

to confess when I have made unhelpful comments and hand that conversation over to God, asking him to use it for his glory despite my inadequacies.

As I pray for my friends, I ask God to help me be watchful, that is, to act with wisdom and to be gracious. I prepare myself for the sporadic conversations by anticipating potential questions or comments and considering how I would respond. But I also need to consider how I am living out the Bible in between any gospel opportunities. Our actions and relationships tell people a lot about our convictions. As we allow the gospel to speak into every area of our lives, we show people the good life that Jesus offers. Our attitudes, the way we treat others, and our responses to situations form a foundation for, or even prompt, fruitful conversations. We can invite people to raise deep and spiritual conversations by showing in our conduct and relationships that we are people who can be trusted.

Wisdom may also mean choosing not to say something. Sometimes I walk away wishing I had said more and at other times I wish I hadn't said so much or anything at all. I'm praying that God will grow my discernment and understanding of the people around me, the context and the nature of each conversation, to help me decide how I respond.

As I ask God to grow me in watchfulness and thankfulness, I am reassured me that it is God who opens the door. God has promised to grow his kingdom and he longs for the lost to be found. We ourselves only know Jesus because God graciously worked in us to see the truth. I often replay conversations in my mind, wishing I had said things differently. It's easy for me to think I've failed because someone hasn't immediately agreed with me or given their life to Jesus. But God has his own timing. I am thankful that God uses our imperfect words even when we think we've failed.

More broadly, I should be thankful for the better story of Jesus and confident that the good life is found in Jesus. Our world is crying out for equality, acceptance, truth, and love; Jesus is the only true foundation for these things. I'd love God's help to grow in thankfulness for the gospel and for all of Scripture; to help me remember I don't need to be embarrassed or apologetic about God's good word.

When you find yourself in a conversation, pray your panic prayer and know that God hears. Remember that God is at work beyond that one conversation. When the time comes, we can be confident that God's Spirit will help us to speak wisely and graciously. May God use our actions and conversations to speak the truth in love and bring our friends home to Jesus.

Collect

God, as upon this day you have taught the hearts of your faithful people, by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit – grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things, and ever more to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who lives and reigns with you, in



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*And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" [ John 21:22]*

**Pentecost (19<sup>th</sup> May)**

Acts 2:1-21

Psalm 104:27-30

1 Corinthians 12:1-31a

**John 20:19-23**

**Trinity Sunday (26<sup>th</sup> May)**

Isaiah 6:1-8

Psalm 29

Romans 8:12-17

**John 3:1-17**

**"Lord, Please Help Me Say the Right Thing"**

TGCA 06/05/2024 **DHANU ELIEZER**

"Lord, please help me say the right thing. Please, please don't let me mess this opportunity up." Have you ever prayed this prayer? This is what I call my panic prayer, my emergency plea to God when I suddenly find myself in a conversation with a friend or colleague and want to share Jesus with them.

The opportunity to share the gospel or offer a Christian perspective often comes when and as I least expect it. It's like one minute we're making small talk and the next it's a pointed challenge put to me, questioning the meaning and implication of a specific Bible verse. As soon as it happens, I'm hit with both a wave of rejoicing and panic. And too often I walk away with 1 Peter 3:15 flashing through my mind, and feeling regret for not being better "prepared to give an answer ... for the hope" that I have.

The wisdom of Colossians 4:2–6 however, encourages us.

*Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

There are three things in these verses that I am asking for God's help to grow in: prayerfulness, watchfulness and thankfulness.

It is a relief to know that we are not on our own, that it is God who is making hearts ready. In all situations we can confidently entrust our words to God. I've taken to praying regularly for opportunities and that in those opportunities I will speak clearly and lovingly. I also take time to reflect and pray after conversations. At times, I've had

## A guide for our prayers during the week

### Monday

Our diocese and the gospel

- Bishop Peter
- Other parishes
- Dean for Cathedral – Rev. Ross Nicholson

### Tuesday

Our church and the gospel

- Children and youth
- Families
- Seniors
- Ivy, Chris

### Wednesday

Our community and the gospel

- St Luke's Op Shop
- Blackwater
- Emerald Churches

### Thursday

Our nation and the gospel

- Prime minister
- State and local government
- Religious Freedom legislation

### Friday

God's world and the gospel

- Islamisation
- War and poverty
- Persecuted Church
- CMS and ABM

### Saturday

Ministry and the gospel

- Bible Studies
- Food for Body and Soul
- Wardens and Parish Council

## Dates to Remember

Today	Service at 4 pm Food for Body & Soul at 5.30 pm
23 May	Bible study at 5.30 pm
25 May	Lay Preacher training Springsure 1-5 pm
26-29 May	Clergy Conference

	19 May	26 May
<b>Service Leader</b>	Dianne	
<b>Read</b>	Merv	Russell, Donna
<b>Prayers</b>	Nancy	Larry
<b>Shop</b>	Nancy, Theresa	Jenni, Joy
<b>Grounds</b>		Phil

## The BCA Prayer

Lord our God, help us to remember those who live in isolated and remote parts of our land. We ask you to strengthen and encourage all whose ministries are supported by The Bush Church Aid Society.

Refresh them in times of discouragement and loneliness and call others to stand with them in the task of making Christ known.

Grant that, through the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, through caring service and by support for young people, the message of your redeeming love may be proclaimed and accepted by the people of our land. We ask these things through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

### Direct Debit Giving Information

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