

- Family Service

God Brings New Life

- Get kids (or others!) up to look at the broken toys:
 - for each set, what is the problem?
 - could it be fixed?
- Impossible to fix them back to how they were when new:
 - broken in ways that can't be fixed with glue
 - all mixed up with other things in ways that can't be untangled!
 - bits missing so they can't be put back together
- What happened in the reading?
 - Ezekiel saw something in the valley - what?
 - bones - lots of them, mixed up, not alive, bodies broken and muddled up
 - could they come back to life? NO!
- But what happened next?
 - God did bring them to life!!!!
 - he did the impossible!
- Sometimes we can feel things are impossible:
 - hard to be a friend of Jesus when our friends aren't
 - hard to see how someone we know could ever change and become a friend of Jesus
 - hard to see how our church could make a difference here in Fintry
- But God does impossible things to bring new life!

God Keeps His Promises

- *Get kids to draw in what they think Ezekiel might have seen*
- Have you ever found yourself in the situation where **you've promised too much?**
 - sponsored a small child - they've done a million laps of whatever it was they were doing - and it comes out at a huge total!
 - or promised to meet someone on a day you simply didn't have time to?
- We've **probably all had that experience** - and its not a pleasant one!
 - both **for the person we've let down;**
 - but **also for us** - leaves the bitter taste of disappointment in our mouths.
- This passage **isn't chiefly about bones!**
- Here is God's **promise** of restoration for Israel
 - remember, they are in exile, oppressed, defeated, bottom of the ladder
 - and this promise was indeed fulfilled: partially under Ezra & Nehemiah a generation later than Ezekiel
 - even though the fantastic language of Ezekiel's vision could hardly describe that somewhat small scale re-colonisation of Judah!
 - and **God kept his promise**
- This promise **completely kept** in the fulfilment that comes **in Christ:**
 - **the church is the new Israel** - God's people
 - we were all dead in our sins... (**Col 2:13**)
 - now we are alive in Christ Jesus! (**Col 2:13**)
- **"I, the Lord, promise..." (v.12)**
 - as well as life itself in that promise...
 - there is **freedom** - death as a picture of the captivity they were enduring
 - there is the promise of **return to promised land**
 - in that promised land there is **true home**
 - and there is the power of **God's Spirit at work**, being the agent of new life - breath

Ultimate Purpose

- There truly is hope and purpose!
- We are God's army, freshly breathed into!
- And **God, he keeps his promises!**