



Walk of awareness



Hopefully you are able to get outside occasionally - whether in open countryside, in town, or in a garden space (whether private or communal). This idea – adapted from *Roots for Churches* – is a wonderful way to turn a simple walk into something very special.

Before the walk

- Decide on a comfortable length of time to walk: between 30 minutes and an hour is about right.
- This walk is best done individually, but if you are more comfortable walking with someone else, keep silent throughout.
- There is no set route; wander where you feel led. It's good to combine different environments, if possible. For example, town or city streets followed by a park, or village streets leading into countryside (stick to marked footpaths in rural areas).
- Take a bag with you to collect things on the way, to remind you of different parts of the walk. They will be used at the end of the walk. Alternatively, take photos of things you wish to record.
- Before you set off, have a moment of contemplation and prayer. Allow yourself to be still and focus on God's presence with you as you leave. If you prefer, read the following prayer silently to yourself:

God of all our journeys, be with me as I walk.

Open my eyes to your presence.

Open my ears to your call.

Open my mind to your wisdom.

Open my heart to your Spirit.

Amen.

The walk

- As you begin to walk go quietly, unhurriedly, lightly and with reverence for the ground on which you tread, and for what you see and meet. Remember, walk in silence.
- From time to time, stop, and take in the whole scene before you, using all your senses:
Feel the ground under your feet.
Touch things with the tips of your fingers.
Listen to sounds, those nearby and far away; those above you and around you. Are they pleasant, irritating, intriguing?
Smell the environment; what stands out to you? Flowers, food, traffic...
Look at detail. Notice shapes, patterns, different colours, spaces between things, textures, different materials such as synthetic and natural, metal, wood, concrete, iron, plastic, paper...
Watch things move; do they travel slowly or quickly, up and down, to and fro?
Notice immovable things such as hills, bridges, buildings and roads.
See contrast: light and shade, big and small, order and chaos...
Observe people as they pass by: their age, their mood, their posture, their clothes...
• If possible, find a secluded place to be on your own. Stay for a while. How does it feel to be there?
• All along your journey, remember God is with you, in the tranquillity of a field or wood, and in the busyness and noise of the litter-ridden street. Reflect on how you feel about God's presence in these different places you find yourself.

On your return

- Find a quiet space to sit on your return and just spend a few moments alone reflecting quietly on the journey you have had. You may want to look again at any items you collected on the way, revisiting in your mind the places you found them. Ask yourself if you found it easy to experience God in that place or not. Do any of your items remind you of any particular pieces of Scripture? If so, find and read them again carefully and slowly, no matter how well you think you know them. What does this passage say to you now?
- Put the items you've collected into a collage. Be imaginative about how you use them. Perhaps write a piece of Scripture underneath, or words of your own. Or you could embellish the items with craft materials or your own artwork.

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This year's song for Thy Kingdom Come ...

To the tune of Tell out My Soul

Thy Kingdom Come Thy Kingdom Come – Lord teach us how to pray
For all to know your joy, your peace and love
And know your friendship each and every day
The breath of Christ, the Father's gentle dove

Thy Kingdom Come – Christ's prayer to make us one
That all may know the Father sent the Son
To celebrate the victory He has won
In love and grace we pray: 'thy will be done'

Thy Kingdom Come – we pray for those we know
To turn and follow you for all their days
and in your love find peace and service grow
Our one desire and hope your highest praise

Thy Kingdom Come – transform our human ways
Our lives laid down in mercy, truth and care
Nations renewed, in giving thanks and praise
To see God's Kingdom come: this is our prayer

Thy Kingdom Come – we praise your Holy name
Your sacrifice and rising sets us free
That by our words and lives we may proclaim
By Jesus' risen life, God's victory!

CCLI Song No 7150052 Words: Neil Hamilton Thompson, Chris Russell, Emma Buchan, Harvey Jessop Music: Woodlands (Walter Greatorex) ©2020 Neil Hamilton Thompson, Chris Russell, Emma Buchan, Harvey Jessop

Two Prayers By Malcolm Duncan ... Spring Harvest Leader, Author and Lead Pastor at Dundonald Elim Church in Northern Ireland

God of all Creation,

We are staggered that You invite us into friendship.
You are not an idea, or a force, or a presence, You come to us in personality, reaching out the hand of love and offering us an invitation to know You. To sit with You, to grow in relationship with You.

We do not understand why this is so, but we accept Your invitation and ask You to help us to grow in our enjoyment of being with You. Thank You that You love us so personally. Thank You that You not only love us, You like us.

We ask that each of us will grow in this friendship with You. We pray for those who feel utterly alone tonight, perhaps even lost. Would You remind them that they are loved, that they are known and that they are welcome.

Show each of us that there is a place for us at Your table; that You have offered us a seat by Your side. Give us the grace to accept Your invitation. Help us to sit with You.

Amen

God of Grace and Prince of Peace,

Still our souls
Quieten our hearts
Breathe Your Peace into our lives
Help us to slow down
To catch our breath
And to remember

That You are always here
That Hope is present where You are
That we can only do our best
That You do not demand more of us
Than we are able to give

Give rest to those who are weary
Give comfort to those who mourn
Give strength to those who are weak
Give peace to those who are anxious
Your Presence is enough
Your Promises sustain us
And so we hold ourselves, and one another before You