

Resurrection - the present day reality  
Ezekiel 31:1-14 Romans 8:6-11 John 11:1-45

We are living in tough times. Lots of uncertainty  
The reality for MANY in our world is tough, if not impossible

Tomorrow evening Bishop Andrew is coming to share some of his experience and love of Ethiopia with us.

TEAR Fund Crisis Appeal for East Africa because food shortages have now become critical and 16million people are in urgent need of food and safe water. Ethiopia is just one of those countries affected

As a church family we are going through a difficult time  
I know several of you are supporting friends and family who are unwell and some waiting surgery  
We have been shocked with what has happened to Diane  
Also need to tell you that Ed has been diagnosed with stomach cancer....

TOUGH Difficult times

And in the midst of all of this we have today's readings  
In our reading from John's gospel we have those beautiful words that Jesus himself said  
I am the resurrection and the life vs 25  
I Jesus am the resurrection and the life

Our Gospel reading is a wonderful story of deliverance from death to life  
brought about by God  
and the people's response to it

I will read the last few verses from John 11 in a moment but look  
vs 21 Martha says to Jesus IF you had been here my brother would not have died  
vs 32 Mary says to Jesus IF you had been here my brother would not have died  
vs 33 Jesus was deeply moved... this is his friend who has died  
vs 35 Jesus began to weep

This was the reality of death for Mary and Martha for their family and friends and for Jesus  
It was a devastating time. WHY DIDN'T Jesus go there more quickly? WHY did he wait 2 days  
(Vs.6)

There was fear anxiety loss grief Don't they sound familiar emotions?

A mum had posted on Facebook this week  
'I am worried that I have brought children in to this world.' !!

Times are difficult. Many people are filled with self doubt or feel marginalised  
The numbers of young people with poor mental health are rapidly increasing. Self harm...

This is all very real and being a Christian, a disciple of Jesus does not exclude us from the  
difficulties and traumas of life  
BUT as Christians we have a hope

Read the rest of the Gospel reading vs 40-45

Jesus said I AM the resurrection NOT was or will be but I AM  
The restorative possibilities of resurrection and life

We need God's presence in the nowness of our existence AND IT IS POSSIBLE

Ezekiel 37 passage of the Valley of dry bones

A dry and parched land with dry and desiccated bones  
Became covered in sinew and flesh and skin  
God breathed LIFE into them

Jewish people were in exile Afraid Hope-less demoralised Would they find their way home?  
Different cause Same emotions  
Times were spiritually very dry

God breathed life into the bones breath came into them and they lived  
"I will put my Spirit within you and YOU SHALL LIVE"

Restoration resurrection hope IS POSSIBLE WITH GOD now and not just when we move  
into eternity

In story of Lazarus those who were alive and well and to unbind Lazarus and let him go

Those who are struggling today Dry and hopeless and fearful need a caring community who are  
willing to nurture and strengthen others until they can walk free  
We need to remove the grave clothes and help them dream  
beyond their current boundaries and restraints  
to consider the possibility of resurrection  
by listening to the voice of Jesus and trusting in His Spirit

God gives life here and now and in eternity  
Jesus IS the Resurrection and the life

How are we feeling today?  
Romans 8 The Spirit is available to each and everyone of us for life now and in the future  
Spiritually even if our bodies are weak and failing  
We cannot protect people from pain and hurt and fear  
BUT we can testify to the hope that Jesus gives

Intro the video... a mime that helped me very much when I was spiritually and emotionally DRY  
Hope it speaks to you  
PRAY

Watch video