

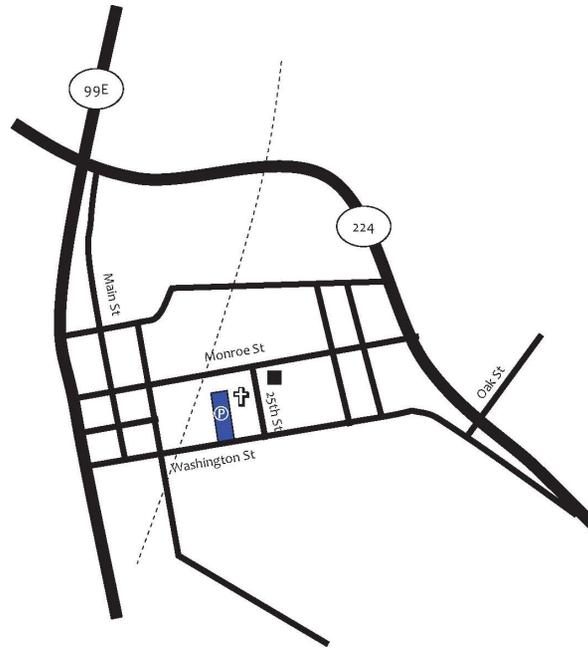


The Chartres Labyrinth

Christians have practiced this particular form of walking meditation since at least the thirteenth century, when a labyrinth was placed on the floor of Chartres Cathedral in France. In its early form, one of the functions of the labyrinth was to give Christians who would otherwise have been unable to make the journey to the Holy Land a way of emulating the experience of making a pilgrimage. By following the path from the outside of the circle to the center and back again they would experience something analogous of the transforming journey to the center of the Christian world, Jerusalem. The labyrinth was called "Road to Jerusalem."

Based on the circle, the universal symbol for unity and wholeness, the labyrinth enlivens the intuitive part of our nature and stirs within the human heart the longing for connectedness and the remembrance of our purpose for living. The path winds throughout and becomes a mirror for where we are in our lives; it can touch our sorrows and release our joys.

Finding the Center

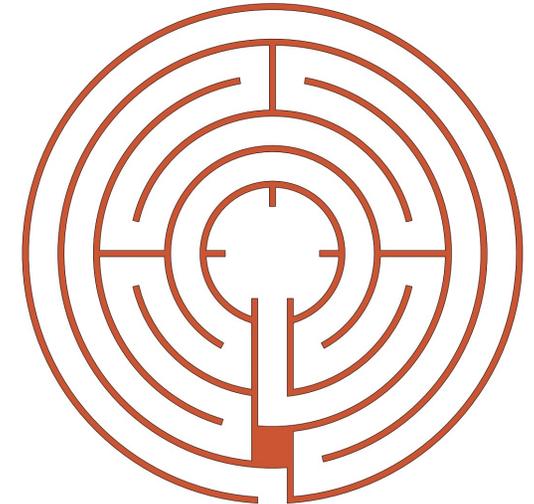


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Walking the Labyrinth



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Ask
Listen
Receive
Be Grateful

Suggestions for Walking

There are many ways to walk a labyrinth. You may be seeking relaxation, prayer, problem solving, or healing. Here are some guidelines for the process that are frequently used. Remember, it is *your* walk.

1. *Prepare*- Set your intention. Reflect on your life right now. Maintain silence for your own reflection and that of others.

2. *Walk In*- Set your own pace. Stop if you choose. Let go of burdens, ideas, the need to control. Simply follow the path. Remember, all things on your walk will instruct.

3. *Center*- When you reach the center, walk in and stay as long as you like. This is a place for reflection and gratitude, a place to listen to the still small voice of God.

4. *Walk Out*- When you are ready, begin your journey back. Be aware of your feelings, your energy and insights or images.



Life as Labyrinth

Labyrinths are unicursal, having a single path. With no choices or intersections, that path leads unfailingly (though circuitously) to the center.

○ We find ourselves.

○ No Competition

○ All paths are part of the one path leading unfailingly to the center where, despite differences and appearances, we will eventually meet.

○ No one will be lost.

○ If we are alive, we are on the path.

○ We are open to a wide range of possibilities without the fear that our choices will cause us to be lost or constitute a dead end.

○ We operate from a position of free choice rather than obligation.

Life as Maze

Mazes have multiple paths and a myriad of choices, most of which lead to nowhere.

○ We lose ourselves.

○ Competitive

○ Easy to feel that success is not assured or that it comes only with luck and struggle.

○ Decisions or events in our lives are not turns but dead ends.

○ We reprimand ourselves when we fail.

○ Our rational minds work overtime.

○ World is divided into right paths and wrong paths, success and failure.

