

THE EASTER THRESHOLD

Living through Easter season with Peter

The ABIDE resources and group for the season will be a slow reading of 1 Peter.

In St Barnabas and St Wulstans Sunday services, all THREE readings should be used.

The 1 Peter passage each week could be read by the preacher 'within' the sermon.

Sunday 12 April — Easter 2

Rev Sarah at St Barnabas and Rev Rosie at St Wulstans

from **RESURRECTION** flows **HOPE**

- Acts 2:14a, 22–32 (*Peter's Pentecost Proclamation*) and John 20:19–31 (*Jesus Appears to the Disciples*)

In this opening week, the Acts and John readings place resurrection in concrete motion. Acts 2 shows Peter interpreting the resurrection as God's decisive act that reorders everything; John 20 shows the risen Christ in person. Resurrection is therefore not an idea but the environment in which the church begins to live. Our Threshold reading goes further:

- 1 Peter 1:1–12

The same resurrection becomes the source of a living hope, a hope into which the community is born and by which it is sustained. The movement across the readings is simple and coherent — resurrection as the act, hope as the life that flows from it.

Sunday 19 April — Easter 3

Rev Sarah / Chris O at St Barnabas and Rev Paul at St Wulstans

from **HOPE** flows **HOLINESS**

- Acts 2:14a, 36–41 (*The Call to Repentance*) and Luke 24:13–35 (*The Road to Emmaus*)

In these readings, hope is not yet enough. In Acts, the crowd hears the proclamation and hope stirs — but it immediately exposes a gap. On the Emmaus road, the travellers carry hope, that is unable to sustain them. Our Threshold reading for this week acknowledges the insufficiency of hope.

- 1 Peter 1:13–2:10

Hope must be drawn forward into holiness — a way of life that gives hope weight, shape, and endurance. The letter refuses to let hope remain a feeling or a memory; it must become identity, conduct, belonging. Holiness is what hope becomes when it is no longer enough on its own. It is hope stretched into practice, hope taking responsibility for the life it has been given, hope crossing the threshold into a new way of being.

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Sunday 26 April — Easter 4

Rev Andy at St Barnabas and Rev Sarah at St Wulstans

from HOLINESS flows WITNESS

- Acts 2:42–47 (*The Fellowship of Believers*) and John 10:1–10 (*The Good Shepherd*)

These readings show a community whose holiness cannot be hidden. Acts is not a cosy portrait; it is a community whose practices make them conspicuous. Their life is open, vulnerable, and impossible to disguise — shared resources, shared tables, shared discipline. It marks them out. In John, the shepherd image is not gentle but dividing: those who know the shepherd's voice stand out from those who do not. Holiness creates distinction, and distinction creates exposure. Our Threshold reading for this week shows how holiness is lived in the public arena.

- 1 Peter 2:11–3:12

The community is urged to live under scrutiny, to endure misinterpretation, to refuse retaliation even when wronged. Their conduct becomes unavoidable testimony precisely because it is tested. Witness is not chosen; it is imposed. This is holiness under pressure, holiness made visible by the cost of maintaining it. Holiness becomes witness when it is the thing that cannot be denied, even by those who oppose it.

Sunday 3 May — Easter 5

Rev Sarah at St Barnabas and Rev Nick at St Wulstans

from WITNESS flows SUFFERING

- Acts 7:55–60 (*Martyrdom of Stephen*) and John 14:1–14 (*Jesus the Way to the Father*)

Stephen's witness costs him everything. His faithfulness exposes him, and the consequence is death. In John, the way Jesus names is the way he walks — truth that confronts, obedience that is resisted, a path that leads through suffering. Our Threshold reading tells us that suffering is not failure but the expected outcome of faithful witness.

- 1 Peter 3:13–4:19

To stand with Christ is to share his path. The community is told to endure, to refuse retaliation, and to understand suffering as participation in Christ's own life.

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Sunday 10 May — Easter 6

Rev Sarah at St Barnabas and Rev Rosie at St Wulstans

from SUFFERING flows COMMUNITY

• Acts 17:22–31 (*Paul at the Areopagus*) and John 14:15–21 (*The Promise of the Advocate*)

This week, the Acts and John readings show suffering as the condition that exposes human limits. Paul stands alone in Athens, speaking into a setting that offers neither protection nor understanding; Jesus promises the Advocate because the disciples will soon face absence, pressure, and uncertainty. Suffering is therefore not an interruption but the environment in which the church learns its need for shared life. Our Threshold reading helps us develop this:

• 1 Peter 5:1–5

Here suffering is met by a pattern of shared shepherding and humble care. Elders lead by example rather than control; the younger receive their guidance; all take on humility as the posture that keeps the community intact. The momentum here is about the unexpected blessing that comes with struggle — suffering as the condition, community as the life that forms within it.

Sunday 17 May — Easter 7

Chris & SES team at St Barnabas and Rev Sarah at St Wulstans

from COMMUNITY flows STRENGTH

• Acts 1:6–14 (*The Ascension*) and John 17:1–11 (*Jesus Prays for His Disciples*)

As we mark the Ascension together, the Acts and John readings show Jesus gathering his followers as a community around himself so that, when he ascends, they remain held together rather than dispersing. In Acts, they stay in prayer with one mind; in John, Jesus asks the Father to keep them in unity as he returns to glory. Community here is not background but the means by which they stand firm in the space created by his departure. Our Threshold reading shows what it means to live together in this way.

• 1 Peter 5:6–11

Here the community's strength is shaped by trust in God's restoring work. They are humbled under God's hand, alert to the adversary who prowls like a roaring lion, and steady in the knowledge that they resist together. Strength is not self-generated but given — God establishes, supports, and renews them. Community is the form; strength is the life that grows within it.

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Sunday 24 May — Pentecost

Revs Andy & Nick at St Barnabas and Rev Sarah at St Wulstans

from **STRENGTH** flows **SENDING**

- 1 Peter 5:12–14

In this week's closing comments, 1 Peter closes the letter by grounding the community in the true grace of God. They are steadied, named, and connected with believers beyond themselves; this is strength understood as firm standing and shared belonging. These are real people, living real lives of faith.

- John 20:19–23 (*Jesus Breathes the Spirit*)
- Acts 2:1–21 (*The Coming of the Holy Spirit*)

The Gospel shows that the shape of sending begins with Jesus himself: the risen Christ breathes peace and Spirit upon his disciples, giving them the pattern by which they will be sent. Acts then reveals this sending in its public form, as the Spirit empowers the gathered community, and this witness moves outward into the world. The movement across the readings is clear — strength as the grounding, sending as the life that flows from it.