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Description automatically generatedYr Eglwys yng Nghymru : The Church in Wales

To all the communities of Wales

from the Bishops of the Church in Wales

16th November 2020

As the autumn evenings draw in, and Christians approach the season we call Advent, which is a time of preparation for Christmas, the theme of light and darkness begins to feel very relevant. The dark evenings can seem cold and forbidding, while even the light seems to become more silvery and pale. At times like this, the verse in the Bible which speaks to us as bishops, as it probably does to all Christians, is:

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it”

*(The Gospel according to John, Chapter 1 verse 5)*

Christians believe that God’s light (the light of truth, the light of justice, the light of love) shines in the world and, no matter how dark things become, whether because of COVID or other troubles and difficulties, yet there is always hope in God’s goodness and love. For us, that light shines most fully in Jesus, whom we believe is God at work, entering the world to share our pain and to bring healing.

This faith will not be shared by everyone in Wales, and we write this, not in a spirit of arrogance, but in a spirit of humility, because we would like to invite you, if you feel able, to join us in praying for God’s healing and blessing on our nation this Advent. We six Anglican bishops will be saying the prayer below every evening at 6.00pm from the end of November until Christmas, and we would be pleased if you felt able to join with us. If you are of a different faith or tradition, you will want to adapt these words to your own belief. We acknowledge this by bracketing the words we will use as Christians, but you may choose to pray in different ways or words. If you a humanist or agnostic, we respect your convictions, and recognise that this prayer will not be for you. Nevertheless, we are sure that the healing, the strength, the compassion and the courage for which we will be praying are important to all people, whether of faith or not. Whatever our beliefs, we can all wish good cheer and well-being to everyone in Wales in this season.

Our prayer is this:

Heavenly Father, in the midst of a troubled world, you are light and life.

Send us your healing for those who are ill,

your strength for those who are suffering,

your compassion for those who grieve, and

your courage for those who work for the healing and service of others.

Bless our nation of Wales with the life-giving spirit of your love,

and grant us your mercy,

[revealed in the person of Christ your Son]. Amen.

John DE Davies, the Archbishop of Wales

Andrew John, the Bishop of Bangor

Gregory K Cameron, the Bishop of St Asaph

Joanna Penberthy, the Bishop of St Davids

June Osborne, the Bishop of Llandaff, and

Cherry Vann, the Bishop of Monmouth.