

Cytûn: Spring 2014 Newsletter



A Time of Opportunity

This newsletter is offered in good time before the great events of Easter as a means of encouragement and as a request for prayer. Cytûn now stands, probably more than at any time during its history, on the shoulder of several significant opportunities. Whether the opportunities are taken up depends now largely on the ability and the willingness of Wales' churches, denominations and bodies in association to work together in a manner that enables effective shared ministry and mission. Activity, opportunity and challenges were discerned at this February's Cytûn governance meetings: Enabling Group and Board.

Cytûn's Enabling Group heard encouraging news of how local Christians throughout Wales are not only meeting, worshipping and witnessing together along traditional ecumenical lines but also reaching out through newer expressions of service such as supporting: foodbanks, street pastors and town centre chaplaincies. Cytûn bodies in association and smaller churches gave an immensely encouraging account of the breadth of their invaluable work in areas such as: housing, human rights, Christian education, resources and publications, supporting night shelters for the homeless as well pioneering work in the arena of addiction. Cytûn seeks to further enable its local groups and bodies in association by: sharing information, offering governance and management advice, providing advocacy support, assisting with funding issues and profiling their work at national events.

Not unsurprisingly perhaps, given the current economic climate, the Cytûn Board considered the challenges of providing a more coherent funding mechanism for Wales' ecumenical instrument. That process is ongoing. Working effectively during 2013, Cytûn delivered almost all its objectives in time and below budget. Nonetheless, Cytûn has worked over the past two years on a planned deficit budget. Based on an agreed total budget of some £171,000 for 2014, Cytûn has already begun to deliver a demanding Workplan. It does so from the platform of a small staff team (full-time equivalent of only 3.4).

The work is significant, effective and almost of incalculable value in the Welsh faith and public

context. These are some of the opportunities that may be offered by Cytûn's work during 2014.



Concelebrating at The Gathering

Faith, Order and Witness Opportunities

Cytûn has enabled Wales' Christian community to streamline its ecumenical and inter-faith costs by providing administrative support for the Free Church Council of Wales, the Commission of the Covenanted Churches and the Inter-faith Council for Wales and appears to be the first port of call for public bodies wishing to mark national events and services. Cytûn has also helped to ensure that Wales is represented effectively at British and Irish, European and World ecumenical councils. Cytûn will during 2014-15:

- Progress further the major conversations regarding The Church Uniting in Wales in preparation for the Gathering 2015.
- Continue to manage and deliver the churches' presence at major national events and facilitate the arrangements for ceremonies and services.
- Provide training especially through its successful Welcome to Wales course for ministers new to Wales.
- Serve the Christian conviction in inter-faith dialogue and engage effectively in witness and mission with Christian communities beyond the current Cytûn membership. Help was given recently to enable The Bible Society to fulfil its recruitment aspirations in Wales.
- Provide substantive national support and encouragement to local and regional ecumenical endeavours sometimes enabling pioneering projects to attain funding from charitable sources.

- Manage the free ticketing scheme for the National Eisteddfod's Sunday Service by the end of May, 2014. It's estimated that this scheme is worth over £16,000 to the Christian community.

Public Square Opportunities

Cytûn is well placed to serve the churches in the public arena serving on the Welsh Government's Third Sector Partnership Council. A strategic objective will be to counter the advance of forms of secularism that strive to confine faith to homes and places of worship. Cytûn will:

- Make further progress towards publishing a revisited *Wales: a Moral Society?* by the end of 2015 with a view to enabling Cytûn to delivering a more robust and focused public affairs portfolio.
- Publish monthly briefing papers on legislative and other public affairs and establish a Welsh "RADAR" group to review legislation and enable effective and timely intervention. Recently, Cytûn organised a platform for the Salvation Army to address the Welsh Government's Faith Communities Forum on poverty issues.
- Advocate for and support measures to enhance chaplaincy work in public life and seek to support the innovative rural chaplaincy team at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show. The financial value of publicly maintained chaplaincies in Wales may be counted in millions.

International, Migration, Race and Ethnic Congregation Opportunities

Cytûn currently provides the Chair for the Wales Migration Partnership and offers a significant policy input through its membership of the Welsh Government's Race Forum. Cytûn will:

- Actively support and facilitate the work of Christian Aid and CAFOD in the international arena.
- Be prepared to support ad hoc church activities on international affairs as requested.
- Enhance further Cytûn's partnership with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland by supporting its international work and producing the 2014 Racial Justice Sunday materials.
- Continue to welcome newer ethnic minority congregations into Cytûn membership and provide advocacy support where appropriate. Cytûn has welcomed and supported newer Christian communities from India, Ethiopia, South Korea and the Ukraine. We also continue to serve the German speaking Lutheran community.

Daily Opportunities

The highlights indicated in this newsletter represent only part of Cytûn's work. Daily, opportunities and challenges are presented by public bodies, the third sector, press and media as well as national and local churches and congregations. Frequently, Cytûn is called upon to signpost individuals to the appropriate sources concerning public and personal church related matters. Beyond the overarching strategic objectives, Cytûn endeavours to fulfil its vocation daily by meeting the opportunities and challenges God has placed at its feet. Staff team members are also willing to speak at and attend local ecumenical meetings as resources allow.



Interfaith Vigil, Newport

For your information:

The **Welcome to Wales** Course for ordained and lay church workers moving into Wales from elsewhere, will be held once again on **1st – 3rd October 2014** at St Michael's College, Llandaff. Particulars, including how to book can be found on the Cytûn website and from denominational offices.

Booking details can be found on the Cytûn website (www.cytun.org.uk) or from Geraint Hopkins (geraint@cytun.org.uk)

Remember to order your tickets for this year's Worship Service at the National Eisteddfod by following this picture-link on the Cytûn website, or by contacting the office via the phone or on e-mail. Please order before the closing date of May 31.

Cliciwch yma am docynnau
AM DDIM i Oedfa yr Eisteddfod.
Bore Sul, 3 Awst 2014

Click here to order FREE TICKETS
for the Eisteddfod worship service.
Sunday Morning, 3 August 2014
Archebwch cyn = 31/5/2014 = Closing date