

Reformation Sunday “Word and Spirit” Ezekiel 37:1-14

Please open in your Bibles to Ezekiel 37: 1-14. On Reformation Sunday, it seems appropriate to pick a text that's specific to some of the themes that arose out of the Reformation. And so this is the text that I thought would be a good spotlight on one of the major themes. I would even argue it is the central theme of the Reformation, and that is the work of the word attended to by the spirit. So as you look in is in your Bibles at Ezekiel 37, we find the prophet introducing to us to a vision that he's about to have. And we have regular vision language at the very beginning where it says he brought me out in the spirit. Okay, that's Ezekiel telling us what comes next is a vision that literally happened. This is a spiritual envisioning of real life realities. So as we find in Ezekiel 37:1-14 , prophet writes...

...the hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the middle of the valley. And it was full of bones. And he led me around among them. And behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley. And behold, they were very dry. And he said to me, son of man, can these bones live? And I said, oh, God, you know. Then he said to me, prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones, behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live. And you shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded, and as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together. Bone to its bone. And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them. The flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, thus says the Lord God, come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they stood. They lived and stood on their feet. An exceedingly great army. Then he said to me, son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, our bones are dried up. Our hope is lost. We are indeed cut off. Therefore prophesy and say to them, thus says the Lord God, behold, I will open your graves and raise you up from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord. When I open your graves and raise you up from your graves, O my people. And I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land, and then you shall know that I am the Lord. I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the Lord.

This is the Word of God.

Let us now please be seated and consider these things that he has given us.

You know, everybody in life has seasons where they kind of lose the thread, don't we? Seasons where we might forget who we are and how we were raised. You might forget the sort of principles and the values that informed our identities. Oftentimes I talk to people in college, and I myself kind of experience this a little bit. When they get to college, they get away from their families and they get around all different people. And there are different demands and temptations in life, and they kind of lose for a moment who they are. And that might last for a week, that might last for freshman year, that might last for all four years. But inevitably, we hope and we pray something happens that kind of draws you back. You graduate from college, perhaps. Maybe you get a job. You have to be financially responsible. Maybe you get married, or you have children, or you get a new job. Or maybe you just get a break in life and it gives you some perspective and you realize, what am I doing? I've lost the thread. I've had a sort of mission drift in my life. This happens to individuals, but it also can happen to organizations. Organizations that start out strong. They start out based on their vision and their principles, and they're moving forward. And you have a great group of leaders lead that organization. And then maybe it's because the next generation of leaders don't have the same vision, or because something that was minor, a minor job, a minor part of the organization becomes a major part of the organization and somehow they lose the thread. The mission drift comes and something needs to happen to bring that organization back.

I want to argue that that's exactly what's happening in the Reformation. We had an institution. The church started strong. It had great leaders, the Apostle Paul and all the apostles. Apostolic leadership then had good generations that followed. Strong men and women of faith. And yet somewhere along the way and that high medieval age, they lost the thread. They had a mission drift. They stopped focusing on the major things, and they started lifting up minor things, even arguable things, to the level of the major things. And they lost sight of the goal and the principles and the values with which they were founded. That's fundamentally what the Reformation was about. But I want to talk more about other than just that, I want to talk about the role of the Word of God in the Reformation.

I want to argue, actually, that the Reformation is ultimately about the Word of God. How do you get back to how you were founded? It's about getting back to Scripture, and that focus on Scripture that we find in the 16th century of the Reformation, and people like Lutherans and Calvin, that that focus on Scripture wasn't a 16th century fad, but rather it goes all the way back to the time of Scripture. And yes, now, not just back to the New Testament. As many people think, but back to the Old Testament itself. And that's why I want to first start this morning just reflecting on Ezekiel 37, hearing what Ezekiel the prophet is seeing and is telling us about in his

vision. And then I want to show how the Reformation is an application. It is an illustration of exactly what Ezekiel is talking about. And the vision that we find in Ezekiel 37.

Well, first of all, let's just start with a sort of background to what's going on here. Ezekiel the prophet is operating at a time when the exile is about to happen. He's one of the few prophets who's, operating and ministering while the exile is coming. And then, boom, exile happens. And now he continues to minister. So he's one of the few prophets Jeremiah is cut short at the at the exile. But Ezekiel continues on and he kind of looks back from within the thing and he considers what's happening. But this vision, okay, this vision is taking place right on the cusp or right after the exile. And it's a vision of hope to Israel. And he's telling Israel, the Lord has not forgotten about you. The Lord remembers you, and his work in you is not yet done, even though it seems like it's done. Now, what's Ezekiel talking about here? He's really referring back to something that we see all the way back in Deuteronomy 30.

And you've heard me talk about this a bit in Amos, because Deuteronomy 30 is a key passage for the prophets. It's in Deuteronomy 30 that the Moses says, when you come into the land, you're going to have this time of discipline and restoration. Sometimes you'll fail, sometimes you'll succeed, but the Lord will bless you ultimately. And even when you sin, so badly that he sends you out to the nations.

Even when that happens, that's not the end of the story. God promises to bring you back. And then here's the key part of Deuteronomy 30. And he's not just going to bring you back. He's going to bring you back to a better place. It'll be more prosperous. There will be more people even than there were in that first generation of Joshua and Caleb and the judges.

It's going to be even better than it was back then. When they call you back, when he calls you back. You see, for Moses and for all of the prophets, the hope of Israel is the restoration. And yet and yet that restoration never takes place. If you ever noticed that it never happens in the Old Testament, even as we read Ezra, Nehemiah, where it looks like restoration is going to happen, it seems to be being offered to the people.

It still doesn't happen. They still continue to fall in sin. They don't grow and become greater than all of the other nations. They don't plant gardens in the desert and see new creation. They don't have a temple that's a cosmic temple that fills the world with fresh water. But whether it's a broke down temple, when the old men see it, they cry because they remember how temples could be. You see, the Old Testament doesn't end with a bang. It ends with a whimper. Because, in fact, that hope that Moses set before them, that Zacchaeus sets before them even now, is never fulfilled in the Old Testament. As a matter of fact, it's not.

Found until the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the true restoration is never attained until one faithful Israelite emerges in the New Testament and the whole world is changed. So we have to

understand restoration of Israel, restoration of the people of God. In the backdrop to this whole prophecy, this vision that Ezekiel is giving us in 637 and yet notice this Ezekiel realizes, as Moses did, that they cannot be restored. Restoration can't happen unless it is empowered, or it is brought about by regeneration. You see, if you want restoration, then you have to have regeneration. Regeneration is our only hope for new life. You see, Moses recognize this as well. That because of the fall, because of sin entering into the world, no matter how much law, no matter how much instruction you gave Israel, no matter how many sacrifices you let them make, they couldn't ultimately save themselves.

As a matter of fact, if you want to think what's the difference between the law and the gospel? The law is telling you, go do this thing, but you're not empowered to do it. What is the gospel? The gospel is here is the power to now go do the thing you've been called to do. Okay? Moses says, the Lord our God is one. Therefore be one. Love him with all of your heart, soul, and strength. And yet he doesn't give us the means by which we can do that. What's the gospel do? Jesus says, let them be one, as I am one. Father, I am in you. You are in me. Let them also be in us. He says, I'm going to accomplish the oneness for you so that you can now obey the law that was given to you in the past.

But you see, what had happened is that Israel had gone the way of the rest of mankind after the fall. As a matter of fact, the only thing that the law seemed to accomplish for them was to further condemn them. So that I say it says it's actually worse for you because you had the prophets, you had the law, you had the prophecy.

It's going to be worse for you than it was for Sodom and Gomorrah. And those are the worst guys I can think of. It's going to be worse for you. You see, Ezekiel recognizes as the Israelites themselves recognized according to this vision, that they are in a state of spiritual death, and the only hope they have for restoration must come through regeneration. They must be regenerated by God, and the regeneration of the Lord only comes through the preaching of the word. The proclaiming of the word of God attended to by the spirit.

Notice the progression here. It's interesting how the vision is broken up, because I think this is an Old Testament systematic theology chapter. This prophet of the Old Testament, a prophet who's never read any Greeks and he doesn't know about the logicians of the Greek in the classical age. He doesn't know about Aquinas and Scholastic theology. And yet he's laying out a very theological idea, isn't he? He's saying this to be regenerate, to be born again, as Jesus calls it, to have new life, to no longer live but Christ live within you. Okay, if you want all of that to happen, what must first happen? First, you must hear the word, and the spirit must attend to your hearing of the word so that you are now made regenerate.

This is called effectual calling. In Christian Reformed theology. And notice how the vision breaks it up. It says first he comes and he sees the valley of dry bones, and it points out they're very dry. What's he telling us? There's no life in them at all. There's not a little bit of wet tissue left on the bones. It's all dry.

These are the bones, like you see, you know, hanging in the air of the, caricature of a doctor's office. Right? Or maybe in some people's front lawns over the course of this week. These are dry bones. There's no meat on the bones at all. They are truly dead. And the Lord asks him, can these bones live? Now, Ezekiel's been doing this for a while, so he knows the only right answer to that is, oh Lord, you know, okay, that's the only right answer to the Lord.

If he asks you something like that, can these bones live? You know, Lord? And so what does the Lord do? He first says, preach, prophesy to the bones and notice what the prophesy is. The prophesy is a gospel prophesy. The Lord will fill you with life. He will breathe his spirit into you and give you life. That's the prophesy.

That's the word, and it has power. It weaves the bones together and knits them together. They click and they come together. You can imagine in a modern movie the CGI that would go into showing the sinews and the flesh coming over the bones and pulling them together, and how computers might generate that. An animated. Okay, it's really it's a vivid picture.

And Ezekiel is kind of an artist this way. He likes to describe things visibly. He describes notice how does it sound? They rattle and they click. What does it look like? The sinews in the flesh come over them. He wants to experience it. But notice new life doesn't come because of the preaching. They are remade and reconstituted and yet what must happen?

The spirit must attend to it. And so he says, prophesy to the wind. Now you know, as brier wood members, that the word for wind and the word for breath in the word for spirit in the Old Testament and in the new, interestingly, can be the same word ruach in the Old Testament, pneuma in the New Testament, this idea that that breath and wind and spirit are all the same things we could say in Genesis one, where it says the spirit was hovering over the surface of the deep, you could say it was all over, but who was all formless and void in the wind of the Lord was hovering over the surface of the deep. But in this passage we have the Lord say to him, prophesy, say to the spirit, come, oh spirit, and breathe into these bones, these bodies life. You see, the spirit must attend to the word of the Lord. And new life is not possible unless the spirit attends to the hearing. The word must be preached. As Paul says, how can they believe if they've not heard? But the spirit of tends to it and gives them life? The deaf dead cannot save themselves. I want this to be an encouragement to you.

By the way, if you are dead, you don't even know it. Only the living recognize what death is. If you're here and you're saying, I love Jesus, I care for him. I'm striving for him. If I just wonder if

I'm saved, I want to tell you something. That's not the way that the dead talk. Be encouraged in that. If you are wrestling with sin, if you recognize sin for what it is, if you hear the gospel message, you hear about this regeneration that Ezekiel's talking about and that sounds compelling to you, that might just be life, new life stirring within you because of the work of the spirit.

Be encouraged, brothers and sisters. Even if you fail, even if you struggle in your sin. The fact that you're struggling is a sign of life. So for restoration to happen, regeneration must take place in us through regeneration that we are empowered now to repentance and faith, or what we call in church history. Reformation. When the spirit regenerates you, right?

You recognize sin for what it is destructive and death word death committed, and you turn away from it and you turn towards life. And that's called repentance and faith. You lay hold of that. And that leads necessarily to reformation. We should talk about that even to these days when we talk about a revival. Revival is wonderful to see the spirit working.

But the way that we know revival is happening is what reformation takes place. People are drawn back to the teaching of the gospel found in the scriptures, and the whole council of God. So that brings us to Reformation Sunday. We have to understand reformation in light of God's promise to restore his people through the preaching of the word and the attendance of the spirit within it.

Okay, now this is obviously fulfilled when Jesus walks into Judea and proclaims, repent, believe the kingdom of God is at hand. What is he doing? He is now as the righteous Israelite. He was coming in the power of the spirit who descends upon him in his baptism, marking the beginning of his work. And he is now calling his sheep to respond to him in the spirit, to hear the gospel, and to be transformed.

That is the beginning of the restoration that is was anticipating back in that vision, where Israel would be given new life, made to stand as an exceedingly great army. It begins with Jesus work. It continues with the apostles. But I want to tell you, it has continued on throughout all of church history. We continue to see that throughout the life of the church, into the Apostolic Fathers and the sub Apostolic Fathers, we continue to see this returning to Scripture, casting out sin, persisting in the persecutions, rejecting the heresies.

Why? Because we go back to Scripture over and over and over again and be reformed. We are made regenerate and we are reformed. You see, the Reformation itself was a work of the spirit in this time of the Lord restoring his people. That begins with Christ and will be brought to fullness when he comes again.

The Reformation was a work of the spirit, illuminating scriptures to faithful men and women who found new life in a new song in their mouths. As the psalmist says in Psalm 40. And they

used that new song to call the church back to its biblical roots. It was on October 31st, 1517. That's 508 years ago this Friday at a precocious young German monk nailed 95 little criticisms against the church up to the door of the cathedral in Wittenberg, Germany, that began a series of events that culminated four years later in what is now called the Diet of Worms.

Okay, a trial in which he was found guilty and excommunicated from the Holy Roman Church. At least there was a deeply conscientious young man. He was a bright young man, some of his opponents, even to this day. I remember a Catholic friend of mine telling me one time, you know, what Luther's problem was, is he was scrupulous. And this wasn't just my friend's opinion.

This was the historic opinion of the Roman Catholic Church. He was scrupulous. And what they mean by that, is he something like OCD? He was OCD about theology. He got hung up on stuff and couldn't get past it. You know, it is possible we have to remember this with our saints. It might be true, okay. It might be true that many of them have sort of character.

Interesting character aspects. Okay. And yet we have to say it was not because of some mental disorder that he came to this conclusion, that he came to. He was conscientious. He was deeply intelligent. He was a young doctoral student at a time when there weren't many doctoral students in the world, was kind of the beginning of this idea of what we now call being a doctor.

Okay. Someone who studies a particular idea very, very deeply at his trial, in terms he's gathered before officials of the Holy Roman Empire and officials of the church, and they read out in front of him all of the things that he has said. They kind of list all of his titles, starting with the 95 theses, but including many other critiques, both of church doctrine but also of corrupt officials.

And they read it all out. And then they ask him two questions. They ask him this. First of all, did you write these things? And then secondly, if you wrote these things, do you recant? Or rather, you must recant of having said these things.

They set them down. You can imagine being in the middle of this whole assembly. One young monk sitting there in the middle of all this attention, they said, you must recant. And when it came time for him to answer, you know what he said? He stood up and he stepped forward, and he said, let me pray about it.

He did. That's actually what he said. He said, let me pray about it, because he is a conscientious and thoughtful young man. So they said, you have till 4 p.m.. It's always interesting when we study church history and you're like, you know, it's actually a lot more normal than we thought. They go, okay, you've got till 4 p.m. to pray and think about it and then come back and give us an answer.

And so he spent that night in prayer, considering his works, considering what he'd written, he'd written. And he came back the next day and he said this. Yes. The answer to your first question. I did write these things. The answer to your second question. I apologize for places where I was harsh against my opponents. Now, if you read Luther, you know that he can be quite harsh.

He's kind of funny. He's hilarious, actually, in his harsh critiques of his opponents. But you can imagine what it's like being one of those opponents and having someone call you a dumb brute. Luther said, I apologize if I was harsh in my critiques, but as to the content, as to the content of what I wrote, he says, this unless I am convinced by the testimony of the scriptures or by clear reason, for I do not trust either in Pope or councils alone, those he says alone, since it is well known that they have often aired and contradicted themselves.

I am bound by the scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot, and I will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against my conscience. May God help me. Amen. This response of Luther is instructive for us Protestants as we remember the Reformation, because it draws our attention to three key Reformation principles that I would argue you actually find, though, the rudiments of back in Ezekiel 37.

So these are the three Reformation principles that we can draw out of Luther's response. First of all, is this the Reformation was a call to return to the biblical principles of the church founded on the teaching of Scripture. It is a re formation. Notice it's not about starting a new church. Luther didn't set out to start a new denomination where they could sing the kind of worship songs that he liked, or something like that.

He is not beginning a new church tradition. He is calling the church the Roman church, to go back to its roots as a church. He's saying, listen, we were so strong for so many centuries. We had the spirit of reformation. We cast out, remember the Gnostics, we reformed, we cast them out, remember the Arians, we reformed, we cast them out.

Remember the Monist, we reformed, we cast them out. Let's go back. Let's go back to the way it was when we were founded on the teaching of Scripture. See, that's why as a Protestant, you cannot talk or believe or act as if the church began in the 16th century. I've often heard that from my friends who either become Anglican or Catholic, they go.

I was sick of hearing that the church began in the 16th century. No reformer would have told you that. They would have said, listen, we lost the thread. We had a mission drift. Let's go back to the way it was. Let's go back to how we used to be when we were rooted in Scripture. Notice what he says.

I can't recant of these things because I am bound to Scripture. I'm not bound to the popes in the councils. And it's interesting. Luther and Calvin would. They'll say, listen, we're not saying

the popes on the councils are bad. Just don't lift them up to the level of scripture. They too have to be revised in light of Scripture.

Luther will actually excuse me. Calvin at points will interestingly defend the popes and the councils against the Anabaptists who are saying, let's just tear it all down. He's like, no, no, no, no, no, it's not. It's not all bad. We just need to test it against Scripture. See, the reformers recognize that unbelief is always at the door like it was for Israel, like it was for the high medieval church.

It's always at the door, tempting us to add to Scripture from the traditions of man, and as a result, we need reformation.

You see, the reformers didn't believe that they were living during this one specific point in time that was special in the history of the church. They saw themselves doing what every generation in the church should do. And that is why, shortly after the Reformation, a phrase began to emerge as the motto of many of these reformed churches Ecclesia.

Reformed motto. Simple. Rough. Ramonda. The Reformed Church is always reforming. We're always reforming, and the 16th and the 17th. And in the 21st century, we should always be reforming according to the teaching of Scripture. And that leads us to the second Reformation principle that I want to highlight. As with the zeal, as with Paul. So it is with the Reformation.

The Reformation was always about the Bible. It was always what J.I. Packer calls a Bible movement. It was always about calling people back to Scripture. Don't get caught up in the philosophies of the day. Don't get caught up in the beliefs of the countries that you're conquering as a Holy Roman Empire, and try to mix your faith with their beliefs and come up with these kind of quasi synchronistic festivals.

That's what the Israelites did back in the Old Testament with Bale and Dugan. Right. With, with, with all the other pagan deities. That's what they're doing. That's what Amos is talking about. As we've seen in the evening services, Amos is talking about mixing worship of Yahweh. Rarely do they ever reject Yahweh outright. What they do is they mix it, they take Yahweh, and then they put male right next to him, and they or Asher and they say, oh, Yahweh had a wife, and her name was Asherah. So we can also appeal to Asherah as well. See, the reformers knew we have to get back to the teaching of the Word of God in the high medieval church. We can understand actually how they got to where they were. If you had a congregation that was primarily illiterate, mostly illiterate and uneducated, you had a scripture that could only be read in Latin.

Now, even having the Bible be in Latin made sense early on. The idea was this well, we have a bunch of different language groups. Let's have one Bible. We can all agree on. Right? And so they took the Latin hit of the Bible of Jerome, and they spread that around the church and said, now we can all know that we're reading the same thing, okay.

And that makes sense as long as everybody has some capacity for Latin. Right. But if you lose that, if you lose literacy, so that even if you speak and read German, you can't read Latin and you're uneducated, so you can't go through all of the deep, you know, mystical, interpretive hoops that the Catholic Church created for how to interpret scripture.

Then what would you do if you were a regular Christian and you wanted to know what you ought to do or believe in a certain context, what would you do? You'd go ask your priest and you can see how that practical solution, illiteracy, bad education leads to a bad doctrine. Well, if I ask the priest for everything about the word, then why don't I just lift the priest's authority up to the level of the word, so that now when the councils who are the priest's boss and the Pope, who is the priest boss, when they speak, they speak of the same authority, the same level of authority and revelation as the Word of God itself.

By the way, if you read the Catholic Catechism today, it says the same thing. We believe in one source of divine authority. That is tradition. And tradition is Scripture, plus the teachings of the councils and Pope. That is the modern day view. This is this is not changed in Rome since the 16th century.

The Reformation was saying, let's get back to our roots. Let's go back to the teaching of Scripture. That's why as soon as Luther is excommunicated after the diet, the diet of worms, as soon as Jesus communicated, he returns back to Germany. And what does he begin doing? Translating the Bible into German. So the German peasants, the German farmers, can have the scripture for themselves.

With the Reformation, the scripture was returned to the hands of everyday Christians, thus revealing the false teachings that had accrued over time. I know when we think about the Reformation, we think about justification by faith alone. We think about purgatory. We think about veneration of the saints or veneration of Mary or calling the Pope the vicar of Christ.

We talk about all this bad theology, but ultimately all that bad theology was highlighted in the Reformation because of this simple fact of just giving the Bible in people's own languages back to them, they start reading it. They say, I don't see any of that stuff in here. You see, as soon as we get back to Scripture, we find ourselves rooted again in that subsoil of faith where the spirit attends to the reading of Scripture so that we might be regenerated and made alive and turn to God through repentance and faith.

It's important to note that the reformers don't reject all of the Catholic Church's teachings, but they do hold all of its teachings under the scrutiny of Scripture. That's what it means to be a reformed church, always reforming, whether it's the Catholic Church or the Presbyterian Church or the doctrines of Brier Wood Presbyterian Church, we should be testing them all against the teaching of Scripture.

That leads us to our third Reformation principle. Protestants did not leave, did not leave the Roman Catholic Church. Rather, they were rejected by it. We have to recognize this. The intention of the Reformation was to reform. It was never to leave. They were jettisoned because of their commitment to Scripture. They were not jettisoned because they wanted to start a new church or a new denomination.

They're excommunicated because of the high esteem with which they held the Scripture. As Luther says, here is the same for us today. I can't go back because to go back would be to reject the teaching of Scripture. And I'm captive to the Word of God. That should be every Christian stance. So as a result, the Protestant can't return home.

There's no returning home to Rome. Rather, the Protestant only faithful option is to stand and to call Rome to return home to the foundations of her youth, to the teaching of Scripture, to the apostolic message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That's our hope for the Roman Catholic Church reform. Come back! The water's great. Come back in to the teaching of Scripture.

We'd love to have you. We'd welcome you. To see the vision of Ezekiel 37 is fulfilled in the work of Christ. And as he spreads the gospel, bringing new life to the people of God and around the world. Yes, this happens during Christ's ministry. Yes, this happens through the apostolic work, through the spirit being poured out at Pentecost.

And we see it continue to happen in the history of the church, most notably as we remember on October 31st when Luther nailed the 95 theses to that door in Wittenberg. You see, the Reformation is just another chapter in the restoration of God's people to the preaching of the word attended to by the Holy Spirit, who gives life.

The Reformation was necessary to return the church to its foundational principles, to pull it out of theological and moral mission. Drift. Therefore, as believers, we recognize as Protestants, we recognize the church did not begin in the 16th century. But why that? Rather, we are a part of that grand tradition that stretches all the way back to the Apostle Paul and continues on through Polycarp and Irenaeus and Augustine and the Cappadocia and Fathers.

Those are our people. That's our church. And we even hold them under the scrutiny of Scripture, because the Reformed Church is always reforming. Reformation Sunday is then, and this light truly church. Sunday, Reformation Sunday is Bible Sunday, and on Reformation Sunday we give thanks to God continues to make living bodies out of dry bones through the work of the word and the spirit.

Let's pray.

Heavenly father, as we come to you, we pray that you would revitalize these bones. Lord, there are many living bodies in this congregation, but there are also dry bones. And there are those

times that we feel like dry bones. But, Lord, you promised through the power of the spirit to attend to the preaching of the word. Let us be deeply rooted in the subsoil of the word, that we might be fed through the power of the spirit, that we might be people of the restoration, that is, people of the Reformation. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.