

Tending this sacred space

Holy Wisdom Monastery is the home and work place of Benedictine Women of Madison. The monastery grounds consist of 138 acres of land, including Lost Lake, the restored prairie areas, woodlands, buildings, gardens, orchards and housing. Over the years we've partnered with hundreds of environmental, civic and community groups and worked with thousands of individuals to help preserve the land for all to enjoy.

The grounds are home to a diverse ecosystem of plants, fish, animals, humans and other creatures living in a harmonious environment. It is our hope that all who experience Holy Wisdom Monastery's grounds will respect and nurture this quiet harmony.

- Camping, fishing, hunting, biking and off road motorized vehicles are not allowed.
- Smoking is not permitted in the buildings or on the grounds except in designated areas.
- Domestic animals need to be restrained on leash and picked up after.
- Help us maintain "litter-free" grounds.
- Please stay on designated trails.
- No fires, unless approved in advance.
- Do not pick or remove any plants.
- Unlawful activities are prohibited.
- Maintaining and restoring the monastery grounds is not free. All guests are encouraged to become an "Eco-Friend of Holy Wisdom Monastery" and share in the stewardship of the land.
- Since the monastery grounds are private property, we ask that all visitors check in at the monastery main office when open.

You can help maintain the grounds by volunteering and by joining the Eco-Friends of Holy Wisdom Monastery. For more information contact us at:

Holy Wisdom Monastery • 4200 County Road M • Middleton, WI 53562
608-836-1631, ext. 124 • info@benedictinewomen.org • www.benedictinewomen.org.



*...weaving prayer, hospitality, justice and care of the earth
into a shared way of life as an ecumenical Benedictine community*

Enjoy the nature trails at Holy Wisdom Monastery



Lost Lake Trail: 0.7 mile

As you descend this trail, a glacial kettle lake hidden beyond the hillside appears. It attracts abundant wildlife and offers you a place for solitude and reflection. At the lakeshore, a tall-grass blend of wet prairie and sedge meadow species extends upland.

This trail passes in front of the monastery which is edged with prairie on one side and an oak-hickory woods on the other. Near the main entry drive, this trail meets up with the Mendota Prairie Trail.



Oak Trail: 0.7 mile

This trail follows along the upper ridge until you reach a woodland trail loop through mature oak trees. You can see some of the characteristic trees of oak savannas, with their outstretched branches, along the woodland edge as the trail dips down. At the half-way point, this trail branches off to the North Prairie Trail and opens to a sunny savanna scene.



North Prairie Trail: 2.0 miles

This trail gradually curves down a northwest-facing secluded hillside through groves of young walnuts, oaks and evergreens planted in an abandoned agricultural field. The path reaches an expanse of prairie with a vista of scattered oak trees on the distant ridge that characterize our savanna landscape.

The trail traverses prairies planted between 1997 and 2001, with an option to return via the Oak Trail. Located midway around the North Prairie is a detention basin created in 1996 as part of a Lake Mendota Priority Watershed Project. It buffers the impact of surface water runoff that flows east into Lake Mendota. As you walk the return portion of the prairie loop, the oak woodland comes into full view. It is especially colorful in fall, but enjoyable in any season.



Mendota Prairie Trail: 0.3 mile

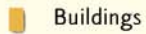
This trail offers a panoramic view of Lake Mendota and the Madison skyline. Winding down a south-facing sunny slope, the trail descends 70 feet through a restoration that exemplifies the diversity of our local prairie flora. The lower plateau was seeded with the help of volunteers and staff in the fall of 2003, continuing with the mid-slope in 2004 and the hilltop portion in 2005-2006. Near the main entry drive, the trail meets up with the Lost Lake Trail.

Holy Wisdom Monastery Nature Trails

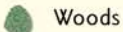
- Trail
- Property Boundary



Water



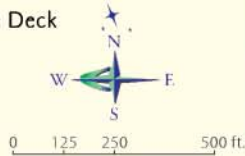
Buildings



Woods



Observation Deck
(handicap access)



- 0.7 mile Lost Lake Trail
- 0.7 mile Oak Trail
- 2.0 miles North Prairie Trial
- 0.3 mile Mendota Prairie Trail
- Connector trail

Governor Nelson State Park

Lake Mendota

County Highway M