

## 1 Peter 2:4-10

(Lectionary Year A Easter 5)  
By Beth Barnett

This segment explores the experiences of being in 'Houses' (teams) as a way of understanding the kind of 'house' First Peter refers to in the metaphor of Living Stones.

It then uses the allocation into 'houses' as a means to present the text collaboratively.

You will need:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Printed handout of "House" emblems and texts (see template)</li><li>• Copy of the whole text for the projector screen (see template)</li><li>• If you have a group that enjoys some spontaneous costuming, add a collection of hard hats and hi-vis clothing to catalyse a spirit of creativity, courage and fun.</li></ul>
Time required:	10 minutes

### Connect

I am wondering if you've ever been in a house?

Not the kind of house you live in, the sleep and eat and play and tidy up and rest kind of house.

But the kind of house you are in at school for sport or athletics.

The kind of House that the Sorting Hat puts Harry Potter in at Hogwarts.

When I was at primary school, growing up, there were four houses – each with a different colour and emblem and named after an Australian flower.

[substitute in your own experience]

Some houses are named after people – like the Hogwarts houses – and those who belong to the house might try to imitate the character to those who the house is named after.

These kinds of houses often have an emblem, a symbol to represent them. Or a particular colour.

Who knows what I am talking about?

Who is or at one time was in a House at school?

Who has read Harry Potter and wishes that they were in Gryffindor?

Take a few minutes to tell the person next to you about a house that you are in or have been in. What was it? What was it like? What did you do? Did you have a symbol or an emblem for your house?

*Give time for these conversations – you may want to move about the gathering and coach any conversations that are slow starting.*

So we know about belonging to a house that is not where we live with other people, but a group we belong to with others.

So I'm going to put you into houses! And each house is going to have a name, and a colour and an emblem. Each of these 'houses' is found in the reading – they represent the ways people responded to God's Spirit and message in the history of God's people. We can see their stories in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) – but perhaps their stories aren't too different to stories we know of how different people, maybe even ourselves respond to Jesus today.

*Allocate a section of your gathering to each of the 'Houses'*

House of Builders (hold up the picture of the hard hat as you create this group)

House of Stumblers (hold up the picture of the very sore toe as you create this group)

House of Rejecters (hold up the picture of the loud nasty shout as you create this group)

Each of our houses takes their emblem from the art that Chris Booth has created for this passage (*display entire image on the screen*)

## Context

xxxxx

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The **house of builders** were busy building their own thing, not looking out for God's ways of doing things.

The **house of stumblers** found God's ways got in the way of their ways and kept crashing up against God's ways

The **house of rejecters** just flat out didn't want God's ways. They objected to God's ways and tossed them aside.



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In our reading from the Bible in the book called First Peter (written like a letter from a follower of Jesus to other followers of Jesus who live far away and a long time after Jesus) the writer uses this idea of being in a house – the kind of house we’ve just been talking about – to describe what its like to be followers of Jesus.

So we are going to read this part of the Bible together – and each of our ‘houses’ is going to help in a different way.

*Hand each house group the marked section of text (see template)*

In your house, practice how you are going to bring your part of the text to us. This might be by chanting it in unison, or a dramatic re-enactment, or in song – or by dividing it up and sharing it among the voices in your house. It’s up to you! Doesn’t need to be elaborate – you’ve just got a couple of minutes to pull this together as a house. Go!

*Give the groups a few minutes and then call them back to focus*

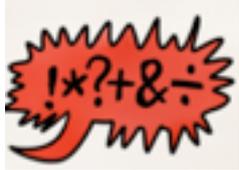
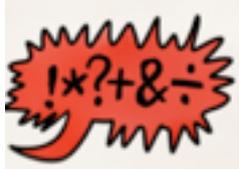
Up on the screen is the whole section of text. When we get to the bit with your house emblem next to it, its your turn to jump in and sing it, or act it, or read it all out together, or separately... what ever you’ve decided.



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## Content

	<p><b>Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight</b></p>
	<p><b>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</b></p> <p><b>For it stands is Scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chose and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."</b></p>
	<p><b>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,"</b></p>
	<p><b>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.</b></p>

Good Job House of Builders!

Good Job House of Stumblers!

Good Job House of Rejecters!

You've read well...You've shared the words of the Bible wonderfully with us.

But the text is about to shift gears.

This next bit moves past the House of Builders, the House of Stumblers and the House of Rejecters.

This is the way the people of God have missed God's ways - but the story's not over!

First Peter goes on to tell how God replaces the old houses of Builders and Stumblers and Rejecters and makes a new House.

A House of being all God's people and instead of being divided in to different houses – there is now one House for everyone. For the people addressed in First Peter in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia – some of whom were Jewish, and other of whom were from many other nations – this is the good news, that everyone



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is gathered and built into one house.

So we are going to read this together. This is about how God rebuilds us all, into one house – the ‘House of Jesus’ – living with his character in his ways. First Peter calls it the ‘House of Living Stones’ – and Jesus is the number one foundation stone.

I invite you to join in on the green bits.

But you are a



**Chose 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**



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Once you had not received mercy but now you have



Received mercy

Great!

Well done House of Living Stones. Let's put all of that together and hear the whole passage as one. Let's listen out for the important things – who Jesus is and who God calls us to be.

Let's read it all through again, reading out the parts for each of your Houses and then the House of Living Stones altogether:

	<p><b>Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight</b></p>
	<p><b>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</b>  <b>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."</b></p>
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<p>But you are a</p>	



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	<p><b>Chose race</b>  <b>A royal priesthood</b>  <b>A holy nation</b>  <b>God's own people</b></p>
<p>In order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you</p>	
	<p><b>Out of darkness into his marvellous light</b></p>
<p>Once you were not a people but now you are</p>	
	<p><b>God's people</b></p>
<p>Once you had not received mercy but now you have</p>	
	<p><b>Received mercy</b></p>

## Consequence

Looking again at the complete image for 1 Peter 2:4-10, which parts of the text can you see? Let's remind each other of the whole story.

Give some time for people to point out parts of the picture, reconstructing the narrative of the text.

A reading like this gives us wonderful questions. I wonder if you have some questions?

If there is time, take some suggestions.

Here are some things I am going to ponder – some of us were in the house of builders – I wonder who the builders are that First Peter mentions? And if Jesus is named as the cornerstone that is a stumbling block – how could Jesus make someone stumble?

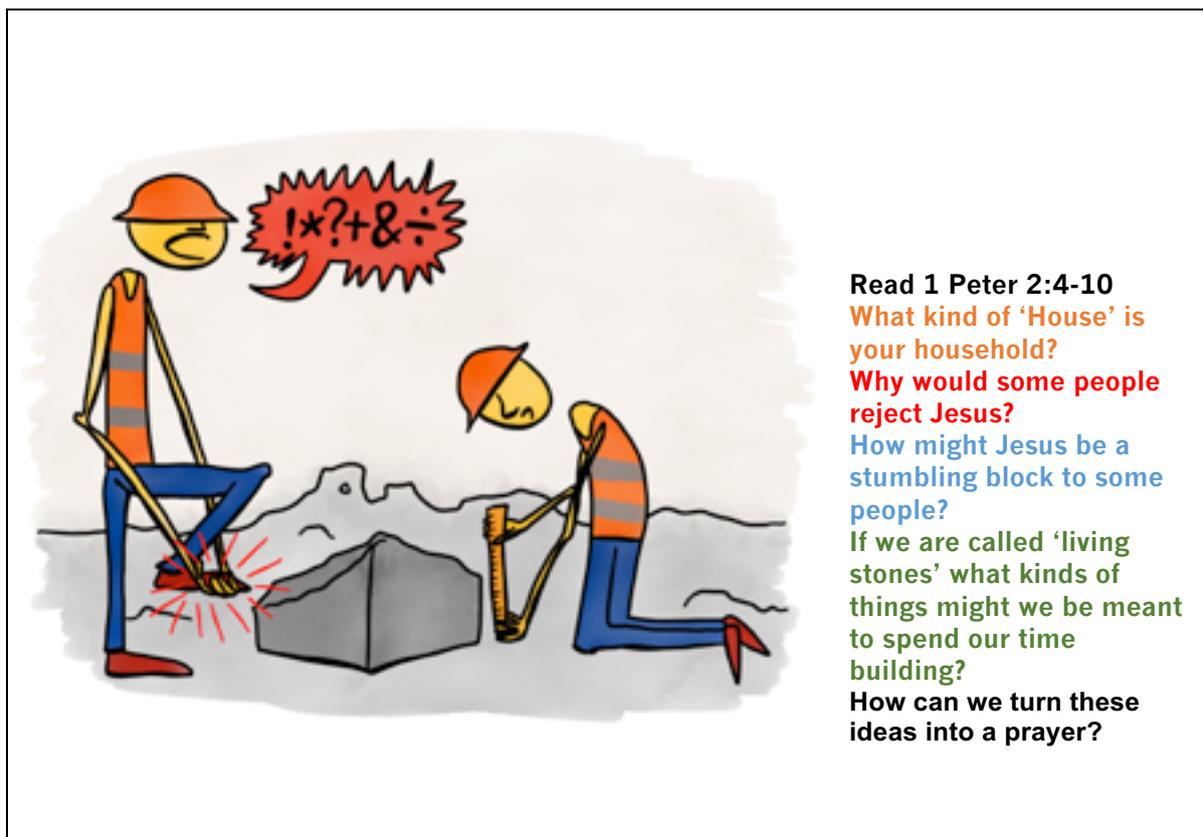
*Extension – Offer Postcards for households to take home and continue with questions and prayers from the passage and the image.*



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Postcard template



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## House Handouts (print and cut)

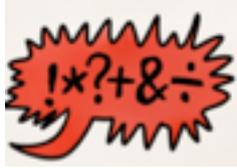
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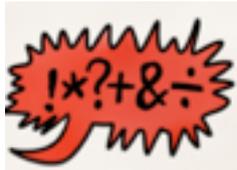


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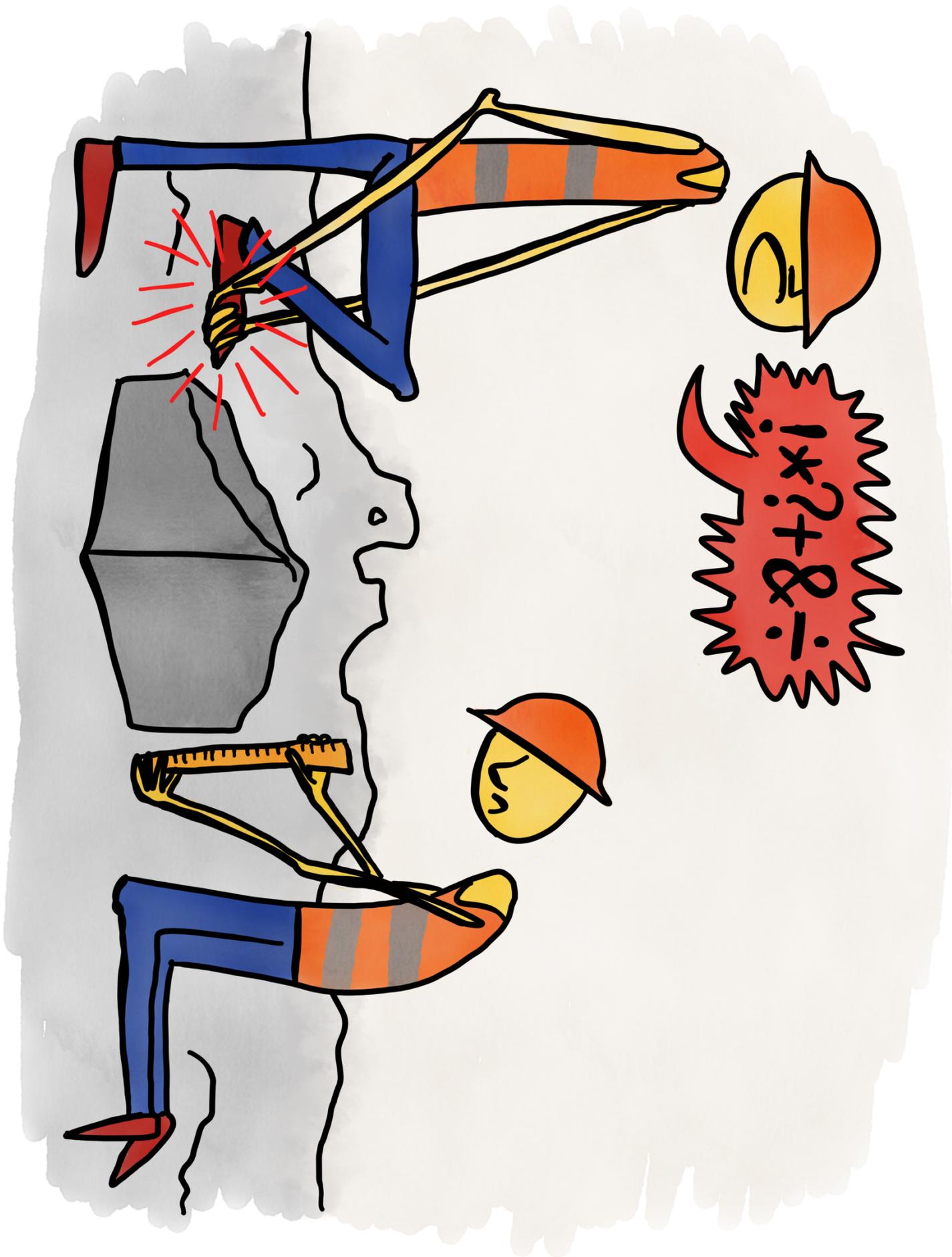


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