Sermon: **Can these bones live?** (Ezekiel 37.3)

Bones. Are they alive? Of course not – too dried, and dead. TEXT. Of course not!

In Ezekiel’s vision, the word wind = breath = spirit. (thus there is a link to Pentecost).
Vision is about Israel who were in Ezekiel’s time: in Exile, dried up, having neither hope, nor future.

Sometimes this is what it feels like in Church. TEXT. We struggle to be relevant, to reach out, to carry on, to find suitable leaders, or money to pay for presbyters. TEXT.

**A** We often feel unable to share our good news in any deep and meaningful way.

**B**: We see other churches grow, while we stagnate and think ourselves unsuccessful.

**C**: Our churches are marginalised with respect to society – few know or care about what we do. TEXT.

Early Church was little different before Pentecost. They were huddled together, aware of Resurrection but still unable to act; they were small in number, wholly unsuccessful, and were on the margins of Judaism. TEXT.

So where is the good news?

For Israel: God promised to do something (v12b), bring them back to life & their land; and God did.

OK, but where is *our* good news?

Though **A**, it is our lives individually, and our life together, that speaks not our words only.

Though **B**, a ‘successful’ church may rely on ‘cleverness’; a crumbling one has to rely on God alone.

Though **C**, being on the margins is where we belong – we are in the world, but not of the world!

For Early Church: God sent his Holy Spirit to fill them, energise them, give assurance and direction.

For us, surely God can send his Holy Spirit to fill us, energise us, give us assurance and direction.

Why do we think God has changed? Is God now unable? Or unwilling?

Because we believe that God is able & will act, that we keep coming here and look for new presbyter to lead us on. TEXT. The world says, of course not. But at Pentecost we emphatically say Yes.