

SACRED GROUND

Dialogue on Race and Faith

PARTICIPATING IN A SACRED GROUND CIRCLE

Time Commitment

Sacred Ground is an 11-session dialogue series that we hope will give groups time to grow in relationship and to cover terrain that cannot be traversed quickly. Committing to the full 11 sessions is a powerful sign of willingly engaging in a lifelong journey. It took centuries for harmful racial patterns to be put in place; it takes an investment of time and attention to undo the resulting internal and external harms.

If you need to miss a session, please take time to watch and read the relevant material and get caught up by speaking with someone who attended.

The assigned films and readings may feel manageable to some and more demanding to others. Do your best to engage with at least the first set of materials listed for each session, but be kind to yourself if you are not always able to complete everything. We erred on the side of offering more, knowing participants can opt to decrease from there.

You will continue to have access to the materials after your circle concludes and are encouraged to revisit them. For those wishing to explore further, we have provided additional “Deeper Dive” materials.

Curriculum Access

Films/videos/readings

A set of films and readings has been curated to form the spine of this dialogue series. Your circle facilitator will provide you with a link and password to access the curriculum website once your circle is registered.

Core books

You will need to purchase (or otherwise obtain access to) two books for this program. If they are cost-prohibitive and not available at a library, the facilitator may be able to help with financial assistance through the congregation.

The first book is “Jesus and the Disinherited” by Howard Thurman.

For the second book, there are two options. Please consult with your facilitator about which book you should purchase. The two options are:

- “Waking up White” by Debby Irving
- “White Awake” by Daniel Hill

For core books, the assigned chapters do not necessarily correlate with the specific content of the respective sessions. They are on their own track, so to speak. The material from these books is meant to provide a rich side-by-side dynamic with the films and other readings, helping to provoke meaningful discussion.

Restrictions on Use

Please respect the filmmakers, distributors, authors, and publishers by adhering to the following parameters:

The course materials are in a password-protected section of the website, so access to copyrighted material is limited only to those who are registered in Sacred Ground groups. Please do not share that password with people outside your dialogue circle. Exception: When a film/video or reading is made available through a link to a web address outside the Sacred Ground password-protected site, you are welcome and encouraged to share it with others.

An important example of prohibited use of films: Our licenses do not permit the screening of the films to your full congregation or broader community. They are only to be screened by the dialogue circles engaged in the 11-session series. If circle members are inspired to share them with the whole congregation for a dialogue event, they must acquire the public performance license from the film's distributor. If you are having trouble acquiring a public performance license, please reach out to the Sacred Ground team for assistance.

Disclaimers and Acknowledgment of Limitations

The views expressed in the films and the readings do not necessarily represent the views of The Episcopal Church, the advisors to this series, or the authors of the series. The purpose of the materials is to encourage reflection and conversation.

Please note that there are one or two instances of profanity in the materials.

A special note from Katrina Brown, the founding author of Sacred Ground:

"I want to take a moment to acknowledge the inherent limitations that come from my walking in the world as a person defined as 'White,' and how that creates the potential for blinders with respect to how I have curated this series and what I have written. I have striven to have a helpful and representative range of voices, and to let various groups 'speak for themselves.' The series has also benefited from the thoughtful recommendations of the project's diverse set of advisors. But it is important to acknowledge limitations. The session on Indigenous history, for example, does not represent Indigenous Native American history in its totality, which is by its nature multi-tribal and heterogeneous. Indigenous history is most appropriately and ideally taught by Indigenous people themselves, in a culturally appropriate context that involves storytelling, the sharing of wisdom by the elders, and the passing down of sacred myths that define the essence of Indigenous identity. The same could be said for other communities.

"I hope and pray that I have done right by the communities of color whose stories and experiences are woven throughout the curriculum. I hope and pray that I have wisely evoked the stories and experiences of people of European descent. I hope and pray that the series, with all of your voices woven in, will move us closer to becoming a healthy human family, a beloved community."