



A Guide to Hosting a Sacred Land Walk

"Creation is a sacred text." – Rabbi Ellen Bernstein

A **Sacred Land Walk** invites your community to encounter the natural world as holy — to walk slowly, listen deeply, and recognize the Earth as a bearer of wisdom and spirit. Here's how to plan and lead one in your faith community.

Step 1. Plan the Walk

- **Choose a Location:** Select a place meaningful to your community — at a park, near water, in the desert, in the mountains, in a bosque, on your congregation's ground, or at a local sacred site. Make sure it's accessible for participants of various abilities.
- **Set a Date and Time:** Mornings or late afternoons are ideal. Consider dates that align with your faith calendar or environmental observances.
- **Identify Leaders or Partners:** Invite a faith leader, elder, Indigenous guide, or naturalist to help facilitate. Co-leading can bring spiritual and ecological wisdom together.

Step 2. Prepare the Experience

- **Gather Materials:**
 - Printed materials (any reflection prompts, signs, prayers, readings, etc.)
 - A bell or chime for guiding silence and transitions
 - First aid kit and water
 - Seating for the opening and closing circle (if needed)
- **Design the Flow:**
 - Opening circle
 - Walking portion
 - Reflection stations (optional)
 - Closing circle

- **Create Reflection Prompts** – Prepare a few questions for participants to carry with them, such as:
 - What is the land saying?
 - What is in pain here?
 - What is thriving or healing?
 - What responsibility is being revealed to me?
- **Reflection Stations (Optional):** Set up simple stations with a poem, a prayer, or facts about local ecology or sacred sites (acequias, watershed, Indigenous lands).
- **Accessibility & Inclusion:** Consider physical abilities, translation needs, and cultural/spiritual inclusivity. Include a land acknowledgment and invite diverse voices.

Step 3. Lead the Walk

- **Opening Circle:** Begin with silence or a short reading (land acknowledgment, sacred text, psalm, prayer, poem, or Indigenous teaching). Frame the walk as an act of reverence and attention.
- **Walk:**
 - During the walk, use a bell or chime to signal transitions or to invite moments of silence.
 - Incorporate at least 10–15 minutes of silent walking or standing still, encouraging participants to notice textures, sounds, smells, and feelings.
 - Pause periodically for guided reflection, readings, or prayer; use any reflection prompts you have prepared.
 - If you have set up reflection stations, pause at each.
- **Closing Circle:** Regather and invite brief sharing – what did people see, feel, or learn? End with a collective prayer, blessing, or commitment to care for the land.

4. Follow Up

- **Encourage Action:** Offer next steps like advocating for clean energy, organizing a cleanup, writing to protect a sacred site, or planting native plants at your house of worship.
- **Share the Story:** Post photos and reflections online (with permission). Use hashtags like **#SacredLandWalk** and **#Faiths4Water** to inspire others.

Tips for Success

- **Collaborate:** Invite nearby congregations, tribal members, or youth groups.
- **Be Inclusive:** Honor Indigenous connections to the land and encourage intercultural respect.



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