



# Peel Valley Congregation

Gowrie, Hallsville & West Tamworth

29 March 2020

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## **Ezekiel 37:1-14 (NIV)** **The Valley of Dry Bones**

**37** The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones.

<sup>2</sup> He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry.

<sup>3</sup> He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

I said, "Sovereign LORD, you alone know."

<sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!'

<sup>5</sup> This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.

<sup>6</sup> I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD."

<sup>7</sup> So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone.

<sup>8</sup> I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

<sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'"

<sup>10</sup> So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

<sup>11</sup> Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the people of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.'

<sup>12</sup> Therefore prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel.

<sup>13</sup> Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them.

<sup>14</sup> I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD."

Lori Rosenkvist wrote about **Ezekial 37: -14** in a unique way, "I have been the recipient of a life-saving organ transplant. I found myself completely unprepared for the level of healing I would experience. Like Ezekiel's dry bones, I had grown used to living with some level of disconnection. As systems deteriorated, and strength dried up, I learned to scale back my expectations. In my own way I got comfortable living in the valley of dry bones.

While I waited in that valley, I didn't think too much about what might be possible for me, how life would be different. I thought it would be wonderful simply to be stable – to have a functioning organ instead of a failing one.. But after the surgery I was thrust into a powerful and unexpected new kind of aliveness. Not only did I mend from the surgery; I also experienced healing on a molecular level as blood chemistry began to change and my body began to find a new level of wellness.

It took time for me to learn to trust this new life I had been given, and, in truth, I had gone there reluctantly. I knew what I had in the valley of dry bones. I had no idea what might await me outside it.

My experience helps me to sympathise with those bones in Ezekiel's vision. They have lain in the valley, peaceful. Though defeated and disconnected, they have accepted their fate. This broken people might not have dared to expect restoration. But God wanted more for them.

God commands the exiled prophet Ezekiel not only to reconnect the bones, but to breathe new life into them. God's desire, for them and for us, is a living, breathing, growing community.

Ezekiel talks about seeing dry, disconnected bones. Being from a priestly family, Ezekiel was one of the first Jews to be deported from Jerusalem to Babylon. Those first exiles must have felt totally disconnected from their surroundings, and totally without hope.

For many of us there is a feeling of disconnection at the moment. We are disconnected from each other as we self-isolate because of the Covid 19 threat, and even more so by the government directives to minimise its' impact.

We are also disconnected from our usual pattern of life. What we did last week is now impossible to do.

We feel separated from our past, and unsure of our future. Perhaps, rather than being a difficult place, it is an ideal place to be!

Instead of looking back wistfully at yesterday, or looking hopefully, or even fearfully towards an unknown future, we are being asked to live fully for today.

How we live today may not influence many people, but it may influence someone. Maybe we need to put our thinking caps on, and to ask ourselves, "What can I do to make someone else's life better today?"

.... enjoy & share the gift of the friendship of Jesus



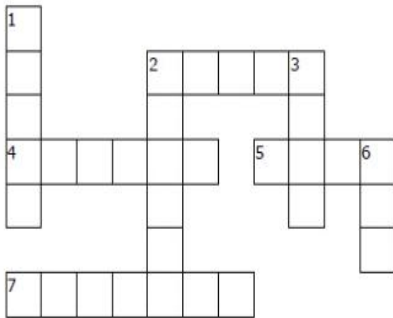
### IN OUR PRAYERS

- We pray for peace for Max and Shirley Whitten, and their family, at this difficult time.
- We pray for each person, and each family affected by the Covid 19 virus.
- We pray for those people who are presently unemployed due to the Covid 19 shutdowns.
- We pray for clear thinking and wisdom for our medical and political leaders.
- We continue to pray for Ian Blanch.

## Dry Bones

I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD. Ezekiel 37:6

Based on Ezekiel 37:1-14



#### ACROSS

2. The hard pieces that form the skeleton of a human or animal.
4. An area of low land between hills or mountains.
5. The movement of outside air
7. A person who speaks for God

#### DOWN

1. To have life; not dead
2. The air that you take into and let out of your lungs
3. The outside covering of our bodies
6. Without any water or liquid

O God, who frees us from death, give us courage to live life fully.

When we are entombed, free us.

When we are distracted, help us to focus on life..

When we are obsessed, liberate us.

May we find joy in service to others.

May we find light in darkness.

May we find new life amid change. Amen.



29 March ~ Bruce Jarrett  
 31 March ~ Val Lush  
 1 April ~ Laurie Mangan



#### PEEL VALLEY CONGREGATION

Our goal: "To be transformed communities, experiencing, enjoying & sharing the gift of the friendship of Jesus."

Mission: "Called to be Free, Gifted to Serve."

Pastoral Care: Meg Mangan 0466 337 005

Elders: Margaret Crowell Ross Davidson Bruce Jarrett



### Meg's Musings

This morning I got out into my garden for the first time in a week.

There were a surprising number of roses to dead-head. Fleeting glimpses were all the notice which I had taken as those beautiful roses bloomed.

Usually I am much more attentive, and appreciative of their beauty.

Over this difficult period when we will be home much more than usual, it will be most important to pay attention to the beauty in our lives.

I see the flowers which bloom, the calls and emails which I receive, the sunshine and pleasant breezes as love letters from God.

Let's ensure that we don't miss any of these "love letters", and choose to let them be foremost in our minds, instead of the panic which seems to be surrounding us.

Blessings from Meg



### NO CHURCH SERVICES



For the moment our congregation will be complying with the government directive not to hold any church services.

Memory Lane will also be in recess for the time being.

We will be doing our best to stay in touch with everyone.

Please also try to stay in touch with each other. Phone-calls can cheer people up, and help them to know that you care, and are thinking of them. Let's hope and pray that this crisis will soon be over, and we will be free to worship together once more.



### DAY LIGHT SAVING ENDS

April 5, 2020, 3 am clocks are turned backward 1 hour

.... enjoy & share the gift of the friendship of Jesus