



# moms monthly

support encourage share grow

## sacred spaces

What types of spaces would you consider sacred?

What images, symbols, texts and settings help you feel connected to God?

How might an area (or areas) in your home be “renovated” for sacred use?

What are the benefits of having at least one sacred space dedicated to worship?



### Sacred Offerings

I've always thought of altars as a sort of Christian version of the *inuk-shuk*: a declaration that God *was* and *is* here.



In Old Testament times God directed people like Noah, Abram, Isaac, Jacob and David to build altars as a way of honouring him with sacrifice and praise. But since Jesus' resurrection altars are no longer places of sacrifice in the traditional sense.

Many churches still have altars in their sanctuaries as a place from which to serve

communion or to pray. The presence of an altar reminds believers to celebrate the God “who is, and who was, and who is to come (Rev. 1:5). An altar can be a place to lay down our lives before the Saviour.

A wailing wall is a sacred place of prayer and lamentation, reminiscent of an altar. In Sue Monk Kidd's novel, *The Secret Life of Bees*, one character uses a wailing wall in her backyard as a place of comfort to deal with the bur-

dens of life. She writes her prayers on a slip of paper and tucks them into the crannies between the rocks as a way of offering them up and letting go. She is able to release “all the heavy feelings she carries around” and finds healing and peace in that simple act.

*Lay it down.  
This is the hour  
of my healing.*  
Jennifer Knapp

Why not fashion a simple altar to aid your spiritual journey? A simple pile of stones, indoors or outdoors just might help you release your burdens to a powerful and sovereign God.

### a room of my own with a view



God is everywhere and the indwelling Spirit allows us the freedom to interact with Him anytime, anywhere. In that sense, we are always standing on holy ground (Exodus 3:5). But though He is accessible we are rarely aware of a connection. Sacred spaces are about acknowledging our spirituality in a tangible way.

It must be my literary background but the phrases, “a room of one's own” and “a room with a view” call to mind two key aspects of personal sacred spaces that invite authentic connection.

**1. Make it your own:** This may require some introspection and thoughtfulness. Ask yourself, when do I feel the most connected to God? What atmosphere helps me to authentically enter into worship? What distractions do I need to remove to help with prayer and meditation? What resources help me in my spiritual disciplines. **2. Consider the view:** What types of things serve as visual anchors for my faith. What items remind me of God? What makes me look up?

Ultimately, a sacred space functions as a backdrop for meaningful encounters with the Creator.

*Praise be to our Saviour  
who daily bears our  
burdens. Psalm 68:19*



### Coffee Talk

1. How has your experience with meditation been strengthened?
2. What challenges are you still facing with respect to stillness?
3. In what ways have you incorporated meditational practices with your kids?

*Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?*

Psalm 139:7



**mommy moment:** Flip through the pages of Marlee Ledai’s book and ponder the significance of your home as a spiritual sanctuary: a place where you and God reside together. Choose a “soulPROJECT” that inspires you and take the time to transform your home in a meaningful way.

***This Month With Ourselves:***

**EDUCATE:**

Psalm 27 reminds us to seek refuge in our Lord. What practical applications does this passage relate when thinking about specific spaces devoted to worship. In what ways can we “gaze upon His beauty” or “dwell in His temple”?

**EVALUATE:**

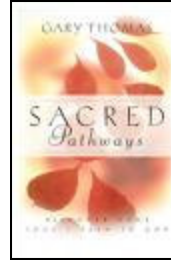
What role have your surroundings played in your ability to connect authentically with God? Consider the impact of your external world on your senses: What do

you see? What do you hear? How might these things be nurturing or hindering your spiritual life? What impact do distractions and ambience have on your ability to focus on your internal reality? Do you need to make any changes to enhance your experience of God in your living spaces?

**EXPRESS:** Romans 1:20 reminds us that God has revealed His “invisible” qualities to us in tangible ways through creation. In your journal, write about significant spiritual experiences that you have had,

paying careful attention to the setting. What places have had the greatest impact on your connections with God? Journal your feelings and your associations with that particular space. What is it about the atmosphere that made it significant for you personally?

**EXPAND:** Consider a spirituality assessment like *Sacred Pathways* as a means of discovering how you feel most connected to God. This can give you some ideas about your own sacred space and a new appreciation for different people’s experiences.



**family fun:** Take a family field trip to a place that has been personally significant in your spiritual walk. A marsh, a beach, an open field, a park bench, a shrine, a church or a cemetery are all possible destinations. Plan to spend some time together in worship: reading, singing, meditating and praying.

***This Month With Our Kids:***

**MAKE A POINT:**

Ask your kids *where* they are when they feel closest to God and *what* types of things remind them of Him. Include these suggestions as you think about adding or subtracting from their spaces to help them stay connected.

**MAKE A PROMISE:**

Point out things in your home that have sacred significance. Explain how your surroundings are being intentionally cultivated to promote faith and connection.

**MAKE A PLAN:**

Art has played a major role in worship in the historical church. You may not have a DaVinci in your clan but you might be surprised at how much their creations help them connect with the Creator. Designate an area as an “Art Wall” in your home. Make it a place that your kids can display their creations but make a conscious effort to include scripture verses, Sunday School crafts and other reminders of their spirituality. It will act as a visual reminder of the lessons they are learning and the reality of God as they see it.

When we fashion sacred spaces in our homes we are acknowledging in a tangible way the reality of our relationship with God. By dedicating a corner of our world to prayer and reflection we are signifying a commitment to the centrality of Jesus Christ in our daily living.

Setting aside such space would itself bespeak the significance of taking time to be quiet and alone with God, and of respecting this kind of need and value for solitude in one another. *Mary Anthony Wagner*

***Appealing to the Senses:***

***What might we put in our sacred spaces to help us connect?***

**Sight:** Bible, Christian books, sacred symbols and/or art, significant words or phrases written on a plaque/chalkboard, candles, natural elements, photography, a window

**Sound:** worshipful music, nature sounds, silence

**Touch:** prayer bench or kneeler, meditation chair or mat, prayer stones, medallions, or beads, a blanket

**Smell:** incense, spices, natural scents, fragrant herbs



***May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.***

PSALM 141:2