

The Message of Peace and Goodwill

What is it and why is it important?

The Reverend Gwilym Davies, a Welsh Baptist Minister from Cwm Rhymney, was a tireless campaigner for world peace. He felt particularly strongly that education and the voice of children and young people were important in creating international peace and understanding. In 1922 he broadcast the first ever Message of Peace and Goodwill from the children of Wales to the children of the world, using wireless telegraphy. Unfortunately, that first message didn't get very far, but it was picked up by the director of the Eiffel Tower radio station, who forwarded it on in French.



Wales for Peace website

Despite the early disappointment, Gwilym Davies was not one for giving up easily! He persisted and within a decade 68 countries had responded. The power of the Message is illustrated by the following message, received from young people in Germany in 1946:

“It is years since we have heard from the Welsh Children. How it grew dark! We should like to hear from you again.”

In addition to the Message of Peace and Goodwill, youth peace camps were held in Wales and overseas trips were arranged to enhance cultural exchange and international understanding.

The Message has changed and evolved over the years but it still survives today, and is broadcast every year on 18th May, facilitated by Urdd Gobaith Cymru, the Welsh Youth Movement. Recent messages have varied greatly in form and presentation, including song, verse and film. Nowadays, the wording and theme of the Message also changes annually, in response to current events, to campaigns by charities and according to issues that young people themselves feel strongly about. However, the aim of the message has remained constant – to enable young people to communicate on themes which are important to them – overcoming barriers of language, culture and politics.

In terms of dissemination, the Message is performed every year on the stage of the Urdd (Young people's) Eisteddfod and in the Senedd building, and broadcasted on radio and television. It is translated into as many languages as possible, made available on the Urdd's website, and promoted through social media. However, considering the huge variety of channels of communication now available to us, is the Message as well-known or effective as it could be?

Questions to consider:

1. What do you think of the idea of sending a Message? Is this a good way to share your views and encourage discussion? Does it help to promote peace?
2. Do the voices of young people count? How can you be sure that your voices are heard?
3. Do you think that children and young people across the world have similar aspirations?
4. In your opinion, what are the best ways of promoting understanding amongst young people globally.

Related actions / campaigns today:

Help to share [this year's Message of Peace and Goodwill](#)

Get involved in voting for the 60 young people who will represent your voice on the [Welsh Youth Parliament](#)