



GO AND...



Creating Space

January is the time of New Year's resolutions and good intentions. We make plans to eat healthier, declutter our homes with Japanese cleaning consultant Marie Kondo's advice, and do a better job of connecting with friends and family. We make plans knowing change can't happen unless we plan. We add veggies to our grocery list, locate donation sites, and add family to our new calendars.

Many of us use the cold of January as a tool to help us rest. With good intentions, we dream of engaging with daily devotions, Bible study and spirituality books. The problem is we often forget to create space on our calendars and in our homes for spiritual growth. We like to think we can do this work cold turkey which means most of the time our good intention and our dream of utilizing January as a habit changing month go out the window after week one.

So how might one create space for growing spiritually?

1) Find a resource that works for you. There are many daily devotion books if you like a day-by-day resource. Augsburg Fortress offers a variety of devotion books grounded in Lutheran theology and lectionary. <https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/search?ss=devotion+books&c=0>

If you prefer a longer read there are great books by Richard Rohr, Henri Nouwen, CS Lewis, Anne Lamott, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Barbara Brown Taylor, Joyce Rupp and others.

2) Physically find a comfortable spot in your home that gives you good light, a table for a candle, a good cup of something warm, and your resources. Have a nice wrap or shawl in case you get cold. Pick a spot with a nice view out the window or facing one of your favorite pieces of art.

3) Pick a time that works for you. If you are not a morning person planning to do devotions at the crack of dawn will soon fail. Prayers offered at the end of the day lying in bed may be cut short because you can't stay awake.

4) Create the space by setting boundaries. This is your time to honor yourself and honor God. Do not disturb cues are needed if you live with others. For example, a closed door with a sign that says do not disturb unless someone is bleeding, or the house is on fire. Shoes set at the entry into a room means I am having my quiet time, and please do not disturb.

Change takes planning. Start with prayer, commit by writing down your goal, ask for help or find a partner to walk with you as you create new habits, plan your space and be patient with self. God's peace be with you as you focus on 2024 as a year of spiritual growth.