

# WELCOME TO WINTER REST

For four weeks in January you will find a Winter Rest insert in your Order of Worship or posted on the Asbury website: [www.asbury-umc.org](http://www.asbury-umc.org). This weekly meditation will contain a reading pertaining to rest and renewal, a prayer, Scriptures of hope and assurance, and thoughtful quotations or poetry. May you find here a moment of peace, a return to serenity, a reminder of the deep abiding Truth which never changes. Blessings, Jan

## Assurance

He loves each of us as if there were only one of us. St Augustine

We are the Beloved.

That is the truth of our lives.

That is the truth I want you to claim for yourself.

In the stillness of this moment, hear the voice of Love saying:

*"I have called you by name, from the very beginning.*

*You are my Beloved, on you my favor rests.*

*I knitted you together in your mother's womb and*

*have hidden you in the shadow of my embrace.*

*I have counted every hair on your head and guided you at every step.*

*Wherever you go, I go with you and wherever you rest, I keep watch.*

*I will not hide my face from you.*

*You belong to me and wherever you are I will be.*

*Nothing will ever separate us. We are one."*

Henri Nouwen from *Life of the Beloved*

*"Be not afraid, for I have redeemed you.*

*I have called you by name. You are mine."* Isaiah 43:1

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society (meeting) in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's *Preface to the Epistle of Romans*. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I *did* trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an *assurance* was given me that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death."

*Rev. John Wesley*

FEAR KNOCKED AT THE DOOR. FAITH ANSWERED.

AND LO, NO ONE WAS THERE.

Anonymous

Jesus' kingdom calls us to another way,  
one that depends not on *our* performance but His own.

We do not have to *achieve* but merely *follow*.

He has already earned for us the costly victory of God's acceptance.

Phillip Yancey from *What's so Amazing About Grace*

Sabbath is more than the absence of work. It is the presence of something that arises when we consecrate a period of time to listen to what is most deeply beautiful, nourishing and true. It is time consecrated with our attention, our mindfulness, honoring those quiet forces of grace or spirit that sustain and heal us.

Wayne Muller from *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal and Delight in Our Busy Lives*

*And after He had dismissed the crowds,  
He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray.  
When evening came, He was there alone.* Mathew 14:23

When Jesus prayed he was at rest,  
nourished by the healing spirit that saturates those still, quiet places.  
In the Jesus tradition,  
prayer can be a practice of simply being in the presence of God,  
*allowing the mind to rest in the heart.*

When we sit in meditation,  
all the saints and ancestors send us loving-kindness,  
as they accompany our each and every breath.

Wayne Muller from *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal and Delight in Our Busy Lives*

*Your Heavenly Father knows what you need  
before you ask Him.* Matthew 6:8

To remember who creates and recreates us, who calls us again and again, who knows us completely, and who loves us unconditionally is to be prepared, as Jesus was, for all that is to come. We need have no fear of today or anxiety about tomorrow. We belong to God who claims us as beloved children and holds us close in the embrace of strength and love. Listen and remember today that God calls your name and be transformed and sustained in all that awaits you.

Rueben Job from *A Guide to Prayer for All Who Seek God*

FAITH IS TAKING THE FIRST STEP  
EVEN WHEN YOU DON'T SEE THE WHOLE STAIRCASE.

Martin Luther King Jr.

I have learned that I cannot always expect my life to be full. There has to be some emptying, some pouring out, if I am to make room for the new. The spiritual journey is like that—the constant process of emptying and filling, of giving and receiving, of accepting and letting go.

Joyce Rupp from *The Cup of Our Life*

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**Strong Savior,  
we often fear, fail, fall.  
You always call, catch, calm, help, hold, and heal us.  
We are amazed by Your grace. Amen**