



Cytûn Newsletter

Advent 2018

This review highlights how Cytûn has fulfilled its mission in Christ's service during 2018. As always, this has been achieved by God's grace and enabled by its member churches and organisations. Our work is facilitated by a small staff team and brought about by the generosity of many Christian volunteers throughout Wales. Cytûn's work priorities are guided by a Workplan, which is agreed annually by the Cytûn Trustees and a representative Enabling Group. We do our best, however, to respond to requests from the churches to engage in activities over and above the Workplan as circumstances and priorities change during each year.

Cytûn works with an array of faith community partners, public bodies, third sector organisations and Welsh and UK Governments. We believe that these partnerships help to develop the good name of our member communities in furtherance of their work and aims.

New Staff Appointment

We were delighted to welcome a new staff member in May 2018. Peredur Owen Griffiths joined the staff team in May 2018. Peredur is employed to work as Faith and Witness and Events Enabler. He can be contacted via: peredur@cytun.cymru / 02920 464 371



Photos from the Cytûn Tent at the National Eisteddfod

Cytûn's work is furthered by

Links with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Cytûn staff and Board members regularly attend CTBI meetings and programmes to ensure that the voice of the churches of Wales contributes to the wider debate across these islands.

Representation at denominational meetings

Cytûn staff are regularly present at denominational governing bodies, assemblies and committees. Our aim is to provide input into these meetings about ecumenical matters, and encourage our member churches and organisations to tackle the challenges and opportunities of Wales today together rather than separately.

Cytûn staff regularly attend the Christian Aid Wales Committee meetings, as most of our member churches are also sponsoring churches of Christian Aid, and many of our local Cytûn/Churches Together groups are also local Christian Aid groups. As the churches' agency working in solidarity with the poor of the world, the aims of Christian Aid are closely aligned with those of Cytûn.

Resources



Examples of resources available on the Cytûn website

Cytûn staff members have produced bilingual prayers for Remembrance Sunday 2018 which also appear on CTBI's website, and can be easily adapted for any occasion of remembrance and commitment to peace.

Supporting local Cytûn and Churches Together groups across Wales

Local Cytûn/Churches Together groups are self-governing, locally run groups of Christian churches who work together in whatever way they feel suits their local circumstances. Cytûn staff are always ready to preach, lead worship and assist with the work of local groups across Wales.

We encourage local groups to affiliate to Cytûn nationally, for a small fee, in order to keep in touch with what is happening across Wales. Enquiries about affiliating to Cytûn or requests for information or help should be addressed to post@cytun.cymru. Or ring the Cytûn office on 02920 464 204.

Supporting Chaplaincy work in Wales

Cytûn has supported the work of the Royal Welsh Showground Chaplaincy service and assisted in finalising a Chaplaincy Partnership Agreement in August 2018. We work with the Free Church Council for Wales on matters regarding health care chaplaincy in Wales; with the Inter-faith Council for Wales regarding Higher Education chaplaincy; and the Cytûn Board is supportive of attempts to establish a chaplaincy to the National Assembly for Wales.

Training

Welcome to Wales 2018. This annual course affords an opportunity to introduce aspects of Welsh culture, language, history, politics and religious life to those who are serving their churches in Wales for the first time, or are returning after an absence. Enquiries about the next course, in October 2019, should be directed to Sasha Perriam at post@cytun.cymru.



Photos from the October 2018 Welcome to Wales course.

Witnessing Work

Our work of witness at the three major national festivals is constantly rooted in worship and fellowship. This year was a year of differences... The first difference was that we had a new Faith, Order and Witness Enabler, Peredur Owen Griffiths, coordinating our presence at the three major national festivals. The second difference was that the Urdd Eisteddfod was held on

the Royal Welsh Agricultural Showground. It proved to be as busy as always providing a platform for the work of partners such as the Welsh Sunday School Council and Open the Book. The bonus this year was that our friends the Royal Welsh Agricultural Showground Chaplains were working alongside us for the week. Many children came to the tent and regaled us with their favourite stories from the Bible.



Cytûn worked closely with the chaplains and others to ensure that the churches had a strong presence at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show. Our continuing partnership was signified with the signing of a new Partnership Agreement that will help further develop the work of the chaplains on the showground. Many of our member churches and groups had a visible presence in the tent and we are grateful to them all for their support. Once again, Cytûn helped to profile the work of the churches in the context of rurality.



The final difference this year was at the National Eisteddfod in Cardiff. Even though the “Field” was different the Cytûn tent was a meeting place for all. With our neighbours Christian Aid, we enjoyed a wonderful week talking, learning, listening and worshipping together. Many of the ecumenical groups that are members of Cytûn conducted the morning worship each day and without them and our member churches we could not have had such a successful Eisteddfod.

With a year of differences behind us, we move on to a potentially more traditional year but remembering to learn from the experience of doing things differently.

Policy Work

During 2018, Cytûn continued to work on behalf of the Welsh churches by sharing information and responding to the developments as the United Kingdom prepared to leave the European Union. The Wales and Europe Working Party organized two public meetings - in Lampeter and Llandudno - where there was an opportunity to hear the views of church members and others about the future. The comments made at those meetings have been a great help to the Working Group in responding to a number of consultations by the UK and Welsh Governments and the Westminster and Wales Parliaments. These responses can be viewed on: www.cytun.cymru/waleseurope.

We discussed with the Home Office how churches in Wales can help with the new Settled Status system for European Union citizens living in Wales. Those churches that have welcomed European citizens into their communities are in a special position to direct members of those communities to the scheme, and may also help them to make the application online or on a mobile phone app. The UK Government requires applications to be made in English, although information about the scheme will be available in all official languages of the European Union and in Welsh. Grants will be available from the Home Office to help churches with this work, and more details can be obtained from gethin@cytun.cymru.

Another major priority for 2018 was to engage with Christian churches and organizations that work with individuals and families suffering from poverty, especially those who find it difficult to buy food. The work of local churches with food banks, plans to avoid hunger among children during school holidays, and debt advice services, is now crucial for many of our poorest people. Many of the volunteers who work so hard are also eager to ask the UK Government

and the Welsh Government to do everything possible to tackle the causes of this poverty. The striking headline of the special edition of the Cytûn Policy Bulletin in March 2018 was Churches Concerned as Hunger Stalks Wales. The Policy Bulletin, which is published every half term, can be subscribed to by contacting the Cytûn office, or may be read on our website.

Cytûn also worked with our members to influence the content of the new schools curriculum in Wales, which will be published in draft form in April 2019. We have had several meetings with Humanities officers, who are responsible for making recommendations for Religious Education as well as History, Geography, Business and Social Studies. These discussions are on-going. We have joined with other organizations in the third sector to ask that more attention be given generally in the new curriculum to topics such as peaceful living, human rights and the history of minority communities in Wales, as well as ensuring that all pupils are encouraged to view the world through a Welsh lens. Giving our members an opportunity to respond to the draft curriculum when it is published will be a priority in 2019.



Cytûn operates through its member organization, Housing Justice Cymru, to be a voice regarding housing and homelessness policy. Housing Justice Cymru also offers support to churches that want to set up a night shelter for homeless people in their area, and also to churches with unused land that could be built on. Housing Justice can be contacted regarding all this through their Director in Wales, Sharon Lee – s.lee@housingjustice.org.uk.

During the period October 2018 – January 2019 we have had the pleasure of welcoming George Watkins as an intern to the Cytûn office. He had graduated from Cardiff University in 2018, and has been assisting the Policy Officer with his work, especially with regard to Brexit.



Looking to 2019

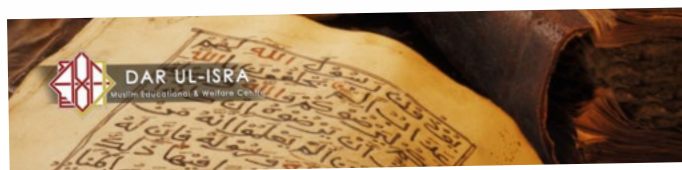
January 2019



Worship materials for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019 have been produced by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. Resources are available in both English and Welsh online at www.ctbi.org.uk and via Norwich Books.

March 2019

Two of our closest partnerships are exemplified during March 2019.



On March 11, the Inter-faith Council for Wales, of which Cytûn is an active member, meets for the first time as a Council in Dar Ul-isra Mosque, close neighbours to the Cytûn office. This meeting will be a visible sign of the growing trust and deep partnership between the various faith communities of Wales, recognising each other's distinctiveness, but working together whenever we can.

On March 21, Cytûn will be present at Gofod 3 in Cardiff City Stadium, the annual showcase for the work of the third sector (voluntary and community organisations) across Wales. This full day of seminars, workshops, exhibitions and networking is a key event in our deep partnership with WCVA (the Wales Council for Voluntary Action) and the thousands of voluntary organisations who make Wales tick.