**North East Circuit of Independent Methodist Churches**

**Devotional for Sunday 12th April 2020 – Easter Day**

**Introduction**

* He is risen! He is risen, indeed! Hallelujah!
* We celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ on this Easter Day, this Resurrection Sunday.

**Hymn: I serve a Risen Saviour**

I serve a risen Saviour He’s in the world today.
I know that He is living, whatever men may say.
I see His hand of mercy; I hear His voice of cheer;
And just the time I need Him He’s always near.

He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me along life’s narrow way.
He lives, He lives, salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart.

In all the world around me I see His loving care,
And though my heart grows weary, I never will despair;
I know that He is leading, through all the stormy blast;
The day of His appearing will come at last.

**Bible Reading: John 20**

**Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene**

11Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb 12and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

13They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?”

“They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” 14At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

15He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?”

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.”

16Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”).

**Devotional:**

* Mary Magdalene is at the tomb. Overcome with grief. Weeping. Alone.
* Turning from her conversation with the angels, Mary sees Jesus but fails to recognise him. Why she did not recognise Jesus we do not know, numerous suggestions are offered but in her conversation with the ‘gardener’ she refers to Jesus as ‘him.’ This suggests that she was unable to even mention that name of Jesus, for the pain was so great for her.
* The change that came was through one word, her own name, “Mary.”
* The Good Shepherd had called one of his sheep by name”
* What Mary had considered lost was in fact standing next to her.
* We too feel bereaved in our own situations.
* Lost freedoms and liberties yet we can rejoice this Easter Day by recognising just like Mary that even though we think we have lost much; all we need is by our side.
* Mary saw her sorrow turned into hope through her encounter with the risen Lord Jesus.
* May we encounter the risen Lord Jesus this Easter Day, turning our sorrows and losses into hope to help us in our situation.

See Mary weeping: ‘Where is He laid?
As in sorrow she turns from the empty tomb;
Hears a voice speaking, calling her name:
It’s the Master, the Lord raised to life again!
The voice that spans the years,
Speaking life, stirring hope, bringing peace to us,
Will sound till He appears, for He lives, Christ is risen from the dead!

**Prayer:**

O God our Heavenly Father, thank that you make all things new. Thank you for the victory and power in your Name. Thank you that you hold the keys over death, that by your might, Jesus was raised from the grave, paving the way for us to have new life with you. Thank you for turning our sorrow into hope. We continue to pray for our decision makers and frontline workers.

**The Lord’s Prayer**