

**St Paul's Letchworth
Intercessions - 30th July**

FOCUS: REST

Seeking Rest

Lord, as we enter the month of August and we move through the summer break, many will be seeking rest. Rest to restore themselves, rest to relieve their burdens, rest to step away from things and just pause.

We are reminded of all that you taught about the importance of rest. Your offer to carry our yolk. To lay us down in green pastures and by still waters. To renew both our strength and our soul.

We pray that we can take your guidance of how to rest and to find those quiet places - whether retreating for days or just moments.

In that stillness, as we find peace, come alongside us, calm us, settle us.

And in those moments, if we are too exhausted to pray, to connect, then we ask that you intercede for us, to find the words and frame our thoughts. To speak what we need to speak.

Lord as we seek rest in these busy times we ask that you settle and calm our souls.

In your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Seeking rest together

Father, last week many young people came to this church to learn about your son healing people. We pray that this time together gave each and everyone of them rest and restoration.

Looking forward, as **more than 100 people** from this congregation pack up their bags and tents to head to New Wine, we pray for their journeys. That their travel is smooth and that they arrive safely. That each finds moments to rest, to connect with you and the wonderful community of St Pauls. We pray for rich experiences and lifelong memories.

Some of us will be spending time with families, setting out on holidays, getting on airplanes or embarking on a long drive. We pray that any stresses will dissipate quickly,

will not carry through into that precious time together. That families can be revived together.

Lord as people seek to escape the day to day we pray that we can be rested and revived together.

In your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Seeking Rest from the challenges that we face

Lord, sadly rest is often a brief reprieve from the challenges we each face. And for some comes far too fleetingly. Faced by the pressures of daily life, of bills and decisions, of sickness, of impossible choices - a burden far too great for one person's shoulders.

For many, stuck in the midst of war, fleeing violence or persecution, facing circumstances that will change their lives forever, rest seems an impossibility. For others in grief, they may feel guilty taking rest or treat it as a stranger.

For all these people we pray for your strength, your shoulders to bear their yolk, your kindness to bring them relief and calm. We pray that the doors of churches like St Paul's will be a wide open invitation to come in and share the load.

Lord, for those who struggle to find times to rest, we pray for every ounce of strength, support and love.

In your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Seeking Rest for our leaders

Lord, one of the first lessons you taught us was the importance of rest, when you created the heavens and the earth, and then took the seventh day to put your feet up and rested. We pray that all those that lead, guide and set examples can find the rest they need.

For those that lead this church - Jeni, Nick, Jess and so many more - we thank you for their unwavering commitment, for the burdens they carry and pray that they can find the time to pause and recharge this summer.

For those in power, leaders of governments and businesses. We pray that they replenish themselves, and that their heart and compassion speak and not their tiredness and exhaustion.

Father, we pray for our Lionesses. For all teams playing in the Women's World Cup this summer. For all they and those before them have done for equality within the sport. For their position as role models to children everywhere. We pray that the tournament will go smoothly, that teams get the rest they need and for fans to forget their troubles and challenges for 90 minutes.

Lord as we and so many others seek rest we pray that you will guide us to those green pastures and still waters, to bear our yolk and free us to pause in that quietness.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen