

# CREATING REST IN OUR HOMES

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A COMPILATION FROM THE JOYFUL LIFE COMMUNITY

**W**ith a little intentionality, we can cultivate an atmosphere of contented peace in our hearts and homes that invites those around us to encounter the restorative power of a life, home, and community willingly dependent upon Christ. To aid you in such a meaningful pursuit, we've compiled a collective list of our readers' favorite ways to invite rest into their everyday lives. It's our heartfelt prayer that these ideas help you and your family to quiet your hearts and experience the genuine rest Jesus offers to each one of us.

I love incorporating rest in our home by taking advantage of all 5 senses:

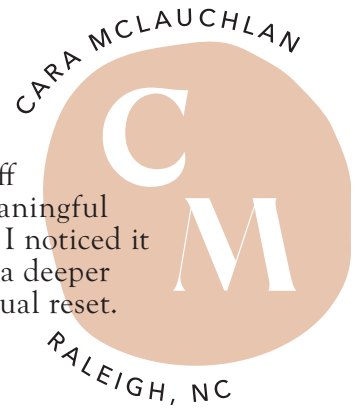
**See**—art on the walls. **Smell**—burn a candle. **Hear**—play music. **Taste**—have something tasty out to eat. **Touch**—lots of soft and cozy blankets and pillows

These things do not take much effort, but I've found that they make such a difference in providing a calm and restful environment for my family.



My family of five has learned to ask one another, “what makes you feel most rested?” While three of us love to recharge by heading outdoors for the day, the other two of us prefer reading a book at home. We’ve learned that neither activity is avoiding time with the others, it’s about preference. We like to spend time together, but we’ve learned that it’s important to build in time for different habits of rest. An active day at the lake followed by a quiet movie night at home ticks all the boxes for an atmosphere of rest in our home.

Making Sundays sacred was a priority for my family. One thing I longed for was communion of bread and wine as part of church at home. We started off simply with crackers and juice and reading Scriptures. Later it became a meaningful touch point for our family to pray together for concerns and for each other. I noticed it gave the week a richer feel. Our conversation during communion time held a deeper care and significance. Taking time for family reflection gave all of us a spiritual reset. This simple practice created a spirit of togetherness for our week.



Paper plates! In our household, we try to limit all work on Sunday in observance of the Sabbath. We eat a slow-cook meal for lunch (prepared the night before), and dinner usually calls for pizza. For every meal on Sunday, even if we have guests, we dine on paper plates. Although I'm all about reducing our trash footprint during the week, it's not truly a rest day if Monday's sink is full of dishes. That's why for us: Sundays are paper plate days.

MICHELLE STIFFLER

MS

If I'm unsettled on the inside, it's unlikely I'll create anything beautiful—especially a restful atmosphere. 'Reflect, release, receive' is a check-in habit I practice throughout the day, during morning reflection and journaling, on bike rides, when I'm driving or making meals. I identify unrest inside me, such as worry and expectation, the running mental loop, body tension, or dysregulated breathing. I release the unsettled places in prayer and receive God's peace. This acceptance process calms my spirit so I can move freely and create an atmosphere of calm contentment in my home and everywhere I go.

MES, AZ

TERRI PRAHL

TP

My favorite way to create a restful atmosphere in my home is to decorate with simplicity and calming paint colors. Having clutter-free common spaces where everyone can gather is important. Each room is painted in a neutral green, blue, or grey which makes them feel light and airy. People often comment on the peaceful atmosphere when they enter our home for the first time. There is room to breathe and be, and I always want my family to know that after being away and facing the harshness of the outside world, there's a place of rest waiting at home.

SPRINGFIELD, MO

ADELAIDE MITCHELL

AM

I hold a snack-and-story hour for my three boys that started years ago when they were little. It originated as "storytime teatime," and I would pour juice from a teapot into their teacups and they would listen to me read a story.

Because tea parties lose their novelty with growing boys, we now do a special snack they wouldn't normally get to have (think popcorn balls or caramel apples). The reading selection and reader have evolved as well now that two of my boys are reading. They each bring a book to the table, and we snack and listen!

CLOVIS, CA

JESSICA FLOT

JF

Sometimes it's hard for children to talk and discuss hard things. It can cause anxiety for young ones, and sometimes kids are just shy. Me and my daughters started mother-daughter journals. It's calming, it creates a safe atmosphere and privacy, and fosters trust. This allows their hearts and mind to rest. Each daughter has their own individual journal with mom.

PEORIA, AZ



In rooms where we rest I include elements that encourage this naturally.

**Living Room:** This room includes well-padded furniture, pillows and blankets made with soft, snuggly materials, a full bookcase, a heating pad stored next to the sofa, and soft lighting.

**Office:** A craft wall creates easy access to art supplies, as that's a key way my family relaxes.

**Bedrooms:** Each room has cozy, cushy bedding, bookshelves, and a bedside lamp with softer lighting.

Instrumental playlists, candles, and essential oil diffusers with soothing scents also help to create a peaceful and restful atmosphere.



One way for our home—our sanctuary—to be a place of rest is to make sure it is free from clutter. When we walk through the door at the end of the day and it's free from stacks or piles of 'stuff' that are either out of place or collecting dust, it's easier for us to put not just our body at rest, but our mind at rest as well. A simplistic, clean space helps create a home of rest for our family.



Creating a restful atmosphere in our family begins with my posture and attitude as a mom. Even if it has been a stressful morning for me, together we do long extended "family hugs" before we start the day. The power of being held by my tribe for longer than five seconds actually brings all of our heart rates down and our oxytocin levels way up. I am thankful for God's gift of the sense of touch and the peaceful atmosphere it fosters not only physiologically but emotionally as well.



We keep a family gratitude journal. In Scripture, God tells His people over and over again to remember what He has done. Taking the time to write down three things that we are thankful for each day gives our family spiritual breadcrumbs of God's presence and provision in our lives when we forget. This practice helps us rest in confidence that the Lord provides and cares for us because we've created a written history of His relationship with us. Plus, research shows that keeping a gratitude journal lowers stress and helps people sleep better. ■