

THE COSMIC WALK

Genesis Farm

Used with Permission

This ritual was designed to provide some sense of the awesomeness of the time/space of the universe. You can change and adapt it as you see fit. It conveys the sense of sequence in the earth's unfolding process. It also dramatically conveys the brief history of humanity, as well as the uniqueness of each person's life.

The events that have been chosen for this are arbitrary. We recommend that you look over the "time-line" included in The Universe Story by Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry. There may be other events that you would wish to highlight. It is very important to "know the audience." Be inclusive of the events which shaped their continent and bio-region as well as their cultural, ethnic or religious story.

Materials

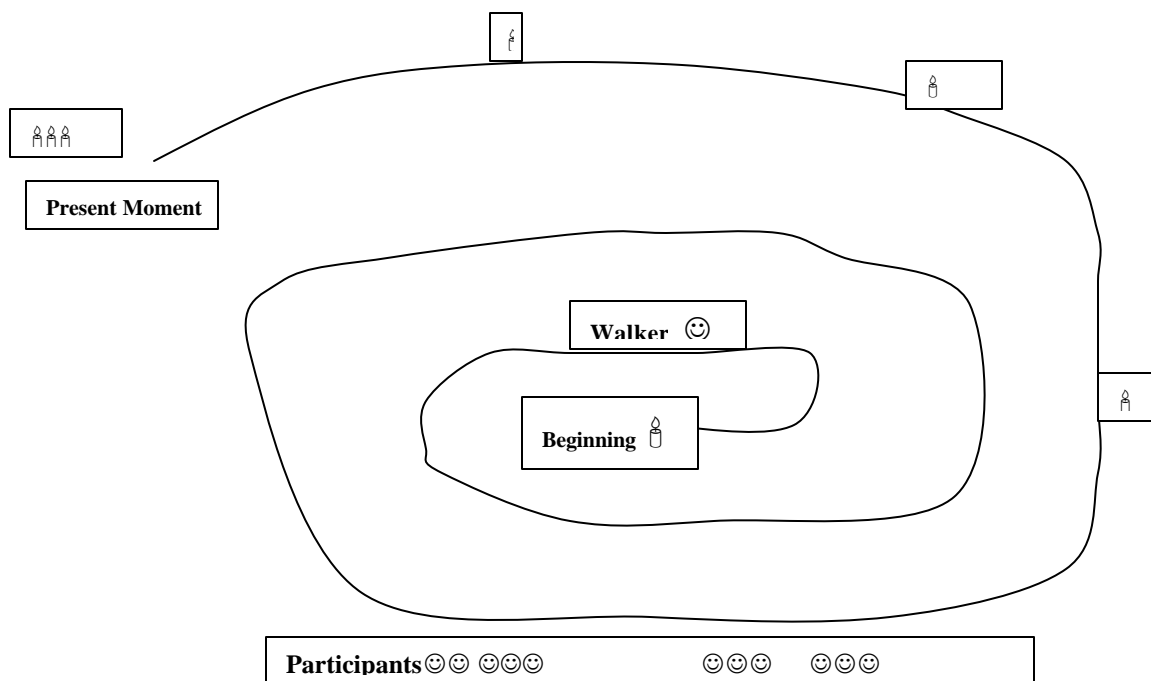
1. A length of thick yarn or rope to represent the time-line of the universe. Total length is arbitrary. These are the measurements we use: 10ft =1 billion years; 150 feet of rope needed. The line is then divided into intervals when special events took place (see narrative). Tie a piece of colored yarn or tape a little tab at each interval so it is always visible. Most of the events happen at the very end and can't fit on the rope. Group them as close as possible.
2. A tall candle to be placed at the center of the spiral.
3. A taper to be carried by the walker. If each participant is invited to walk the story, then provide a taper for each. Be sure to hand a small circular protection at the base of each candle to catch wax drippings.
4. 32 small vigil candles to be placed at each interval marker. We suggest small glass vigils, or else have coasters or pieces of cardboard under each candle to catch drippings.
5. Use markers to indicate events in the evolution of the universe, such as Marion Honors, CSJ, illustrations. Each one is marked with year and event.

Music

Use any appropriate solemn/contemplative piece. Our favorite music for this is "The Fairy Ring" by Mike Rowland.

People

- A narrator
- A “walker” – this person is the first to walk the cosmos as the narration is read and lights a vigil at each “cosmic event”
- You will need a large space with room for people to sit around the spiral. The larger the “feel” of the spiral, the more effective it is. If you want all the participants to do the walk afterwards, be sure they have their tapers before hand.



Procedure

Begin music.

The narrator stands off to the side and reads from the prologue to John’s gospel substituting “Dream” for “Word,” as suggested in the Dream of the Earth. The walker waits in the center of the spiral until reading is finished. If this is not a Christian setting, then another appropriate “origins” prologue could be used. Be creative with this initial narration. It should set the tone for the universe evolution.

Narrator: “In the beginning was the Dream, the Dream was with God and the Dream was God. The Dream was with God in the Beginning. Through the Dream all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through the Dream; and out of this, Mystery created light.”

Walker: Strike match and light “universe” candle as narrator reads “...Mystery created light.” Pause. Light personal candle from universe candle and slowly begin to walk through spiral. Stop at each event and wait for the narrator to describe it. Pause at each “event” while narrator reads “event.” Light the vigil candle that represents its. Continue to end.

Narrator: Use narration given in Sturdy Roots II.

If the entire group is to participate in the walk, there should be a pause with just the music continuing. When moved to begin, each participant should walk to the center, light their individual candle and walk the entire time line. Each should leave a space so there are no “traffic jams” or waits in the walk. It is meant to be a meditative experience and should not be rushed.

After everyone is finished and seated, it is helpful to allow a time of silence and then invite each to speak a one-word response to their experience, i.e., “inspiring,” “awe-filled,” “gratitude,” etc.

Be creative and enjoy!

