

Along the way

Following Paula's sermon on Sunday about people currently spending time and energy finding places for their "stuff," I've enjoyed hearing people's comments. It seems many of us are in a phase of clearing out, downsizing, or simply reckoning with the accumulation of too many things. This is work that can be emotional, sentimental and exhausting. And yet, the benefit of confronting our attachment to material things is that it truly brings our priorities into focus. The process of clearing out can become a spiritual one of making space and creating room for something new to develop and blossom.

If you have stopped in my church office, you may notice that I tend to live in the midst of piles—papers, books, and other items clutter my desk and, after two and a half years at Plymouth, I still have boxes to unpack and items to organize. There are times when it all overwhelms me, and I have to find a different space to get some work done. I am trying a new approach—a commitment to "making space"—and this means being thoughtful about what I add to a particular pile, what papers I can discard, how to be more organized electronically rather than consuming more paper, and really examining the items in my space as to whether they "spark joy" (thanks, Marie Kondo) or if I can let them go, creating room for the unending possibilities of creativity. You are welcome to hold me accountable to this evolving practice. And I welcome advice on managing my "stuff," too.

In addition to organizing our material things, we are often in the midst of difficult emotional work. Many of us realize a need for healing, forgiveness, closure, a change of perspective, a desire to let go of that which is holding us back from purposeful living. We need to "make space" for that work as well, or else it is too easy to be consumed by tasks that beckon our attention. In one week, we begin the season of Advent, a gift of time to prepare and wait with expectation for the Divine to be born anew. Advent means "to come into being" and these days are a perfect opportunity to make space for the spiritual work destined to transform us. I invite any opportunity for conversation as you work towards "making space" in your life.

As a way to make space for spiritual endeavoring, we will offer a service of Evensong (evening prayer) on the last Sunday of every month at 5 p.m. in the Chapel. Please join me this Sunday.

Blessings,
Beth