

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. 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

Hope

To cherish a desire with anticipation, to expect with confidence.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

Hope is willing to leave unanswered questions unanswered
and unknown futures unknown.

Hope makes you see God's guiding hand
not only in the gentle pleasant moments but also
when the shadows of disappointment and darkness gather.

Henri Nouwen

FAITH DOES MORE THAN HOLD OUR HAND IN THE DARKNESS;
IT LEADS US INTO THE LIGHT.

Percy Ainsworth

Somehow losing myself helped me find my truer self; losing love helped me learn to love more fully and authentically; failing in relationship taught me much about being in relationship in a creative, nurturing way; experiencing a broken trust revealed how precious life is with someone who is worthy of trust. Out of my deepest pain has arisen my greatest joys.

Jean Blomquist

*I wait for the Lord, my soul waits and in His word I hope.
With the Lord there is steadfast love and with Him is great power to redeem.*

Psalms 130:5, 7

We do not yet live in the realized sovereign realm of God on earth. Our journeys as individuals, as communities, still pass through hard and dangerous places that may very well look and act like wilderness. But here is the gift, here is the promise, here is the grace for our wilderness: God will journey with us.

John Indermark

I am persuaded at last
that the places I have been in my life
are either places into which I have been led by God
or places into which God has followed me
and waited to be allowed to
lead me out.

Vashanti Rahaman

FAILURE IS JUST ANOTHER WAY TO LEARN TO DO SOMETHING RIGHT.

Marian Wright Edelman

WHEN YOU ARE MAKING DECISIONS, DO IT FROM A PLACE OF HOPE,
NOT FEAR. HOPE IS THE OXYGEN OF YOUR SOUL.

Sandra Stier

Our lives are unfolding stories. Sometimes an unexpected event throws in a plot twist rife with pain. But these events need not define our entire stories as tragedies. As we write our lives, God the divine editor may nudge the story in certain directions. "Here is how the story is going," God might whisper. "Instead of moving toward calamity, together we can steer it toward redemption."

Albert Y Hsu from *A Spiritual Life: Perspectives From Poets, Prophets and Preachers*

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not upon your own understanding.*

In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

This is my Father's world.

O let me ne'er forget that though the wrong seems oft so strong,

God is the Ruler yet.

Maltbie Babcock

Hesitation, more than anything, has been the invisible hitch that has kept me from joy. I've found that the magical moment with all its meaning often moves on past by the time I've reconsidered whether or not to enter it. It is this small hesitation, this small resistance to enter what is real, that makes life feel neutral or out of reach. So when life feels far off, remember that a flute is just a pipe with holes in it - until it's played. So, too, the heart. Life's questions and problems remain obstacles until we choose to live them. In this way, the life of every soul waits like sheet music to be played. Oh the grayness of a life unplayed...

Mark Nepo from *The Book of Awakening*

IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO BE WHAT YOU MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

George Eliot

It is not what you *are*
nor what you *have been*
that God looks at with His merciful eyes.
He sees what you desire to be.

The Cloud of Unknowing

"O God, help me to believe the truth about myself, no matter how
beautiful..."

Macrina Wiederkehr

**My God, in these quiet moments I caught a glimpse of Your vision for me.
Help me now to believe it, to embrace it. Breathe into my faltering spirit Your gift
of hope in things yet unseen. Help me to daily trust Your love.**

Amen