

"Prayer is not monologue, but dialogue. God's voice in response to mine is its most essential part."

Andrew Murray

Loving and Eternal God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer of our lives, we come in the quiet, seeking to settle our minds from the world around us, and to give our full attention to you. Help us to leave behind the concerns from wherever we've come from. And help us not to look ahead to the needs and activities of this day. But be within us, so that we can be present to you in body, mind and soul. For Lord, we can talk to you, in fact you want us to talk to you, sharing with you those things that are on our hearts and minds. But we are not always so good at listening. We have preconceived ideas of how we want you to answer us. We often think we know what's best anyway, and so we don't really want to hear what you have to say. Sometimes we just haven't put our God ears on. We surround ourselves with so much other noise, that we fail to hear your "still, soft voice." We fail to even pause, to stop and set aside our phones, our to-do lists, our calendars, and even give you the time to speak to us. Forgive us, Lord. For not only do we sadden you when we don't listen, but we do ourselves a disservice. We forego the wisdom, the guidance, the comfort, the peace you can give us. Help us to remember the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who said, "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and obey it!" May we hear your word to us today.

Lord, we come to you in prayer because we trust in your power to make a difference in the lives of those we love. We believe in your sovereignty to change things, to help in places of need, to bring hope in places of despair. And so we lift to you those who are on our hearts and minds this day. And even as we think of those we know, help us to be mindful of those who feel lost and forgotten. Those in parts of the world where simple necessities such as food and water are in short supply, and where medical care is scarce. Those who are oppressed by governments and power hungry forces who devalue human life. There is pain in places we cannot see or understand, and yet you know, O Lord, and we pray for that which we cannot see, but that which causes you and your children sorrow and suffering. May we never take for granted the peace, the prosperity, the freedoms, the health, the simple pleasures we so enjoy. And now, in love and care, we bring others to you, and so hear us now as people in this congregation lift aloud those for whom we ask your blessing.

And now, Lord, we pause in stillness to be in dialogue. To not only speak, but to listen...