

# ST PETER AT GOWTS CHURCH

MARCH 4TH 2018

3RD SUNDAY OF LENT

9.30AM SUNG EUCHARIST

## Readings

First reading; Exodus Ch.20 v1-17

Second Reading; 1 Corinthians Ch.1 18  
-25

Gospel; John Ch.8 v 13 –22

## Collect

Almighty God,  
whose most dear Son went not up to  
joy but first he suffered pain,  
and entered not into glory before he  
was crucified:  
mercifully grant that we, walking in the  
way of the cross,  
may find it none other than the way of  
life and peace;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
one God, now and for ever.

## Priest in charge:

**Revd Jeremy Cullimore.**

The Vicarage,

Sibthorp St, Lincoln.

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**Lay ministry** Mrs Mary Rose

**Church Wardens**

Mrs Mary Rose, Mrs Margaret Simpson

**Hall caretaker** David Hansell

**Hall bookings & baptisms**

01522 528215

## Please pray for;

**the sick;** Fred Bowskill, Pam Goodman,  
Elizabeth Graham, Joy Gray, Martin  
Jefferson, Mandy North, Claire O'Neil,  
Stuart Rose, Michael Vaughan , Tim  
Wheeldon.

## Years Mind;

26 Joan Cooper

## March

4 Richard Hanson, Gemma Weaver

8 Lily Balchin

- The discussions and decisions made at PCC (6th)
- Pupils and staff of Bishop King School (Edward King; 8th)
- Those struggling in this wintery weather.
- The rescheduled coffee morning.
- The women of the world (8th, International Women's day)
- Those who suffer from kidney disease or are waiting for transplants. (8th world kidney day.)

## Upcoming events

6th	Tuesday	10am	Women's social group	church hall
		7pm	PCC	church hall
7th	Wednesday	10am	Keep fit	church hall
10	Saturday	10am	Coffee Morning (rescheduled)	church hall
11th	Sunday	9.30am	Sung Eucharist	church
15th	Thursday	7pm	Rehearsal for Stainer's Crucifixion	church

Dear Friends,

The words 'How can this be?' seem to me to be hovering in the air a great deal at the moment.

'How can this be' that we are so close to the date of leaving the EU and we don't know precisely what is happening yet? 'How can this be' that I've paid my stamp all these years and all I hear about is hospitals and schools under huge stress? 'How can this be' that every year the trees seem to burst into bud a few days earlier than they did last year, but that many people cannot accept the evidence that says that this is as a result of human impact on the climate?

These and so many other versions of the question buzz around in my mind and heart – as do the very prosaic ones of human living that in different ways we each face – and in my case: 'How can this be' that my parents, who have been reasonably well physically to this point, suddenly seem now to be failing so rapidly?

'How can this be?'

These are big questions and real questions. They affect different parts of our lives. They require us to draw on deep sources of strength. They can depress us or energise us. They can encourage us to reach out to others for support, and they can also make us want to hide and to turn in on ourselves. And where is God in it all?

I don't underestimate the impact of these words and of their underlying and related questions.

However, as the words and questions gather, in the month of March at least I am comforted by the fact that as the 25th approaches, I can draw strength from the example of one amazing woman who has trodden the human path before us. The 25th of March is the Feast of the Annunciation, which is the day on which Mary was told the news that she would bear a child who would be Son of God – and not surprisingly, she exclaimed 'How can this be?' (Luke 1.34)

If Mary asked this question, then I think I am in good company if, on occasion, I ask it myself as well.

'How can this be?'

And once it had been explained to Mary that if she said 'yes', she was to enact God's will, then Mary did indeed summon her strength and courage and love and obedience, and having expressed her incredulity, proceeded to bring about God's purpose for her and for the world. She could have said 'no'. However, she said 'let it be so', and thus a new chapter opened in the life of God's creation.

Can I echo Mary's words? Can we?

Can we, having faced the questions, place our trust in God and respond with similar strength, courage, love and obedience? Can we draw strength from Mary's example?

It is my firm conviction that we can!

With every prayer and blessing, then, for March and for the Feast of the Annunciation,  
And for the coming joy of Easter,

**Bishop Nicholas**