

St. Augustine: "O Lord you made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you."

O Loving God, Creator God, Parent God, we have come to worship you in many ways - through our singing and music, through hearing your Word, through sharing love and fellowship with our brothers and sisters, and through the quiet of sitting in your presence, both speaking to and listening to you. And in your presence, Lord, we know we must be honest, for you know all our ways, all our thoughts, all our actions. Nothing is hidden from you. And so, in humility, we admit that sometimes our hearts are restless. We feel anxious, angry, frustrated, fearful. We let the news of the world get to us. We put pressures on ourselves and others that are unrealistic. We wonder at the meaning of our lives. Yes, our hearts are sometimes restless. We forget that you have made us for yourself. We feel that we must do things and handle things on our own, in our own way. Our pride pushes us to want to be "independent." And we sometimes wrongly feel as though we don't want to "bother" you, as if a loving parent could ever be "bothered" by a child in need. And yet, Lord, deep down, we want to find our rest in you. We want to have the faith that trusts in your will and your way. We want to have the peace and assurance that you are there and you will never let us go. We want to put our lives in your hands, confident that all will be well. And so we come seeking your forgiveness for our doubts, and asking for faith even the size of a mustard seed that trusts in your love, your timing, your presence. May we do our part by coming to you faithfully, by asking for and following your direction, and by trying to live the way you want us to live. So that our hearts are one with yours. At peace and at rest.

O God, we pray for that peace and rest for people around us. For loved ones and friends who are hurting, who are struggling, who are ill and in need of healing – both in body and spirit. We pray for those we don't know, but with whom we share our common humanity, our common desire for peace, civility, justice and even basic needs like food, water, shelter. The need is great, Lord, but you are greater. And so we come in faith to offer our prayer of intercession. You have heard those on our prayer list, but there are others.

Lord, we come as brothers and sisters in Christ, seeking to be examples of Christ to others, not only in our personal lives, but in the life of this church, John Wesley. We want to draw others to you by the way we are the Body of Christ in this community. And so, as one voice, one body, we say our John Wesley prayer together...

Dear Lord, we want John Wesley to be a strong and vital church in our community. And we want to be guided by your vision and plan for us. As we move into the future, please lead us all in our thoughts, our discussions, and our decisions. Show us what you would have us do and how you would have us do it. And help us always remember that John Wesley is your church, not ours – may your will be done. In Christ's name we pray. Amen