

## MAECYMRU LAUNCHES IN WALES – WITH GROWTH IN MIND

MAECymru, a new CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) to promote gender justice and equality in the Church in Wales, was launched in Newtown on Saturday December 5th.

MAECymru stands for ‘Merched a’r Eglwys’ (‘women and the church’), ‘Ministry and Equality’ – and also means “it’s Wales” in Welsh. Its establishment follows the historic decision in 2013 to allow women to become Bishops in the Church in Wales, but in recognition that there is a long way to go before women – lay and ordained – achieve equality in the church. The organisation aims to monitor appointments, including to influential committees and boards; promote gender-aware training and appropriate theological education; and arrange events to promote equality and encourage participation.

With an opening membership projected to be in the region 60, over 25 women and men from all over Wales – every Diocese was represented – came together on December 5th. Hilary Cotton sent greetings from English sister organisation WATCH (Women And The Church), reminding the gathering that their meeting fell on the same day as the first woman priest in Argentina was being ordained.

Revd Enid Morgan, long-time campaigner for women within the Church in Wales and Chair of the new organisation, said in her inaugural address:

“The law is in place: now the work begins. We need higher standards for what a community of equality in the name of Jesus is about. We can become a model of the Kingdom of God for the rest of the world.”

Revd Dr Jean Prosser, who has led the Steering Group preparing MAECymru’s constitution and working towards registration of the organisation, pointed out:

“Equality aids growth: there is ample evidence of this from the commercial world.”

Cathy Grove, newly-elected (lay) Trustee and Vice-Chair, spoke of the need to grow the membership of the organisation, adding:

“We mustn’t become the Church in Wales’ best-kept secret!”