

Walk On: The Journey After Sacred Ground – Discernment Handout

This handout is designed to support Session 11 of the Sacred Ground curriculum. It provides compelling questions that guide participant reflection and discernment, with the hope that individuals, circles and congregations will be better prepared for their next stages of action, engagement and formation.

Please keep in mind: As you consider the questions, and especially as you move into working groups during the session, you are not definitively choosing one focus over another. You will be asked to focus on one of these areas during the session – individual, circle or congregational discernment – but you should think of it as “trying on” a focus so you can develop more skill around discernment, and so you can begin a naturally longer process. For instance, those in the individual discernment group can of course be part of any ongoing circle work.

Please also rest assured that we do not expect you will know your precise next steps while working with this handout or even at the end of the session. Especially if you are discerning circle or congregational action, you won’t have all the information or relationships necessary to craft a real action plan. Hold the details loosely and listen for where the Spirit is leading. Ideally, you will continue as part of a circle or ministry where you and others will be able to reflect, research, learn and act together for years to come.

Part 1: Listen for the Spirit

Consider all three areas prior to the session, as Session 11 will open with time to share broadly.

Individual discernment

- What has God continually focused my attention on during the Sacred Ground journey? What question or concern has my Spirit returned to again and again? What might God be calling ME to do and to be?
- What do I want to do differently because of what I’ve learned in Sacred Ground?

Circle discernment (your individual sense of the circle)

- What has God continually focused our circle’s attention on during the Sacred Ground journey? What question or concern have we returned to again and again? Understanding we do not need to come to full consensus in this moment, what might God be calling us as a circle to do and to be?
- As a circle, what do we want to initiate, do differently or continue to do?

Congregational/ministry discernment (your individual sense of the congregation)

- What question or concern for/about our congregation or ministry have we returned to again and again during the Sacred Ground journey? What is God calling us as a ministry or congregation to do and to be?
- What do we want to help our ministry or congregation to do or see differently because of what we’ve learned in Sacred Ground?

Part 2: Walk the Labyrinth

Explore the Becoming Beloved Community labyrinth and a host of possible, practical next steps in the [Becoming Beloved Community Where You Are](#) booklet. During the session, you will be asked to focus with a small group gathered around either individual, circle or congregational/ministry discernment. These questions will help:

- What quadrant of the labyrinth do you (or your circle or congregation) consider to be most familiar, at this stage in your journey?
- What quadrant of the labyrinth do you (or your circle or congregation) feel most drawn to dwell and work in, at this stage in your journey?
- Where do the passions you indicated on Part 1 of the handout (for yourself, your circle or your congregation) intersect with the opportunities and pathways indicated in the booklet?
- *Most importantly:* What concrete action, choice and/or commitment could you (or your circle or congregation) make in order to advance racial healing, repair, justice and reconciliation?

Part 3: Step Out on Faith

Recalling that your plans will be provisional – whether they're for yourself as an individual, for a circle or a congregation – think about a few of these questions and prepare for next steps. Don't feel pressured to get it "right" immediately; you can always come back to this section for further discernment and planning:

- Per Part 2, what concrete action, choice and/or commitment do you or your group sense God might be leading you to take up, as a result of the Sacred Ground journey?
- What resources and gifts might you or your group have for this action, choice and/or commitment?
- What resources and training might you or your group need?
- What relationships might you or your group need? Who could hold you accountable? Who might you partner with to be in discernment together? Who might serve as your allies or you as theirs?
- *Most importantly:* Given the concrete action, choice and/or commitment you described, what might be the next best steps you could take, individually or as a group? Start reasonable and practical. The first step may be, "Ask someone who has done this before to share their wisdom" or "Sign up for a formal antiracism or dismantling racism training" or "Set a time to reconvene."
- When could you or your group take these steps? Within a couple of weeks? Over the next month?