

St Paul's and St Luke's

Prayer Collective

Our link to You



Saved by Jesus Christ
Growing in Jesus Christ
Proclaiming Jesus Christ

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans." Romans 8:26

A Chat with Simone

I love that the New Testament has many examples of the early church modelling fellowship with their brothers and sisters in Christ and encourages us to emulate their example. Acts 2:42 tells us the early church "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to **fellowship**, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." This week I enjoyed catching up over a cuppa with Jenni Tang, getting to know one another and reflecting on our shared passion for prayer. I am certain we both walked away from our time together mutually encouraged but I particularly felt greater enthusiasm about my prayer life and devotion time, both on my own and with my family.

As important as we know prayer is in our relationship with our Lord and Saviour, it is not something we can ever expect to get perfectly right. Jenni and I reflected that knowing how to pray doesn't come naturally to most of us. However, we already have everything we need to enrich our prayer life through God's Word, as well as other books and resources developed for the very purpose of encouraging us in prayer.

Jenni shared that she loves to use scripture to help her stay focused; reading a few verses or passages of Scripture then praying His Words back to Him. As she does this, He is shaping her heart more in alignment with His will and helping her look at what God is saying to her. Jenni particularly loves the gift of the Psalms, as they reorient our hearts to His faithfulness, power, presence, goodness and wisdom, rather than just bringing a long list of selfish requests before him.

Everyday Cedric and Jenni spend time with Theodore and Allegra, talking about what they are thankful for and giving thanks to God for those things. Practicing what James 1:17 encourages us to do in acknowledging that "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights." Practicing thankfulness reminds them of their total dependence on Him.

One of Jenni's favourite prayer tools is a book with a collection of prayers, *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers & Devotions* by Arthur Bennett. Jenni shared it is so beautiful; the prayers help give words to what she is thinking and feeling, convicting her and helping her to remember who she is and how she can glorify Him each day.

One of the things I enjoy most about engaging in fellowship and rich conversations about prayer and faith is the shared love and passion we have for God and the opportunity to share books and resources that have helped us to grow in our faith. I hope you are encouraged and inspired too, by this brief snippet of our conversations on prayer.

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Prayer Points

- O God, be gracious to our church at St Paul's and St Luke's and bless us. May your way be known by us; and your salvation among our local community. We praise you O God, and pray that we may be glad and sing for joy each and every day. May you bless us as we live your Word and bring glory to you.
- Lord, may our ministry team be refreshed and encouraged as the year gains momentum. Bless them with joy and faithfulness in serving and grow them as they depend on you daily. May their personal relationships flourish and nurture their faith in you.
- We uphold Di's position in the office to you and pray that you will raise up the right person to meet this need according to your timing. We thank you for Di's generosity and willingness to continue serving our church family in the short term. Please, bless her for her servant heart.
- We commit our bible studies, playgroups, children and youth ministries to you as they recommence this year. May these all-important groups be a source of encouragement, growth and fellowship this year. May we have an opportunity to grow our support networks and deepen our relationships this year as we engage with one another with your Word central to our relationships.
- As SRE re-commences at West Tamworth and Westdale Public, along with our local high schools we pray that your Word will bear much fruit amongst children and families who do not know you. May any gaps in this ministry be filled by willing and faithful servants who have a heart for the lost, for our children and for our wider community. We particularly commit Belinda Gonsalves and Darrell Mole to you, that you will equip them with all that they need to be your people in our local high schools and enable them to rise to the challenge of working with difficult children, attitudes, and behaviours.
- Almighty God, giver of life and health, hear our prayers for our church family who are unwell or facing difficulty, that by our blessing on them and those who minister to them, they be restored to health of body and mind according to your will, and in the presence of your people give thanks to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Prayer for our Missionaries

Andrew & Margie Newman - CMS, Rukungiri, Uganda

Thank you that Margie and Andy recently spent valuable time with the Bishop to work out their role in his vision for the Bible College. We pray that growth in godliness will be central to theirs and their fellow teachers lives and relationships. Thank you that by your grace, Andy and Margie's teaching load will be light as they continue in their language studies.

May you bless the principal of the bible college with Godly wisdom and leadership and may the Holy Spirit illumine the students with knowledge and enthusiasm for God's Word and purpose.

We pray for healing for Margie's skin condition that causes such discomfort. We give thanks that Margie was able to contact her Tamworth GP for advice on management. We pray too for Andy and Margie's family here in Australia who miss them so dearly and who are missed by them. Ease any home sickness they experience and remind them of your love for them, their family, and friends.

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Most of you would be aware, I recently spent an extended time in hospital, undergoing spinal surgery. The speed with which my health needs progressed was nothing short of confusing and I struggled to understand what was going on most days... my world became blank. During this time, I was so encouraged by my brothers and sisters in Christ who contacted me, shared bible verses and words of encouragement, at a time when I felt I just couldn't pray for myself. I was physically exhausted, unable to even shuffle my feet or push my body, let alone where my head was at.

It was scary as my body was aching and I felt I simply could go no further, no matter how hard I tried. Let me tell you how powerful prayer is, after speaking with both Darrell and Helen, the prayer chain went into operation... and, it was many hours later whilst lying in bed that my feet touched one another. My legs moved, so I buzzed for the nurse as I wanted to try standing again, at 4am! My prayers were answered, I shuffled to the loo!!! But I still had to overcome my aching body...a body I honestly didn't feel I could push anymore...

I'm now back in Tamworth, undergoing Rehab at Tamara; so pleased & very reassured God is certainly good. We all have those moments when we come up blank, when we know we should be praying. But remember, "Please help me!" is a prayer and the body of Christ can fill the blanks. Don't be afraid to ask friends or family to pray for you. Your prayers for your brothers and sisters in Christ are so important. Afterall, we are all prayer warriors, every time we are prompted to pray for another, whether they ask you to or not. Perhaps God is prompting you to pray when they cannot. How blessed are we that God knows and meets our needs? Keep praying my fellow warriors, we all need it!

Lesley Hood
