

# *Undeb Bedyddwyr Cymru* *The Baptist Union of Wales*



Rhif Elusen Gofrestredig / Registered Charity Number 1154855

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Easter Greetings from the Baptist Union of Wales

“Christ has risen! He has risen indeed!”

Whilst the Easter message is the same every year, our context this year means that our celebrations will be somewhat different as the COVID-19 casts its shadow over us.

When Mary Magdalene went to the tomb on the morning of the third day two thousand years ago, it was still dark. She was not rejoicing but wept tears of great sadness. Those very same feelings are currently being experienced by thousands of people today yearning for a new dawn when the threat of the Coronavirus has completely disappeared. This is a time that we have never experienced before.

However, in spite of the trauma and sadness that has been witnessed, we have, over the past few weeks, seen humanity at its very best: the staff of the National Health Service work tirelessly caring for and treating patients, key workers ensure that we can buy food, medication and shop for essentials along with the army of volunteers who help the frail and vulnerable members in our communities. Each and every one deserves a very special round of applause. But at the same time, some have exhibited the very worst tendencies of human nature. Examples of selfishness and greed have been seen as people attempted to travel to their second homes; others have insisted on socialising in large gatherings whilst others have stockpiled food and other supplies leaving our supermarket shelves empty. Thankfully, we can testify that we have seen far more goodness at work rather than the negative tendencies of our human nature. As we look forward to the coming weeks and months let us pray that we will continue to see more of the ‘positive’ rather than the ‘negative’ at work in society.

In the midst of this we have been truly horrified as the virus has increasingly claimed thousands of lives throughout the world. Urgent preparations have been made to ensure that there are sufficient beds available for those needing medical care. It is a source of enormous sadness to know that those who fall victim to COVID-19 will not have the company and comfort of their nearest and dearest at their bedsides. To compound this, we are not able to hold funerals in our usual way and friends and family are unable to visit the bereaved to offer support and comfort. In order to avoid contracting the virus we have no choice but to follow the Government’s instruction and stay at home.

What therefore does Easter have to say to us in the middle of this emergency?

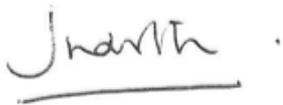
As Christians, we know that life’s journey is not easy. The shadow of the Cross is always a reality. But we know that the Cross is not the end. Jesus succeeded in transforming everything through His incredible love for us: He defeated death; He transformed the darkness and crushed all hopelessness. He gave us new life and a light that can never be extinguished and an eternal hope through His victory on the Cross. That is the

message of Easter. He defeated death and gave new life to his disciples. Therefore, in the middle of this emergency we can but turn to our Lord Jesus Christ and receive of the peace that he gives to us.

As we look to the future, many people are already asking questions about our current way of living. Will we have learnt anything from this difficult period? Will this emergency have led us to live differently for the sake of our brothers and sisters and the whole creation? Will we appreciate and cherish our freedom to meet together for worship and social activity? Will we as Christians have engaged in a deeper and possibly more reflective relationship with God?

Time alone will tell whether we will be able to respond with wisdom and maturity to some of the questions currently being asked. In the meantime, let us cling dearly to the Easter message and may each and every one of us remember the timeless truths of the Gospel and know the power and strength of the presence of the risen Christ, the One who sustains and comforts us at all times.

“Christ has risen! He has risen indeed!”

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith Morris". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Judith Morris  
General Secretary

April 9, 2020