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CYHOEDDIADAU'R
GAIR

Summary Report

of the work of the

Welsh Sunday School

Council

and

Cyhoeddiadau'r Gair

2024



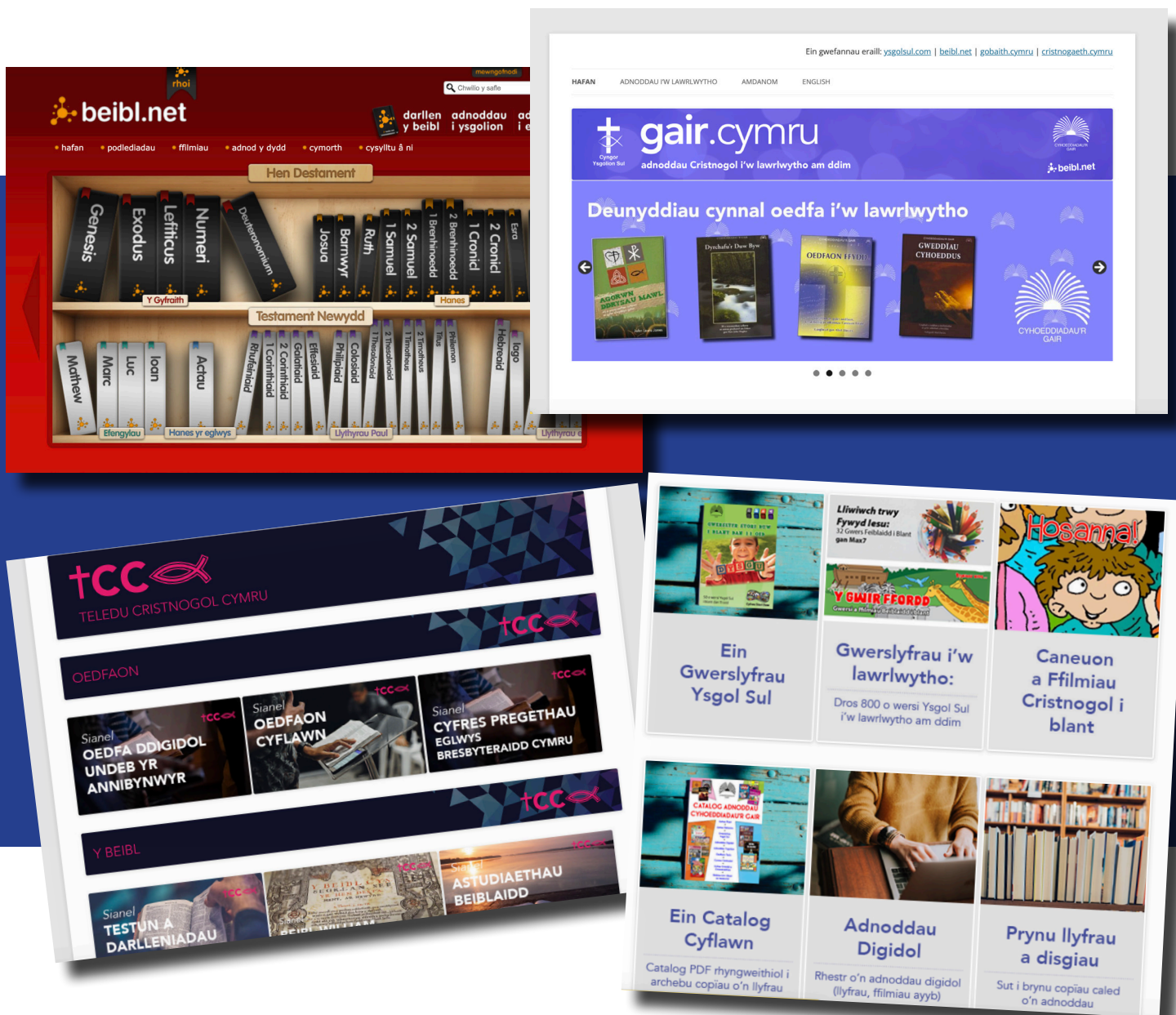
INTRODUCTION

It is a pleasure to bring this report to your attention, which summarizes the main activity of the Welsh Sunday School Council and its publications imprint Cyhoeddiadau'r Gair during 2024.

This was a year where there was an opportunity to encourage and support the re-establishment or establishment of new children's work in communities across Wales. Thank you for each opportunity that comes our way - from churches, and for invitations to attend national denominational gatherings.

DIGITAL STRATEGY

Back in 2019 we created a 5-year strategy plan for 2019-2024, with the emphasis on **increasing our digital work / websites**, while reducing our print publishing work. Over a period of 5 years, we now have 5 websites full of information and practical resources, not to mention channels on Facebook, TikTok, X and Instagram. **A Christian TV channel** was also created on YouTube, bringing together the thousands of Welsh Christian videos that can be seen on the internet.



MISSIONAL OUTREACH

While the focus of the last 5 years has been on developing our presence on the web, and more 'digital' resources, the focus for the next two years - 2025/6 - will be on **reaching out missionally, specifically around the work of Christianity in schools**, by developing Christian resources for supporting the work of schools and also helping churches to reach out to their local schools.

We have received an endowment of money from the Welsh Religious Education Movement charity, and this will be spent over the next 2 years to realize these objectives. The main resource will be the production of 2 original illustrated books in Welsh, one focusing on the history of the development of the Christian faith in Wales, and the other illustrating the history of the Celtic Saints. We also hope to translate them into English. We will also help churches with guidelines on how to create links with their local schools.



NEW RESOURCES

There are by now a wide range of Welsh language resources available for almost every occasion - for Sunday Schools (**at least 8 different series of textbooks**), children's and youth clubs, Messy Church, Godly Play, **Roots** worship material and resources for assemblies in schools. The challenge ahead of us now is to encourage and inspire people locally to use these resources, working together within areas - and inter-denominationally where that is practical. It will be good to be able to collaborate with denominations and other Christian organizations to make this happen, in a time where the average age of our church congregations is rising.



NEW BOOKS

Some of the Welsh language books we published during 2024 were:

Llyfr Sticeri Beiblaidd Enfawr - a colorful large format A3 book, with stickers that can be reused over and over again. Published January 2024, price £7.99.

Llyfr Sŵn Anifeiliaid y Beibl - a colorful board book with 50 electronic buttons that make different sounds. Published January 2024, price £12.99.

Llyfr Llechen Beiblaidd - a book containing 40 Bible stories, which includes an LCD digital screen and a stylus, where pictures can be drawn on the digital screen within the book. Published January 2024, price £12.99.

Llyfr lliwio Stori Duw - a coloring book containing 60 pictures from this popular Bible. Published May 2024, price £7.99.

Gweddïo gyda'r Salmau - a volume of 150 original prayers by Euros Jones Evans based on the Psalms. Published May 2024, price £14.99.

Byw'r Weddi - a volume by Trystan Owain Hughes discussing the Lord's Prayer. Published August 2024, price £7.99.

How to Pray - Meirion Morris's adaptation of Pete Greig's book on prayer guidance. Published June 2024, price £14.99.

Gair yn ei bryd - a volume of articles by Noel Davies. Published June 2024, price £5.99.

Fesul cam drwy'r flwyddyn - a volume of sermons and hymns by Noel Davies. Published June 2024, price £8.99.



Gair Duw ar Lafar Gwald - a volume of Dewi Arwel Hughes' work, edited by E Wyn James tracing the origins of many of our Welsh expressions. Published August 2024, price £8.99.

Ganwyd Iesu - the Christmas sound book - a colorful pop-up book with 6 electronic buttons that make different sounds. Published October 2024, price £11.99.

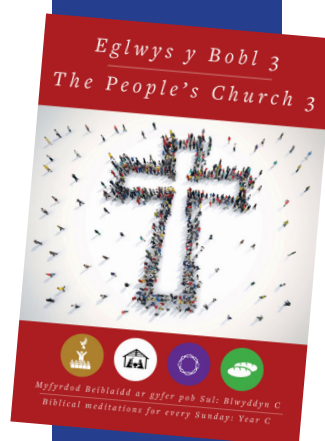
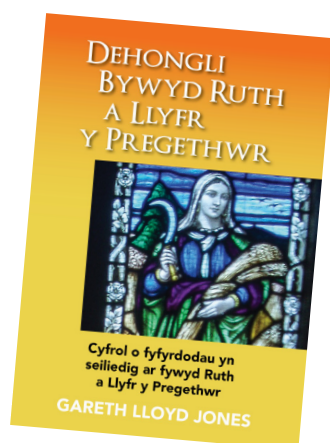
Llyfr Carioci Caneuon Nadolig - a colorful board book with 6 electronic buttons that sing 6 different carols. Published October 2024, price £11.99.

Cyfres Jig-sos y Gair - 3 new jigsaws: Birth of Jesus / Feeding the Five Thousand / Noah's Ark - 3 colorful 50-piece jigsaws in a box. Published October 2024, price £7.99 each.

Eglwys y Bobl / The People's Church - volume 3 - a volume of Biblical reflections/addresses following year B of the Lectionary. Published November 2024, price £12.99.

Dehongli Bywyd Ruth a Llyfr y Pregethwr - the fourth in the series of Old Testament commentaries by Gareth Lloyd Jones. Published April 2024, price £8.99.

Llythyr cariad, llythyr gobaith: a volume on self-help and care based on the history of some of the characters of the Bible by Glyn Wise. Published March 2024, price £5.99.



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Time was also spent developing new books for 2025. This includes:

Reviving Prayer - Meirion Morris' adaptation of Reviving Prayer by Owen Cotton in collaboration with charity 100 i Wales. To be published March 2025, price £8.99. We will also publish 2 English books on the same occasion.

Hoff Adnodau'r Cymry - 60 well-known Welsh people share their favourite sections of the Bible by Beti Wyn James. To be published March 2025, price £9.99.

Beibl mewn 10 - a joint project with the New Welsh Bible Committee, which will present 66 chapters giving a 10-minute guide to each book in the Bible, in print, as a podcast and as mp4 movies. To be published September 2025, price £12.99.

Merched Rhyfeddol y Beibl - an adaptation of Extraordinary Women of the Bible by SPCK - a colorful book for children. To be published September 2025, price £7.99.

Dal i ganu a chanmol - a volume tracing the history of Cymanfa Ganu and interviews with a number of conductors. Trystan Lewis edits this volume. To be published August 2025, price £8.99.

Hoff Emynau'r Cymry 2 - this time Delyth Morgans Phillips will ask 60 people who use hymns in their daily lives which is their favourite hymn. To be published in October 2025, price £9.99.

Fy Ngweinidogaeth - a volume containing around 20 portraits of people who carry out different and varied ministries by Carwyn and Nerys Siddall and Dylan Rhys. To be published September 2025, price £9.99.

Carolau'r Cymry - reflections on carols by E Wyn James. To be published November 2025, price £8.99.

Y Goeden Jesse - a colourful activity and craft book for children including a 25-day journey through the advent period. To be published in October 2025, price £4.99.

Coeden y Pasg - a colourful activity and craft book for children containing a 40-day journey through the period of lent. To be published in October 2025, price £4.99.

Llwybr Cadfan - A volume of poetic pilgrimage following Llwybr Cadfan by Sion Aled and Sian Northey. To be published May 2025, price £8.99.

Arglwydd, dysg i mi weddio - a volume of essays that are studies discussing prayer. To be published in May 2025, price £6.99.

Dyma gyfarfod hyfryd iawn - a volume of 50 services by Watcyn James following the order of the church year. To be published July 2025, price £11.99.

Dyrys Daith - a volume on climate change by Huw John Hughes. To be published in May 2025, price £6.99. Sponsored by Cyfundeb Môn.

Cenhadaeth y Cymry - a volume on Welsh missionaries by D Ben Rees. To be published in May 2025, price £6.99.

New Illustrated Bible for 7-11 year-olds - A new colour Bible by Tom Wright is on the way. This will be a memorial volume in memory of Elisabeth James, using the funds received. This will be a joint project with Ebeneser Caerdydd, with Ifan Roberts administering.

Autobiography - volumes by Aled Edwards and Hywel Meredydd.



WEBSITES

Work on our 5 websites continues. Here is a summary of the main new developments:

Work on www.ysgolsul.com

New sections:

- God's story series - 50 online Sunday school lessons, with marketing and promotional material.
- Early years - nursery material.
- Bible PowerPoint - 60 new stories.
- Bible animations for children - 30 new.
- The True Way lesson plans - 20 new.
- Praying with children and prayer cards.
- Linking churches with schools.
- Children in mourning.
- The Prayer course.
- Faith exploration course - Question.

Work on www.cristnogaeth.cymru

New sections:

- Health and well-being.
- Dementia Support.
- Climate Change.
- Prayer.
- Grants and financial support.
- Faith and sport.
- Faith and the countryside.
- School work.

Work on www.gair.cymru

- Around 500 new files of resources added.

Work on www.gobaith.cymru

- 32 contemporary Christian songs authorized and added to the website.

Work on www.beibl.net

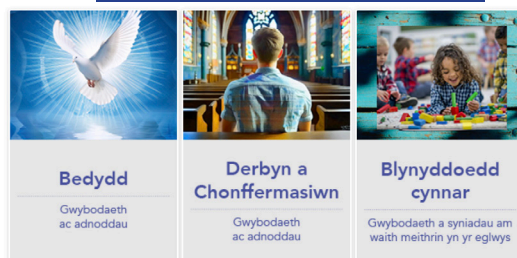
- Maintenance and security updates..

Work on Teledu Cristnogol Cymru

- New channels including Y Cwmni Bach podcasts, Question study material and contemporary songs in Welsh.

Cynnal pump tudalen Facebook

- Ensure presence on social media.



PROMOTION

Dechrau Canu on S4C made a special programme to highlight our Codi'r Llen book, while there was an item on Llan Llanast on **S4C News** and articles were published in **Cenn@d** ar **Tyst, Cristion** and on our 5 pages on **Facebook**, and the occasional radio talk to draw attention to new initiatives.

We also continue to share regularly on **our social media pages**.

Our **annual bulletin CYSylltiad** was also published in October, as a colourful 16-page magazine, together with several articles in **Cenn@d**, **Y Tyst** and **Cristion**.

Among the **events** we attended ourselves were:

The Baptist Union assembly in Pembroke - an opportunity to set up a stall and launch the book *How to Pray*.

The Union of Independents assembly in Pontypridd - an opportunity to set up a stall and launch 2 new volumes by Noel Davies.

The General Assembly of the PCW in Aberystwyth - an opportunity to set up a resource stand.

The Royal Welsh in Llanellwedd - an opportunity to host a resource stall over the week.

National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd and the **Urdd Eisteddfod at Meifod** - an opportunity to run a resource stand on the field, with an exhibition in the Church. There was an opportunity to launch *Byw'r Weddi* by Trystan Owain Hughes, *Gair Duw ar Lafar Gwlad* by Dewi Arwel Hughes and a series of 5 new Christmas books for children.

A residential meeting of the **Ecumenical Network of the Church in Wales** was attended in Lampeter.

There was an opportunity to host a **children's work resource evening** in Aberaeron for the Presbytery of Ceredigion and North Pembroke.

There was an invitation to **exhibit and speak at a 'Flame Childrens Ministry' Conference with the Church in Wales** in Swansea.

An invitation was received to hold a **session on leading worship** based on using our print and digital resources in Llandysul to Cyfundeb Ceredigion.

A meeting was held to **discuss the work of the new Craigblaenau Sunday school** and the supply of resources.



WIDER PARTNERSHIPS

As part of the work of **CMN (CTBI children's work network)** we completed work on 2 training courses, namely **Essential Children's Ministry** and **Essential Family Ministry**. A course of 10 modules each which will appear on the **TheologyX** digital platform under the auspices of Cliff College. It will not be possible to have a Welsh version - but as the course is taught over the web, it would be possible to have a Welsh tutor group for it.

During the year we took part in 3 conferences discussing the future of children's ministry - one in London discussing employee training, another on spiritual abuse and the other a conference at **European level (ECCE) in Geneva**.

During 2024 **10 Gee Medals** were presented, and they were presented in 7 different locations. It was encouraging to see full chapels to honour local enthusiasts.

Our work of developing the **Roots suite of worship materials** continues, and at the moment there are quite a few changes planned, including a brand-new website and a completely new design to our printed magazine. The new website will include a 'Drag and Drop session planner' resource, where you can click on different elements to create a service schedule in pdf format. The new magazines were launched in September. The number of subscribers remains constant, and customer feedback is very appreciative of the resources. The weekly Welsh prayers, together with hymn choices and 2 weekly worksheets for children will continue to be produced and uploaded weekly.

Networking and sharing ideas is very important in the field of children's work. We often turn to England for inspiration - SU England and Wales, Bible Society, SPCK and Lion etc. In November I had the opportunity to visit 4 charities and 2 Christian resource centres in Scotland, namely **Scripture Union Scotland, Bible Society Scotland, CVE schools Scotland and the Church of Scotland** children's work office, to try to understand their perspective of working from a different country.

There was an opportunity to attend the **London International Book Fair**, and it was great to feel the buzz within the industry. There were several constructive meetings with several publishers there.



ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Our **Management Committee** met in March, June and October, and our annual meeting was also held in June, again all on Zoom. Thank you for the support of the officers and trustees for the work, and to the denominations for the sponsorship. Thanks also for the happy collaboration between us as a team - Rhys Llwyd for designing and maintaining the websites and to Delyth for looking after Roots and the Gobaith website.

In challenging days, we give thanks for every hopeful sign seen throughout Wales. **Thank you for all the leaders and volunteers who strive to maintain activity for children and their families.** In concluding this report, I would like to emphasize once again our desire as a Council to support the establishment of new initiatives (or re-ignite work that is struggling), and our willingness to meet to discuss options and what is practical and possible within our local communities.

Thank you for the support of officers and members - financially and practically. **Jennie Hurd's** term of Chair came to an end at the end of the year, and **Mererid Mair** was welcomed to the Chair in January. It is sad to record that **Idris Hughes**, our former treasurer, died during the summer after a period of illness. We remember him fondly and thank him for his term of service. We have also had the opportunity to welcome **Kathryn Morris** to us as our new treasurer, and we thank her for the expertise she has in the field of finance.



Following the death of **Elisabeth James** in 2023, who was our Honorary President, the Council at its annual meeting appointed a new Honorary President to succeed her, namely **Rheinallt Thomas**, who has also made an immeasurable contribution to the Council's work over many years. It was also agreed we would publish a new children's Bible in memory of Elisabeth James, using the donations received in her memory to sponsor the work.

With thanks for all your cooperation and trust, Aled Davies, Director

