

REV. CARLA CULMER

Mr. Vice President and Senators, good morning. Today I want to focus on prayer. How often do you pray daily? What motivates you to pray? As a leader and a Senator, it has been said, *"Leaders who pray can make decisions with greater wisdom, connect with others more effectively, and recognize their dependence on God's grace and power."*

Leadership is not an easy matter, and there will be times when you need discernment and wisdom to know next steps or how to navigate in the myriad of challenges and blessings that are before you. Many leaders of the Bible were persons of prayer, including Daniel, Moses, Nehemiah, David, and many more.

Today I want to encourage you, firstly, that leaders should always trust God and be persons of prayer. Daniel 3 and part of verse 23 says, *"To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and might and have made known to me what we asked of you."* This powerful leader exemplified that sometimes, in all that a leader has responsibilities over, there will be times when there are things beyond you, and they will need God to give them direction.

Someone has said, *"If your God is a genie, your prayers will be a shopping list."* Jeremiah 33:3 states, *"Call to me and I will answer you and show you great and hidden things that you have not known."*

Secondly, prayer keeps a leader humble and grounded. It can be a temptation in the midst of success and adulation to become less focused and to believe everything that is said concerning your accomplishments. But sometimes, flattery can become a trap that is set for your downfall. Proverbs 15:33 states, *"Wisdom's instruction is to fear the Lord, and humility comes before honor."* When a leader is humble, they become more concerned about what God says about them rather than being a people pleaser.

And thirdly, prayer should become a lifelong habit of everyone, especially leaders. When you lead, you are a leader everywhere you go. It is not a mantle that you put on and take off, because even in your downtime, you are a leader to someone. It is important to realize the significance of this awesome responsibility and to always be the best version of yourself everywhere you go. When you spend time with God in prayer, He will guide you and equip you daily for every task and every assignment. Psalm 119:133 states, *"Guide my steps by your word so I will never be overcome by evil."*

I close with this quote: *"Don't forget to pray today because God didn't forget to wake you up this morning."*

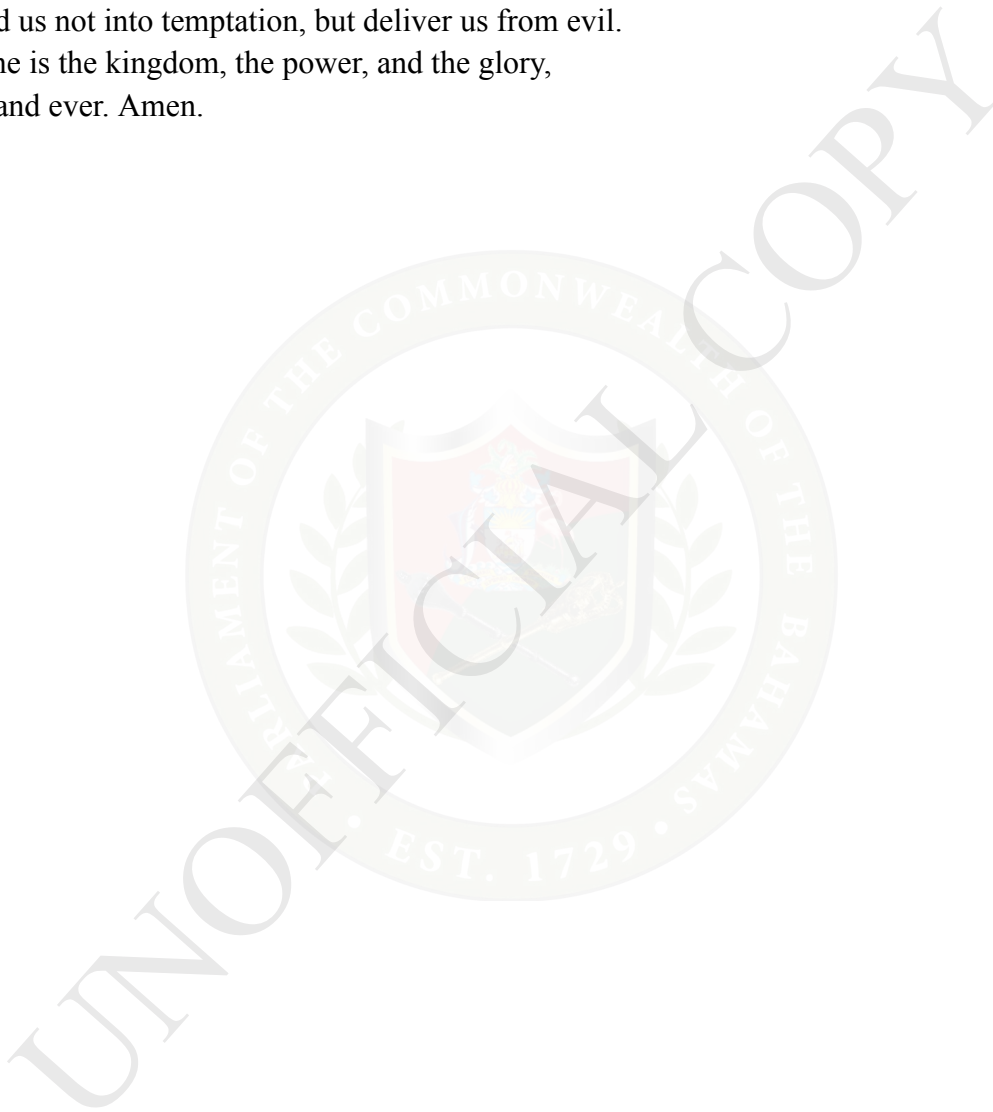
Let's pray.

Dear Lord, I lift up each Senator. Help them to be persons who will daily talk to You and allow You to guide their steps. Help them to cultivate a prayer habit. Fill them with wisdom and discernment. Place a hedge of protection around them and their families. May they always be the best version of themselves and display strong, positive leadership everywhere they go.

When they are weak, strengthen them. Let them know that even in times of adversity, they are never alone. May each Senator place their full trust in You. And also, Lord, remember

this day the families of former Senators Boswick and Moncur. May You undergird them as they have transitioned from this life, from labor to rest.

We pray all these things in the name of Jesus, amen. Please join in the prayer of our Lord:
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.



***** TRANSCRIPT *****

MR. VICE PRESIDENT

Good morning senators. It's a beautiful Monday morning. Welcome to the Senate session for the morning of May 19th, 2025. Adoption of the Minutes.

MR. MICHAEL HALKITAS

Mr. Vice President, I move that the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Monday the 28th of April 2025 be adopted.

MR. VICE PRESIDENT

Is there a seconder? It has been moved and seconded that the minutes of Monday 28th of April 2025 be adopted as laid. All those in favor say I. All those opposed say nay. The ayes have it. The minutes of the 28th of April 2025 have been adopted. Motions for Leave of Absence.

Leave to resign. Swearing in of Senators. Communication by the President.

Good morning Senators. On behalf of President of the Senate LaShell Adderley, who is unable to be here today, I wanted to officially welcome all Senators and say a belated Happy Mother's Day to all of the mothers present with us in the Senate today and also all of the mothers across the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. So, Happy Mother's Day from the entire Senate body.

I also wanted to recognize the passing of two former Senators: former Senator Rodney Moncur and former Senator J. Henry Bostwick.

Senator Moncur was sort of a larger-than-life figure in the Bahamas generally. Many know him from his acclaimed radio talk show. He's also been known as a political leader, a protester, an activist, and someone who fought very much for the poor. I think all Senators in particular will remember his remarks about the "two meat" being served in the Senate that became quite famous. And so he certainly held a place in Bahamian society. He will deeply be missed, and so we just wanted to take a moment to acknowledge his legacy and his life.

I also wanted to acknowledge and honor the life of former Senator J. Henry Bostwick. J. Henry Bostwick also was a larger-than-life figure in Bahamian politics—and not just in Bahamian politics, but also within the legal fraternity in the Bahamas. He's a prominent King's Counsel who was known for his charisma, his advocacy, and his bright legal mind. He's also known as one of the foremost political leaders in the country, and many credit him with keeping a united FNM by ensuring that his party that he had formed—the BDB—rejoined with the FNM.

On a personal note, I'm privileged and honored to have known J. Henry Bostwick in a professional and a personal capacity. And so his death struck me. As well, before I even

went to law school, I was dabbling with the idea of practicing law. But unlike many people in society, my family didn't have any connections with anyone in the legal fraternity. And so I remember one summer sitting down and sending my resume to absolutely every single law firm that I could find in the phone book.

The only law firm that returned my call as an undergraduate was the law firm of Bostwick and Bostwick. Lisa Bostwick said she looked at my resume and, even though I didn't have any legal experience or wasn't in law school yet, she saw something in my resume and she invited me to join them for the Christmas.

That Christmas, I worked in their filing room, which was essentially a room in the basement. And I now learned that it was a bit of a test but a test that I passed because I did all the work that was asked of me without sort of batting an eye. So I was invited to come back the next summer and work in a more legal capacity. There was an empty office at the back of the building that sort of joined with the back of J. Henry's office.

He was very used to that office being empty with no associates, and so he would often barge through the office to get out to go outside or go to the kitchen. And every time he would barge in he would say, "You know, I'm—I'm sorry, I'm sorry." But after the 10th or 15th time, I'm like, well you have to know someone is in here now.

But that was J. Henry Bostwick. I spent the few summers after that working—and Christmases—working at Bostwick and Bostwick, and I got to know Mr. Bostwick, affectionately called Mr. B, quite well. I continued to occupy that office at the back of his, and the barges soon stopped.

They were replaced by a tap on the door, which meant to me, "Griffin, come into my office." While I should be doing legal work, oftentimes I was in his office with him discussing the politics of the day. He was nearing the end of his legal career, and so much of his morning he spent reading the papers from front to back. He and I would sit there and discuss the news of the day, the politics of the day. He would tell me stories of his political past and of members of the Bar.

If anyone knows Mr. B—Mr. Bostwick—you know that he was quite unfiltered, and so much of what was said to me I cannot ever repeat. But one thing that struck me when I attended his funeral on Friday was the tributes that were given to him in the memorial book. The tributes by his wife and the tributes by his children.

They were particularly emotional, and I said to myself, on your death, the way his wife wrote about him and the way his children wrote about him is what every single man should aspire to achieve. They were loving, it was real, and it was raw. And you can tell the difference in relationships that he had with each of his children and with his wife.

So I just wanted to say that, you know, as we all sit at this table, sort of leaving—whatever our legacies would be—a part of that is also to be strong in your family, strong in your faith, strong in your convictions. He was a man who had strong convictions, going up against the PLP at a time when the PLP was all-powerful. And much of that is again recounted through the tributes that were given to him.

