Sermon: **God sent me ahead of you to rescue you in this amazing way** (Gen 45.7)

The history of the world is littered with atrocities – the Holocaust, the many instances of colonial forces taking over native lands and systems of government, the madness of WW1 trench warfare, the deporting to Australia of those committing trivial crimes often in desperation.

Atrocities occur to communities – new roads that take up prime land and bypass thriving towns which end up deserted, all for the sake of five minutes’ drive-time. Charlottesville. Barcelona.

Atrocities occur to churches, closed against the wishes of worshippers, or split by the power-hungry.

Atrocities occur to individuals – such as Joseph, sold as a slave by his brothers.

This story has something to say about these atrocities: God’s hand can be seen at work in them.

Many tales of courage in the Holocaust, Charlottesville – mother of woman who died.

However, this does not mean that the atrocities are God’s doing or desire. Can you believe this of the examples above?

**But** they will never thwart his purposes. TEXT. Just think how the story of Joseph led to the Exodus, the creation of the nation and God’s People, leading to Jesus and ourselves.

This does not absolve us from the atrocities in which we share – the insistence of our own way, the lack of compassion, the unoffered forgiveness, the nursed bitterness.

But it does mean God can work in us, and all the better when we seek reconciliation as did Joseph.

Let us be one people for God in this place, leaving behind all that would mar God’s image within us and within our fellowship! TEXT. May we see in each other that rescue God offers to us all.