

MAKING SPACE

WEEKEND!

STEVE MATTHEWS

# changing the <sup>29</sup> question

Marie Kondo is a consultant and media phenomenon known for her unique ability to declutter, organize, and make space in the places where people live and work. She calls her process of assessing and making space the “KonMari method.”

Kondo's breakthrough on her decluttering pilgrimage came when she realized she had been asking the wrong question. Instead of asking her usual *What can I get rid of?* question, she began focusing on what she wanted to keep, holding up each item and asking, *Does this spark joy?* This new question challenged her to reconsider her relationship to her things, and it opened the door to her organizing empire.



[www.devozine.org](http://www.devozine.org)

JANUARY>FEBRUARY 2020 **63**

# STAY AWAKE CULTIVATING JOY

## MAKING SPACE

### WEEKEND!



Oddly, I am reminded of Marie Kondo as I begin to prepare for the Lenten season. Kondo asks us to consider our possessions as we declutter our homes; during Lent, we consider our priorities as we make space in our lives. In some traditions, Lent begins with this caution: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return." These words remind us that we all will die someday. We know this intellectually, but often we live as if we are invincible. If you have experienced trauma or tragedy, your perspective might be different; but death will come to all of us. The big question of Lent is this: *How then shall we live?*

As we seek to answer that question during our spiritual pilgrimage through Lent, we often ask ourselves what we need to let go of or abstain from during this holy season. But inspired by the KonMari method, I wonder if we might find more joy, more space in our lives if we asked new questions: *What part of my relationship with God matters most to me? Where do I experience joy? Who or what promotes a sense of peace in my life and nurtures my relationship with God?* In other words, what relationships, practices, and experiences do I want to keep? Once we answer these questions, we will be better equipped to declutter our spiritual lives and to nurture the things that bring us joy.



## MAKE SPACE FOR JOY

As you prepare for Lent, find a like-minded friend or mentor and have a conversation about what matters most to you in your spiritual life. Focus on what aspects of your relationship with God bring you joy and peace. Then name two practices that you might engage in during Lent to help you nurture that joy.

Be aware that as you practice, your focus may shift to things that can get in the way of the joyful life you are trying to encourage. When you encounter a potential distraction or

temptation, try a bit of the KonMari method and ask yourself, *Does this bring me joy? Does this strengthen my relationship with God?* If not, let it go and refocus on what brings you joy.

Hopefully, your conversation will help you find some creative ways to reorganize your life so that you can support your renewed intention to make space for God during Lent and beyond. And may you find great joy! <

**Steve Matthews** was a youth minister for over 15 years and is now a spiritual director, a coach and consultant working with redeveloping churches, and a Senior Associate Consultant with FaithX Strategic Missional Consulting.