**WOODLANDS CHURCH**

**May 6th 2018. Living as Witnesses**

**Discussion notes: Words. Acts 4:29**

In the Church Calendar we are in the season leading up to Whitsun, Pentecost Sunday. The book of Acts documents the first Pentecost and the gift of the Spirit to enable the disciples to be witnesses (Acts 1:8). Our series this May will look at what it means to be a Witness in the power of the Holy Spirit (alliterating around the letter W quite strongly!).

In Acts 4:29 the early Church prayed ‘enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness’.

Words have power. Jesus speaks of his own words as ‘works of the father’ (John 14:10) as much as other ‘miracles’. Paul (Rom 10:14-15) asks how people can believe without a preacher.

But Words can get us into trouble. And Witness requires boldness, as well as sensitivity. How do we find the right words to be witnesses? How do we prepare, take opportunities, know God’s empowering?

1. Why was ‘boldness’ what the disciples needed in Acts 4? Are there any situations in your life where you need more boldness in speaking about Jesus? Can you share those with your group?
2. When you think about speaking and preaching what examples come to mind? Can you see yourself as someone whose words can be a witness?
3. Witnesses are people who say what they have experienced and seen. Can you tell your story of encountering Jesus? Why not practice with one another, trying to tell your story to someone in your group in three minutes!
4. Jesus links ‘words’ with the gift of the Spirit (e.g. Mark 13:11). Have you asked for or experienced the Holy Spirit’s help with words of witness?
5. Can you be too bold in speaking about Jesus? What place is there for sensitivity and context?

Pray for one another as you leave this week that you would look for appropriate opportunities and ways to speak of Jesus.