

WHAT IS A LABYRINTH?

The labyrinth is a metaphor for life's journey, a journey that takes us toward a goal, then away from that goal, finally reaching the goal, only to see that there is more beyond it. It is a journey to enjoy, not a problem to solve. There is no right or wrong way to walk the labyrinth. Put anxiety aside and open yourself to whatever comes—an image, a new understanding, a faith walk, or renewed joy in life.

WALKING THE LABYRINTH

Inward/Upward/Outward Focus

The labyrinth is often described as an inward-upward-outward movement--inward to self-reflection, upward to our relationship with God, and outward to awareness of others. Try this exercise as a body prayer before you begin your walk:

- *Place hands together in prayer.*
- *Reach up in openness to God.*
- *Reach out to accept God's gifts.*
- *Cross hands over heart to cherish God's gifts.*
- *Place hands together in prayer.*

‡ INWARD - Walking toward the center with God is a time to release the stress of life and invite God's insights appropriate to your journey. What are you thirsting for? Where are you hesitant to let God lead you? What fears or sorrows weigh

you down? Where does your life bubble with joy and thanksgiving? Start where you are and open yourself to God's images.

‡ UPWARD - When you reach the center, take a seat. Take a deep breath, breathing in God's love and peace. Exhale and release yourself again to God's care and wisdom. If there is unfinished business from the inward journey, ask what God wants you to learn. If there is none, enjoy the silence in the presence of your greatest Supporter. If scripture or words to a song or an image come to mind, accept it as a word from God. Stay in the center until you're ready to move on.

‡ OUTWARD - The outward journey is a time to move beyond yourself. As you retrace your steps, allow God's presence to journey with you. Where is God at work through you in your various relationships in life? What relationships surface to the top of your thinking? How can God meet the needs of your colleagues, your neighbors, your church through your presence? What is God's prayer for you? As insights come to you, open your hands to God as an expression of a sacred partnership.

Finally, as you exit the labyrinth, let the Love symbolized by the cross impact how you resolve to relate to yourself and others. What can you do to celebrate what you have learned?

Bring A Specific Focus

A different approach to using the labyrinth is to form a specific intention or question to meditate on. Here are some examples:

- * Walk the path during special transitions of life as a review of past highlights and an anticipation of new hopes and dreams.
- * Use the labyrinth to pray for healing when you face an uncomfortable issue or relationship.
- * Formulate a question to direct your thoughts, such as: Where do I need more clarity in life? What do I need to "let go" of? How can I make a difference to my friend or to this situation?
- * What question would you like to ask God? Bring that question into the labyrinth journey and see what God might reveal.
- * Read a few verses of scripture before entering the labyrinth. What phrase or word stands out to you? Ponder on that word or phrase as you walk.

As you see, the ways to use a labyrinth are endless and as varied as our meditations. May the path lead you to God.

*"You have made known to me
the path of life; you will fill me
with joy in your presence."
Psa. 16:11*

Psalm 23 (adapted from NIV)

You, LORD, are my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

You make me lie down in green pastures, you lead me beside quiet waters.

You restore my soul. You guide me in paths of righteousness for your name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Thank you for visiting the Creekside labyrinth. You may replace this pamphlet for someone else's use, or keep it for your own meditation.

May your path be blessed!



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The Labyrinth at Creekside, constructed in August 2007, is built in the Classic Style with seven circuits. The recycled brick borders define the walking paths.

Welcome to
the Creekside
LABYRINTH

using the Labyrinth
as a means to walk with
God



Original drawing by Jeff Saward,
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