

Sunday 19th April 2026

from HOPE to HOLINESS

St Barnabas | Christ Church | St Wulstans

ABIDE for Easter 2026

THE STARTING PLACE

Hope can be a powerful beginning: it can inspire vision and courage, but it can also slip into pie-in-the-sky thinking. When have you found that hope needed support from outside you, or action from within you, to give it real weight or direction?

LISTENING TO ACTS

Read [Acts 2:14a, 36–41](#). A particular kind of hope appears when people realise that something has gone badly wrong and begin searching for a way out. Notice the ways that this desperate hope shows in the crowd.

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

Read [Luke 24:13–35](#). Hope can fade when events seem to contradict everything we once trusted. What do you notice about this account of disappointed hope?

LISTENING TO PETER

In this next section of Peter's letter, the living hope we encountered last time is drawn forward into holiness. For him, holiness is not something we drum up to get right with God; it is the shape of how we think, act, and belong in response to God. As you read, look out for the "before" and "after" language Peter uses.

1 Peter 1:13–2:10

Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed. Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance. Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; for it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.' If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God. For ‘All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord endures for ever.’ That word is the good news that was announced to you. Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: ‘See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’ To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner’, and ‘A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.’ They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

THE THRESHOLD

Peter uses striking phrases to describe the life of holiness. For instance, how comfortable would you feel saying, “*I am a living stone,*” or “*My hope is set on God*”? Which of his phrases would you be happy to wear as a badge of your life at the moment, and which still feels some way off?

MOVING FORWARD

In this spring season, what might you nurture, and what could you prune back, so that holiness can blossom for you?

A Prayer for this Week

God who calls us into holiness, you have given us a living hope: shape our lives to match that gift; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

There are ABIDE groups this week at the Vicarage

WEDNESDAY 22ND APRIL AT 7PM and **FRIDAY 24TH APRIL AT 10.30AM**