Affairs (WCIA) recently identified a Peace Appeal from 1925: "A memorial from leaders of religious bodies in Wales to the Federal Churches of Christ in America".

Beautifully crafted in Moroccan leather, gold leaf and Indian inks and signed by leaders of Christian churches in Wales, the memorial declaration contained within calls for the support of churches across America in advocating for the League of Nations - to avert the danger of future world wars.

Discovery of this memorial document followed on from rediscovery of the related Welsh Women's Peace Appeal to America of 1923-24, which has inspired a Wales wide centenary campaign and HLF funded project, '[Hawlio Heddwch](#)'. During 2023-24 it is uncovering the story behind it through involving community groups, volunteers, academics and civil society.



The Churches Peace Appeal in 1925 looks to have been inspired by the Women's Peace campaign - following about 18 months after, and both organised through the Welsh League of Nations Union

(WLNU), WCIA's predecessor body.

But the story of the Churches Appeal remains as yet untold. This memorial may hold distinct ecumenical significance, as one of the earliest tangible demonstrations of broad inter-denominational cooperation post-WW1 and disestablishment.

WCIA have so far been able to:

- [digitise the memorial](#) onto People's Collection Wales (PCW), and has supported volunteers to research, identify and digitise [WLNU archival materials](#) held at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth - in particular an [account by Rev Gwilym Davies](#) of his trip and the appeal's presentation to American faith leaders in Detroit in December 1925
- These source materials have been curated and written up into a 'hidden histories feature' on WCIA's Peace Heritage pages, 'the [1925 Welsh Churches Peace Appeal to America](#),' which can be shared digitally whilst also enabling others to view and use the source archives.
- Student [placement Abby Craig-Jones](#) has produced a [short \(9 minute\) film, available on Youtube](#) (along with a [downloadable PDF leaflet](#)), drawing together the appeal's story so far – which we hope can stimulate interest among community groups and partners.

WCIA and Cytûn have now agreed to work together with the successors of the original signatory denominations (the Free Churches, the Church in Wales and the Quakers). It will also work with other churches, faith and community groups and heritage / third sectors organisations Wales-wide to remember the Churches Peace Appeal in 2025. It will celebrate its relevance for both peace and inter-denominational and inter-faith endeavour a century later.

This is a great opportunity for WCIA to work together with Cytûn and others to uncover and bring the story to life, make connections with contemporary peace issues, and involve communities in uncovering this lost part of Welsh history. All Cytûn member denominations have already received an invitation to participate, but we would welcome expressions of interest from individuals and local churches also who would be willing to help research the past, recording it for the present, and

provide inspiration for the future. In the first instance, please contact Gethin Rhys at Cytûn – gethin@cytun.cymru

The Season of Remembrance

Each November is a time to remember those lost in war or armed conflicts over the years.

Speaking after the event, Cytûn Chief Executive, Siôn Brynach said "It was an honour this year to take part in the British Legion's Festival of Remembrance at St David's Cathedral in Cardiff this year, assisting the Rev Martin Spain of the Congregational Federation who is also ecumenical officer for the URC.

It was a sombre and appropriately dignified occasion to remember all those lost in war."



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