

Introducing Labyrinth Prayer

Faith, Hope and Love Global Ministries Inspire Trip

Myanmar Institute of Theology Yangon, Myanmar 2014



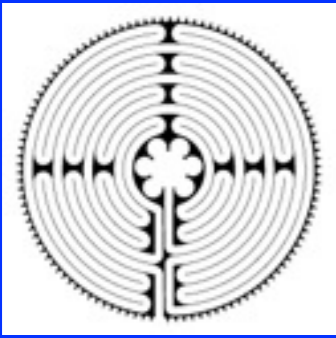


Taking a prayer walk with God.

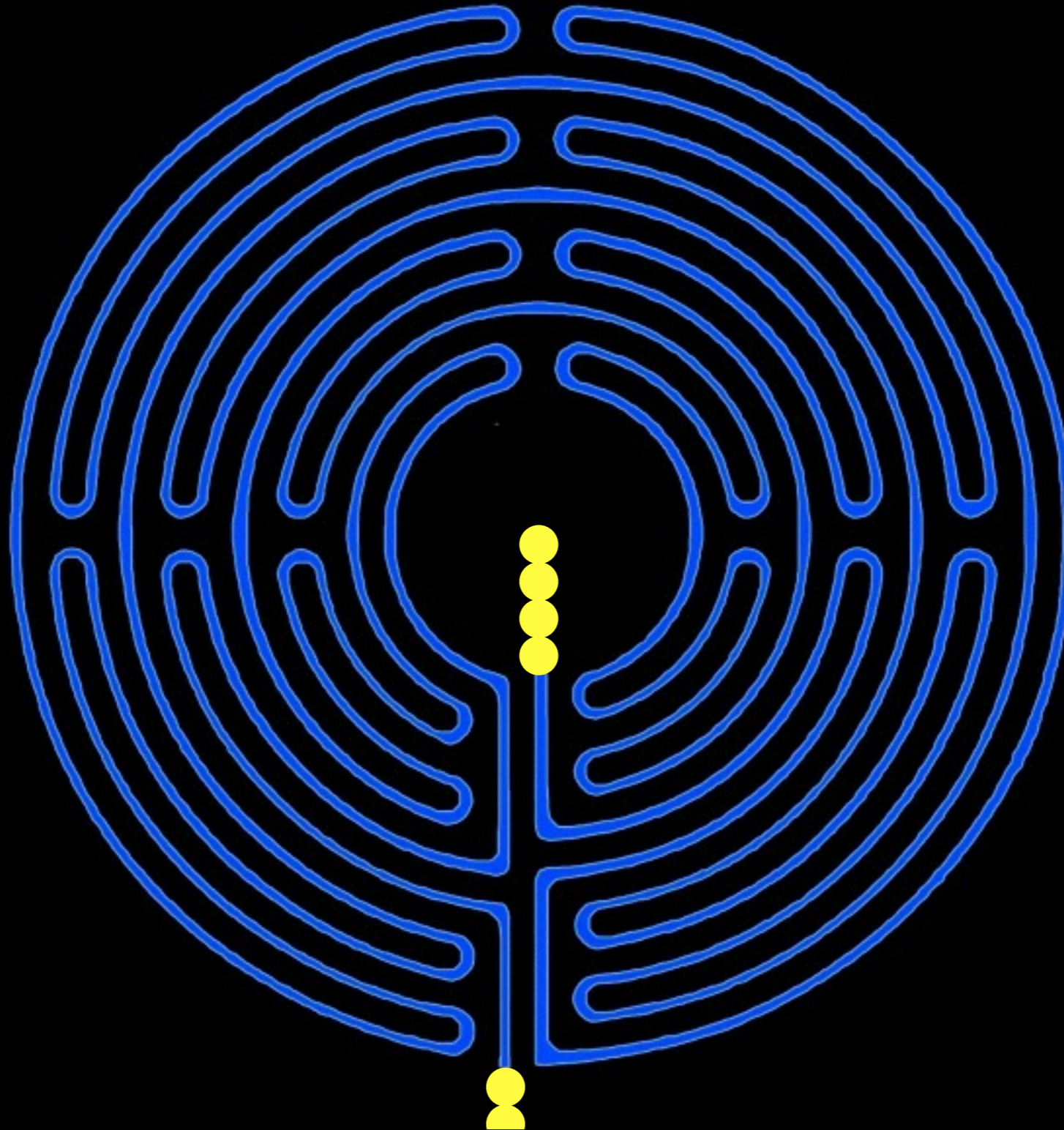
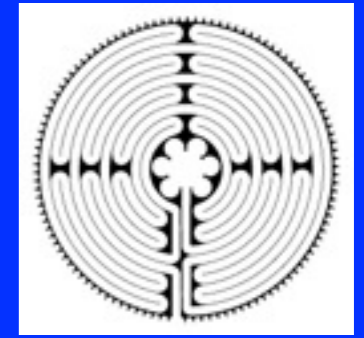


Our goal is not a labyrinth experience, but a [prayer] experience.

Robert Ferré, 12 Reasons To Have A Church Labyrinth.



Labyrinths are designs that consist of a single, winding path that begins at the periphery and leads to a central space. The way out is on the same path, but in the opposite direction.



A labyrinth has one--and only one--pathway.
Mazes have many.
There are no tricks or dead ends in a labyrinth.
You can't get lost.

Karen Wingaba Maze
at a Buddhist Temple
Yangon, Myanmar

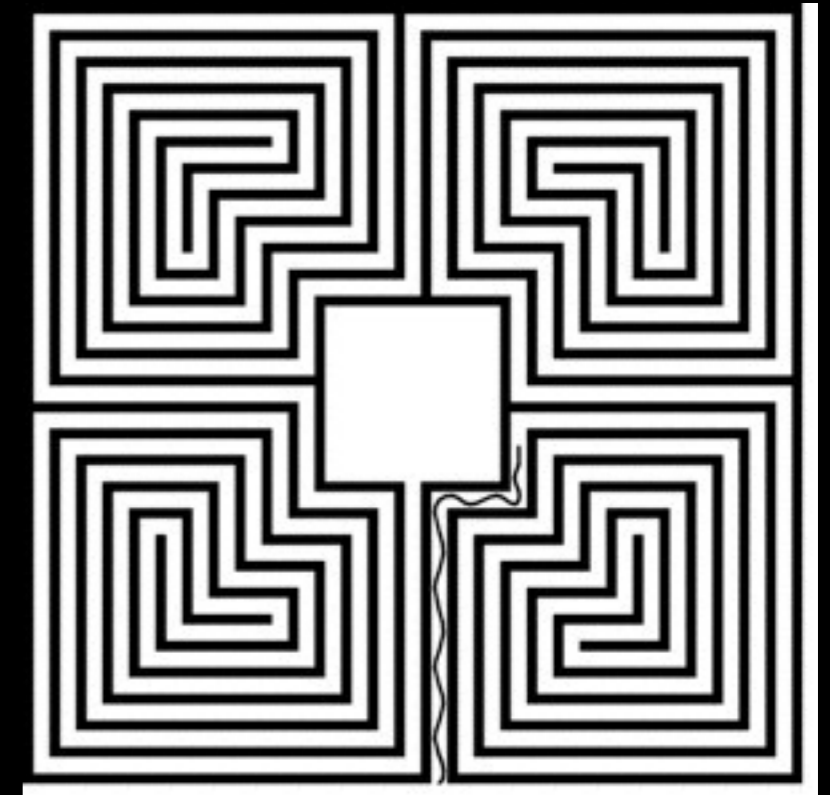
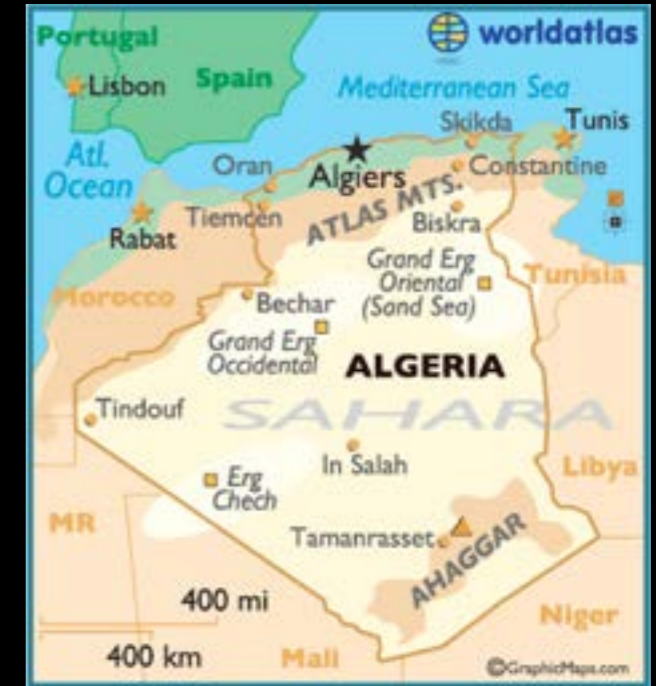
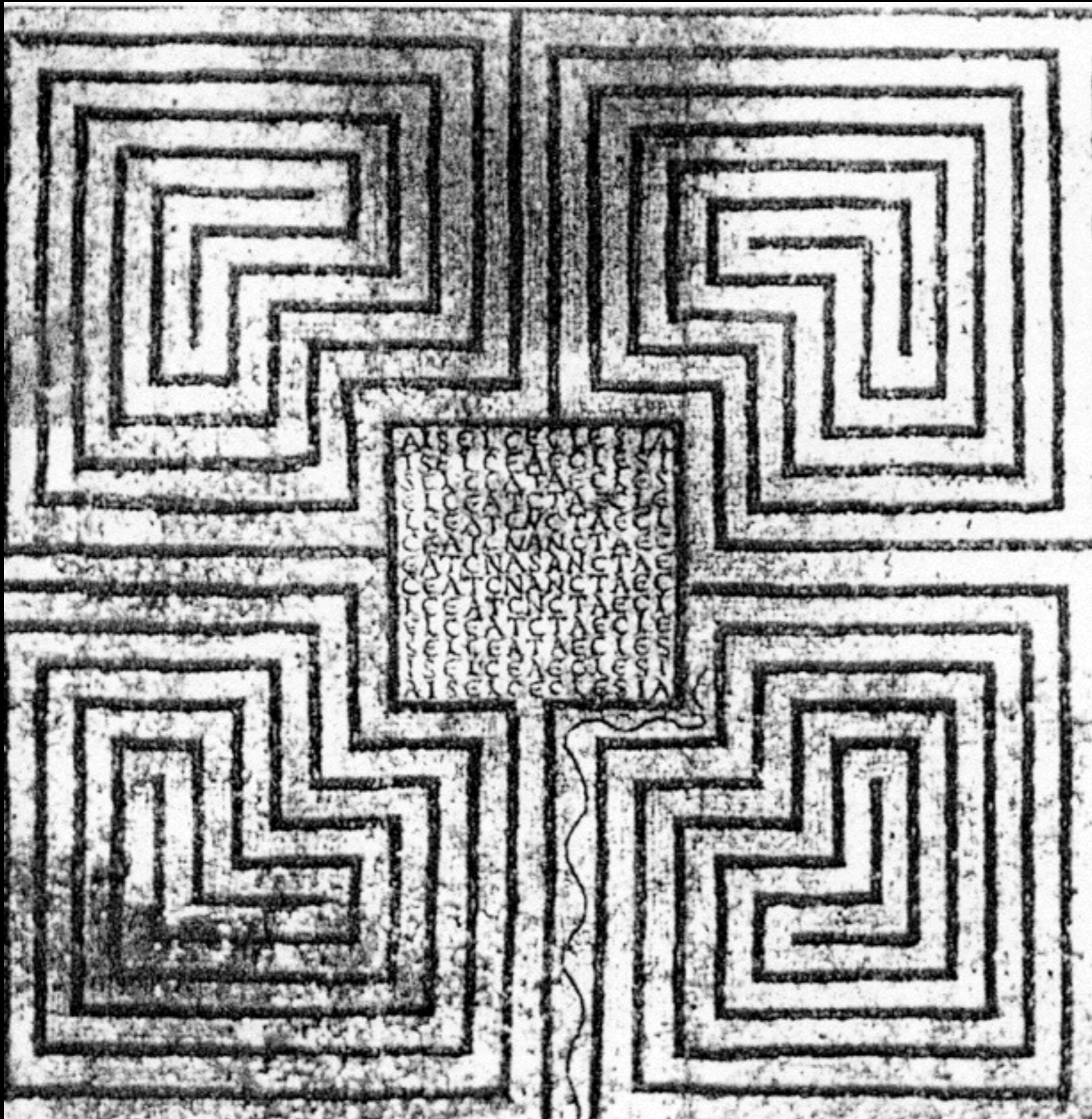
Historical labyrinths exist all over the world.
The oldest is approximately 4,000 years old.
It is found in Goa, India.



Goa, India 2,000-2500 BCE
Pansaimol Labyrinth

©Jeff Seward see [Labyrinths and Mazes](#) & www.labyrinthos.net

Christians began using labyrinths as early as 324 A.D.



From a church in Orléansville, Algeria (Africa)

Today they are used for ministry in churches, retreat centers, schools, hospitals, and even prisons.



Episcopal Church Albert Lea, Minnesota (USA)

**There are 4,320 labyrinths
in over 77 countries that are currently listed on the
world-wide labyrinth locator at www.labyrinthlocator.org.
The labyrinth from the chapel at MIT in Yangon is there too!**

Myanmar Institute of Theology

ID#4993

Church or Place of Worship; School or Educational Centre | By appointment | Indoor | Permanent

Address: Seminary Hill, Insein
Yangon 11011
Myanmar
[view map](#)

Directions/notes: Located on the seminary campus in Insein Township, about 20 minute taxi ride from downtown

Contact: Dr. Maung Maung Yin Peace Studies Center
Phone: 95-1-6431115/640168
Email: m.i.theology@mptmail.net.mm

Web: <http://mitheo.com/index.html>

Private owners: The labyrinth is located in the Faith, Hope and Love Chapel on the 5th floor of the Global Education Building.

Admission: Donation welcome

Type: Medieval
Chartres replica

Material: Terrazzo

Designer: Jill and Tim Geoffrion

Builder: Jade Construction


Size: 36 feet

Date installed: March 2012



Chapel Labyrinth, Global
Education Building

A Christian Biblical and Theological Understanding of Labyrinth Prayer

A painting depicting a man in a blue robe walking through a dark, textured landscape. The man is walking towards a bright, golden light on the right side of the image. The background is dark and textured, with some lighter areas. The overall mood is one of journey and hope.

“Follow me...”
“I am the way...”

Symbols help us to grasp
and remember what is
most important.

This is true of the
symbol of the labyrinth.



Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, California (USA)

The
underlying
structure
of a
labyrinth
is a cross.





In the Bible God's People Are Often On Journeys

Abraham as a pilgrim: Genesis 12

Theme of exile as pilgrimage: Exodus

The shepherds visit Jesus: Luke 2:8-20

The wise men travel to meet Jesus: Matthew 2:1-12

The flight of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph to Egypt : Matthew 2:13-15

Jesus "on the way" with his disciples--to the villages of Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8:27), to Capernaum (Mark 9:33), Jerusalem (Luke 17:11, Matthew 20:16), etc.

Jesus walking with the disciples on the Road to Emmaus Luke 24:13-53

Christians as exiles and strangers (pilgrims KJV) 1 Peter 2:11-12

A photograph of a stone labyrinth in a rural setting. The labyrinth is constructed from grey stones on a dirt path, featuring a central square and several concentric, irregular paths. Three people are walking on the labyrinth: a man in a striped shirt and jeans on the left, a woman in a white jacket and black skirt in the center, and a woman in a grey top and blue jeans on the right. The background shows a line of trees, including palm trees, and a fence. The sky is overcast.

Jesus said, "I am the way,
the life and the truth."

John 14:6

"Jesus' claim can be understood in terms of the metaphor of labyrinths--
a single pathway, leading one to God, The Center of All."

Geoffrion, *Christian Prayer and Labyrinths*.

“Christian life is an on-going response to Jesus’ authoritative call, “Follow me.”

The following of Christ is often imaged as a journey.

David Liedl, Labyrinth retreat leader





**“Follow Me.”
Jesus**

**Matt. 4:19, 8:22, 9:9, 10:38
16:24, 19:21; Mark 1:17, 2:14,
8:34, 10:21; Luke 5:27, 9:23
9:59, 14:27, 18:22; John 1:43, 10:27,
12:26, 13:36, 21:19, 21:22**

We come to the labyrinth as Christians.
Christ walks with us as we move on the labyrinth.



Church Garden Labyrinth, 7 circuit "heart of Chartres", Baltimore, Maryland, USA

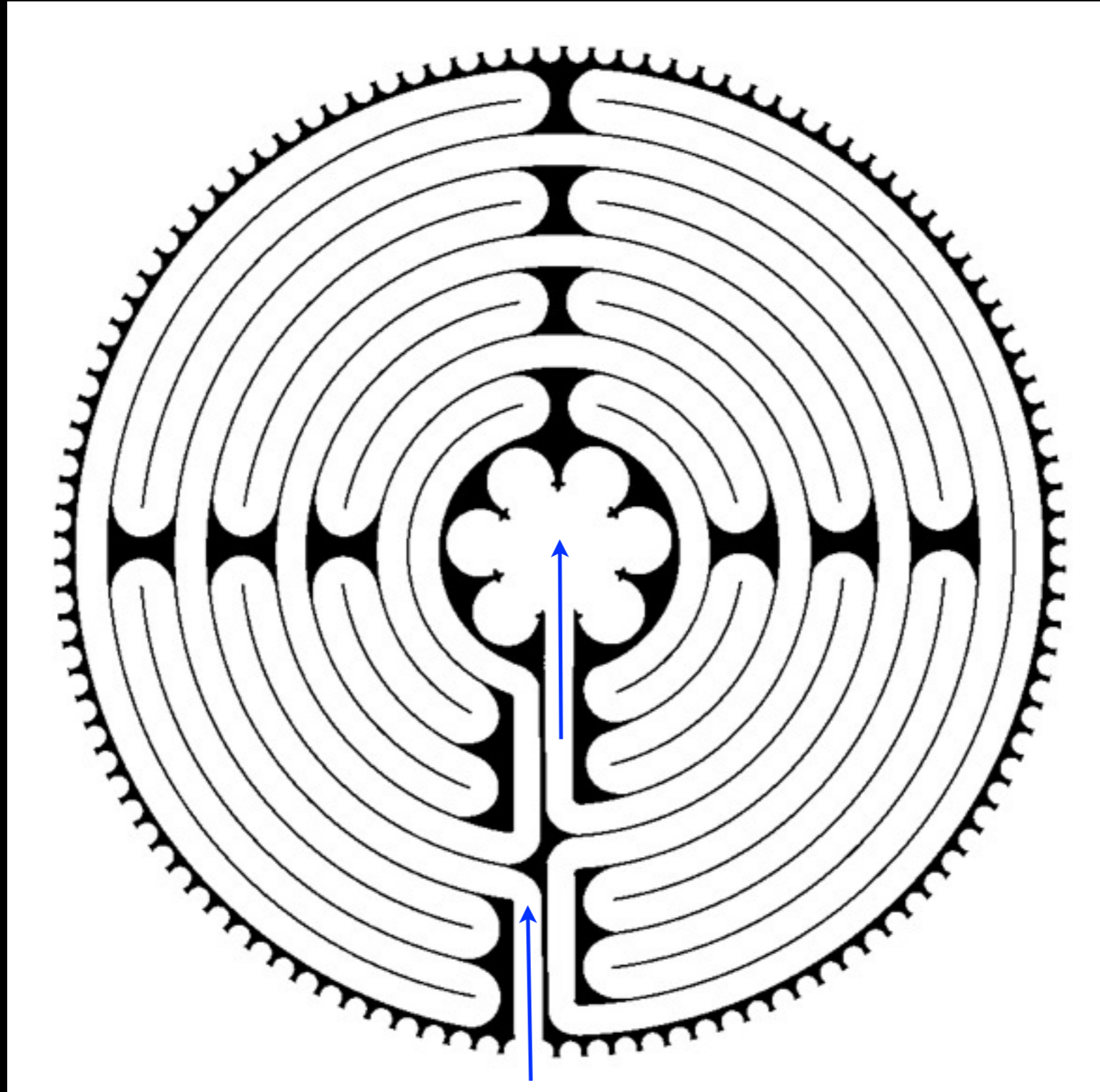
Before entering: Prepare yourself for your walk.

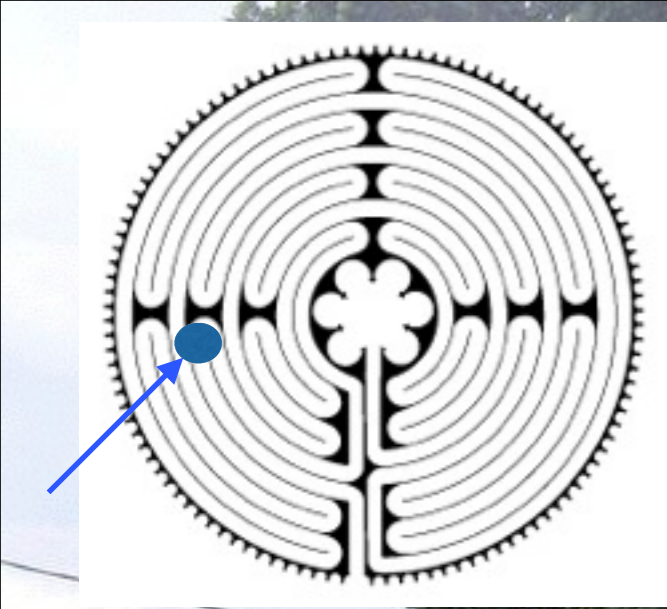


Ask God, “What do you want me to hear, see, and feel while I am here in Myanmar?”



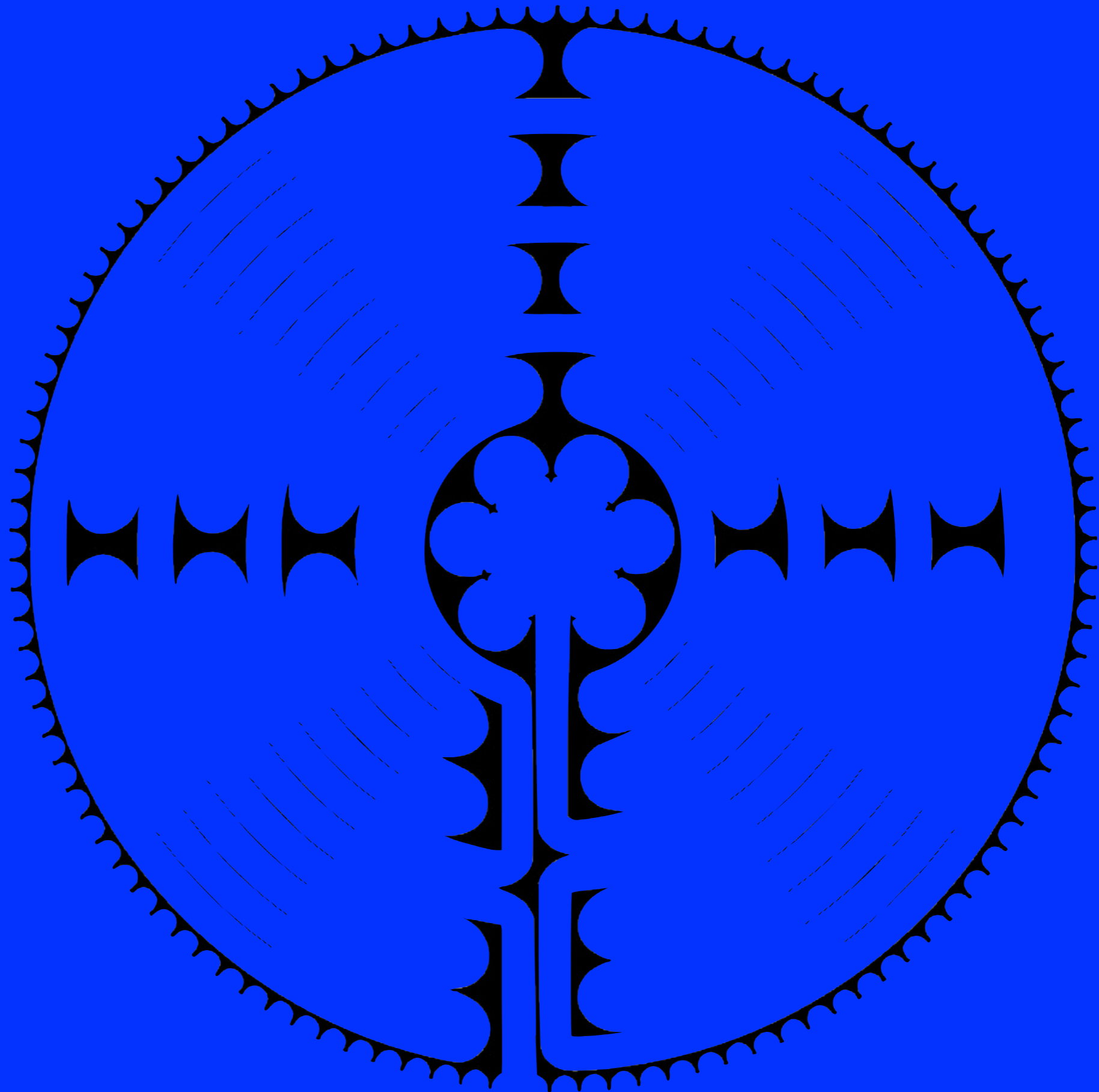
You enter the labyrinth through its “gate” or “door.”
Then, you follow its pathway to the center while you pray.





When starting to walk in a group,
wait until the person in front of you goes around the first turn.
This gives her/him time and space to find an initial rhythm
that feels comfortable.
Then, it's your turn to cross the threshold.

You are
being led to
the center.
You can
trust the
path
(God).



When walking the labyrinth you can move around another person, or let someone “pass” you.



**When you get to the
center:**

Rest with God.

Listen.

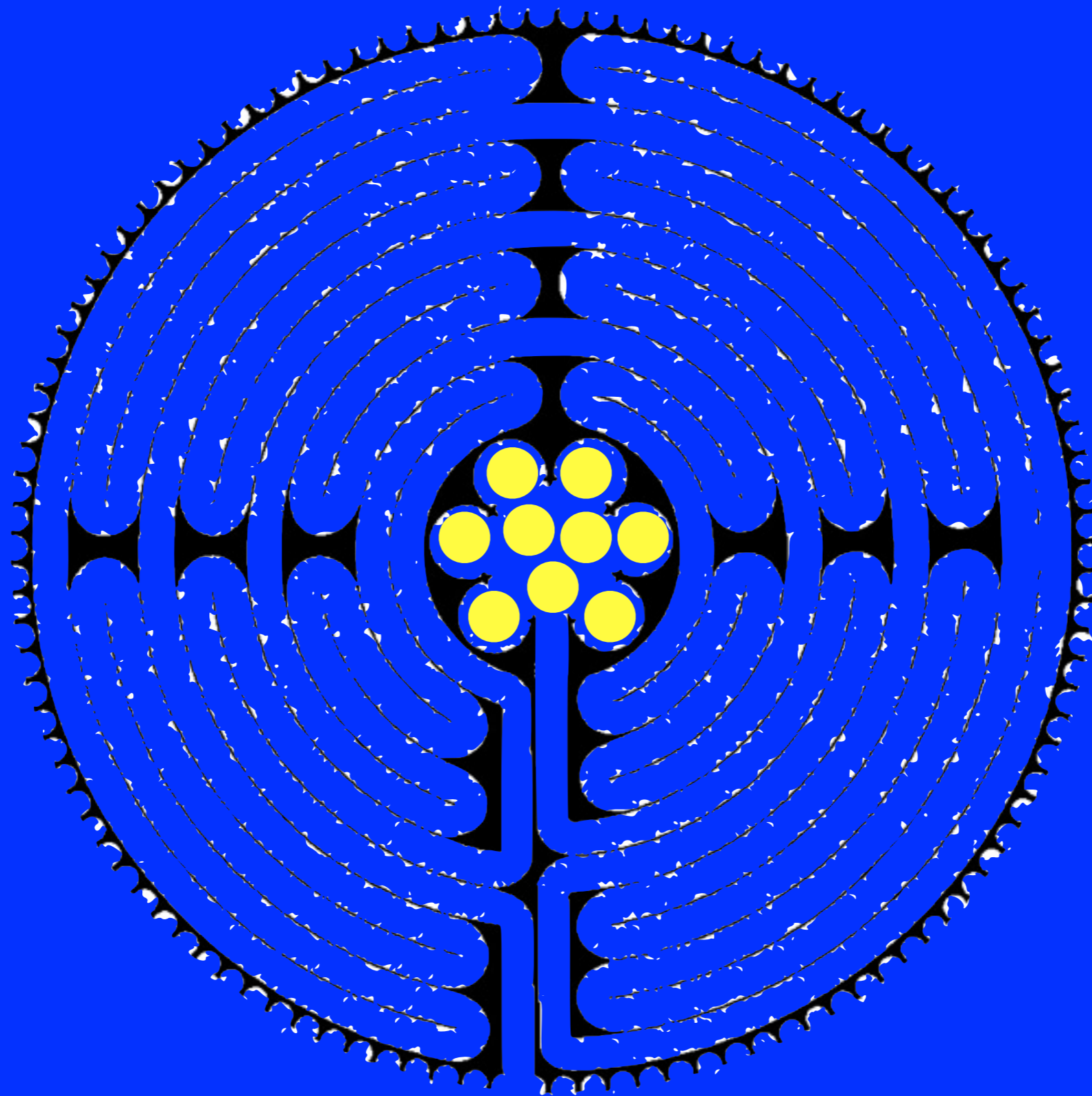
Receive.

Offer thanks.

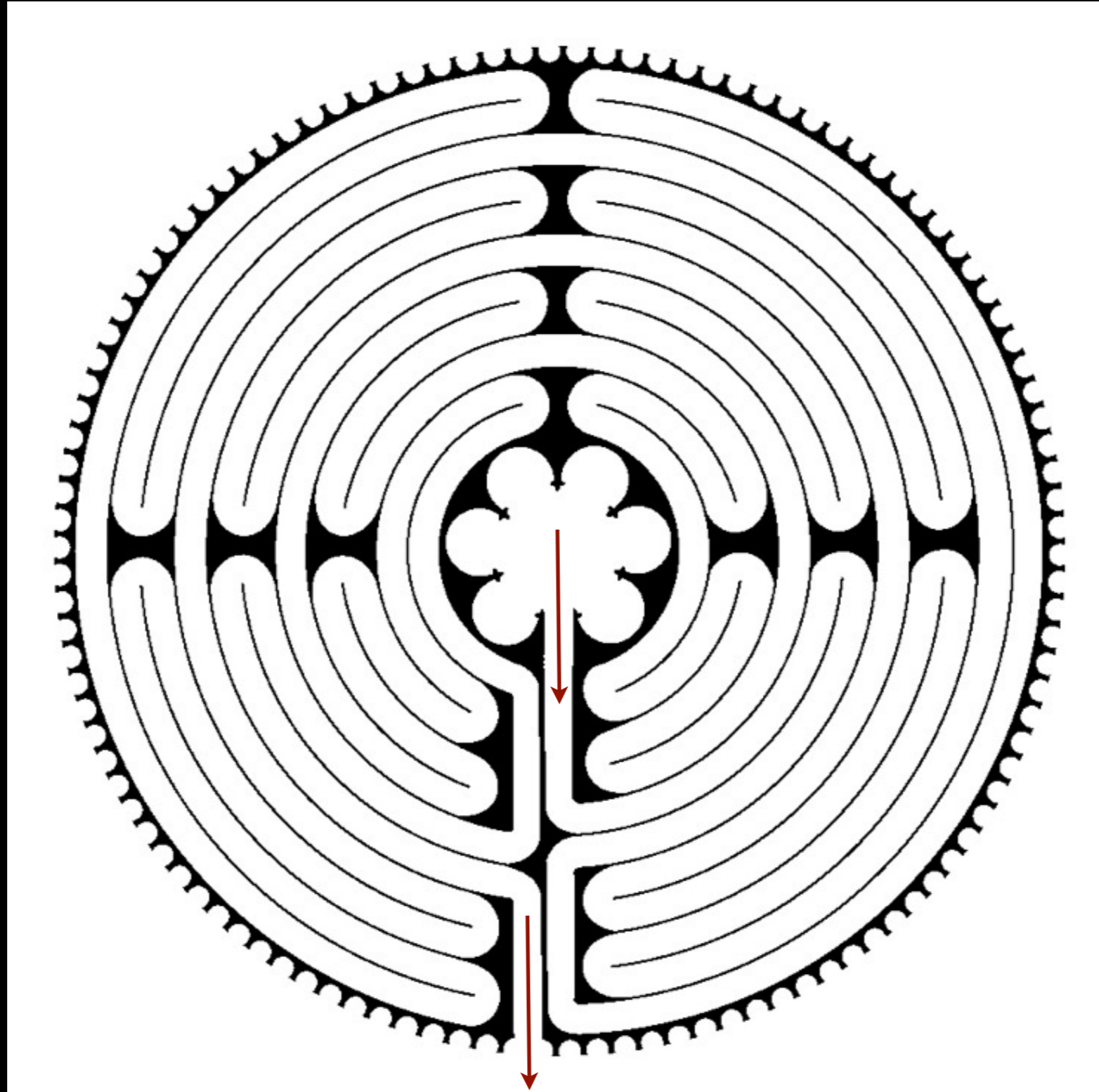
Stay in the center
as long as you would like.



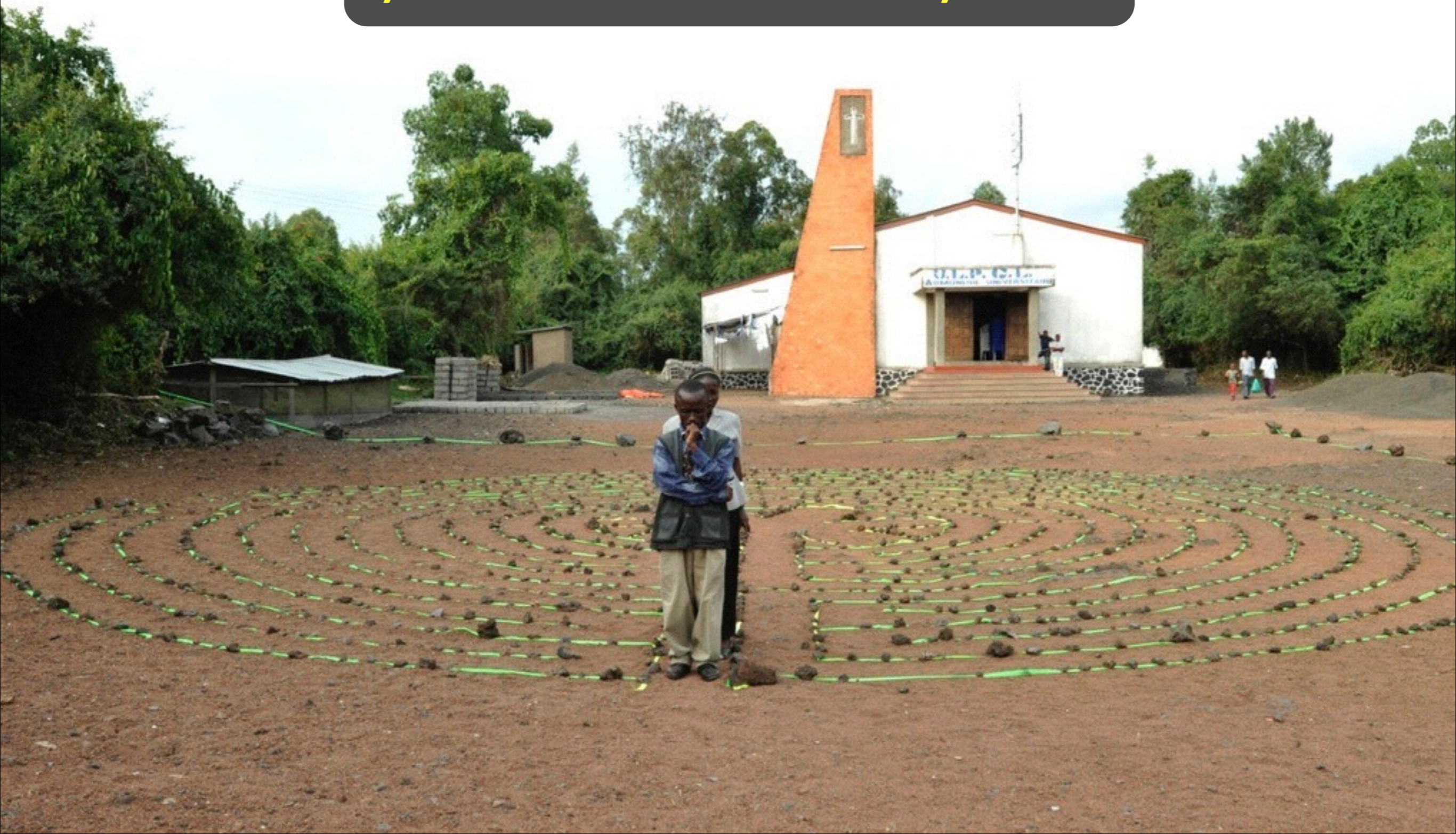
There is room in the center for many people.



The same path is used as you continue your prayer
when returning to the single opening in the perimeter.



Prepare yourself to leave.
Stop and thank God before
you walk out of the labyrinth.

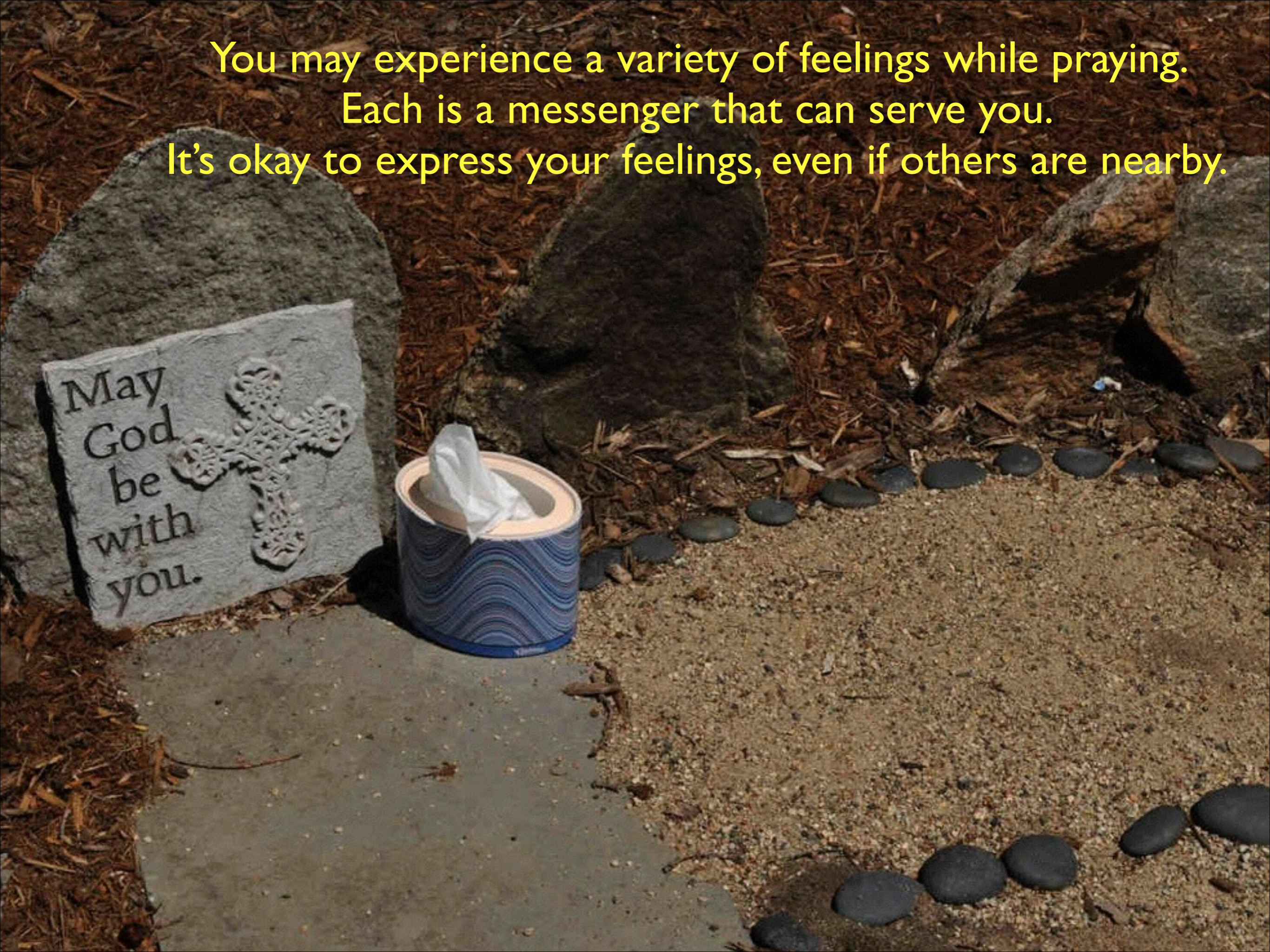




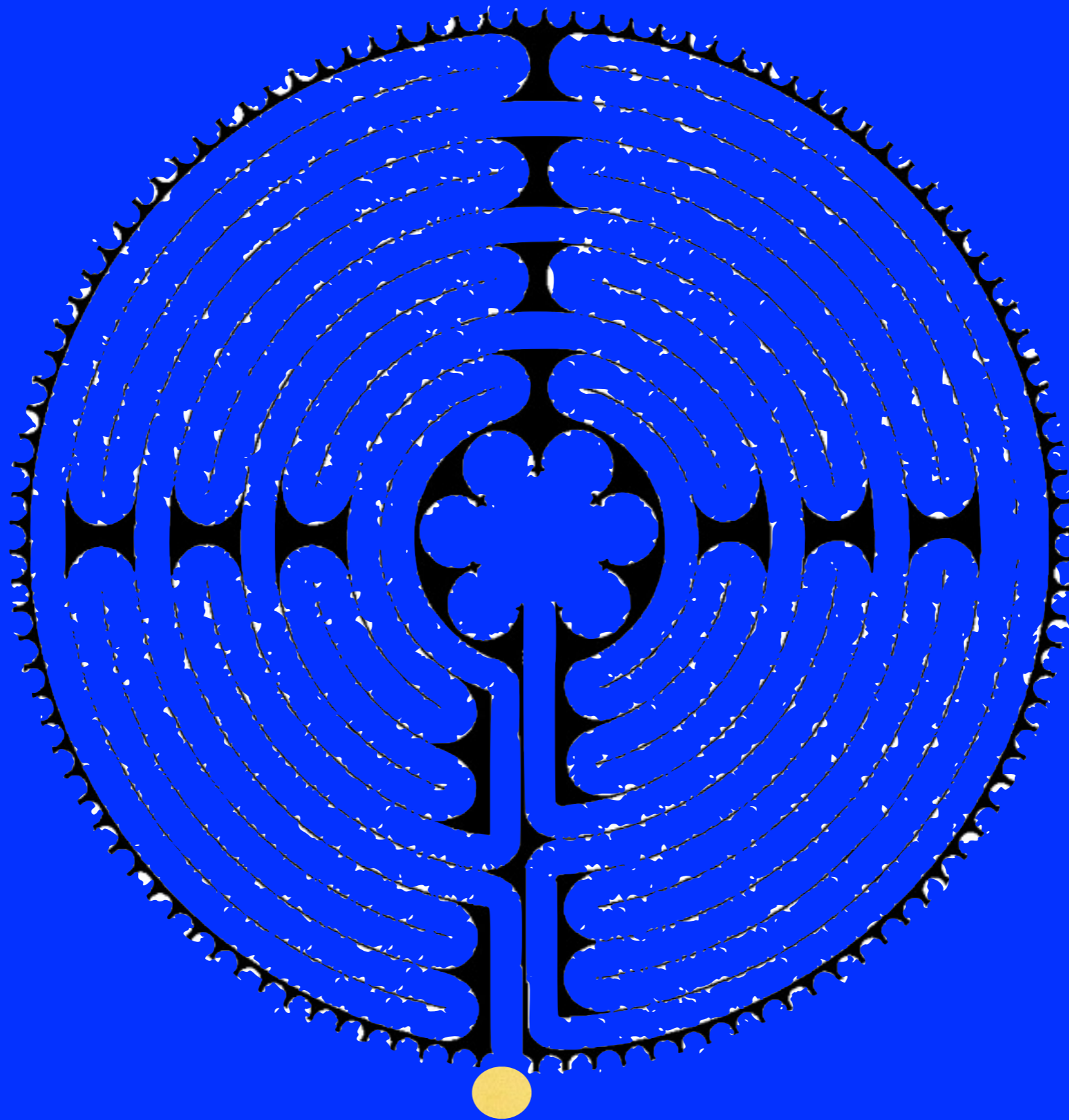
You can get turned around, but it's not a problem.

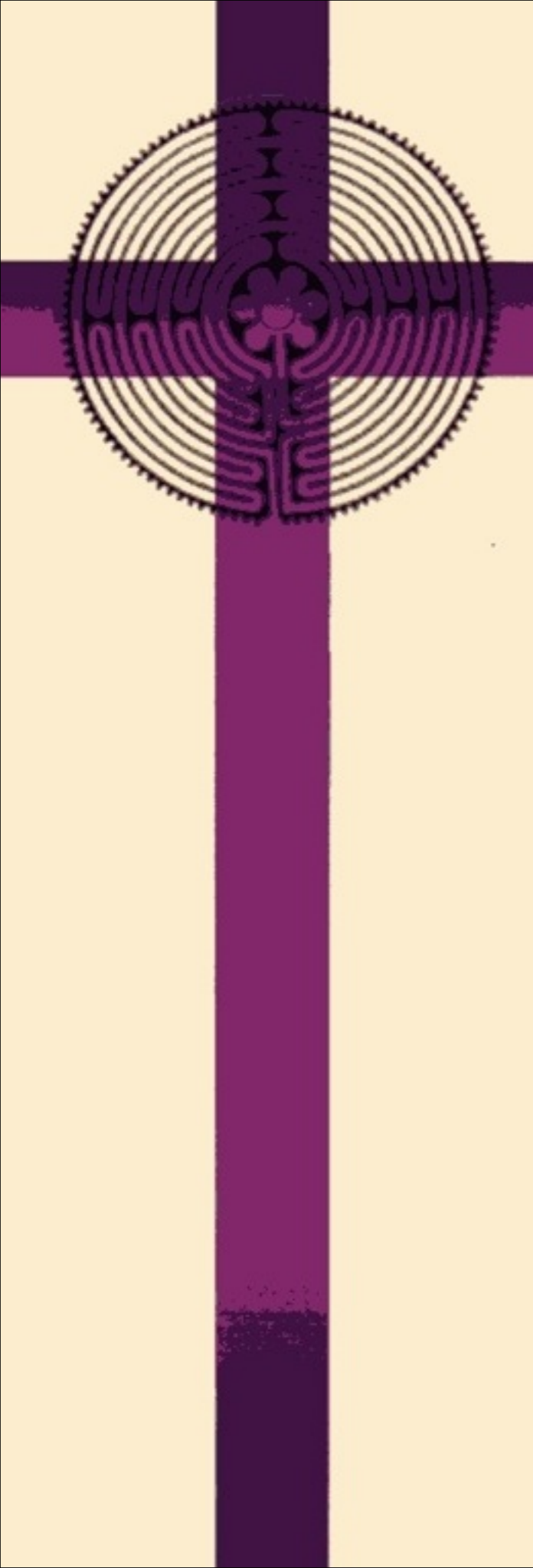
You will end up either in the center or at the gate.

You may experience a variety of feelings while praying.
Each is a messenger that can serve you.
It's okay to express your feelings, even if others are nearby.



**Revisting Your Prayer Experience:
make time for personal reflection.**





Suggested Labyrinth Experience:
“Speak Lord, Your servant is listening.”

What do you want to say to me?

What do you want me to see?

What do you want me to feel?

...

God may give you an image,
a word,
a song,
a Scripture,
a desire...

Now the LORD came... calling, “Samuel! Samuel!”
And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

1 Samuel 3:10









































































Experiencing Labyrinth Prayer

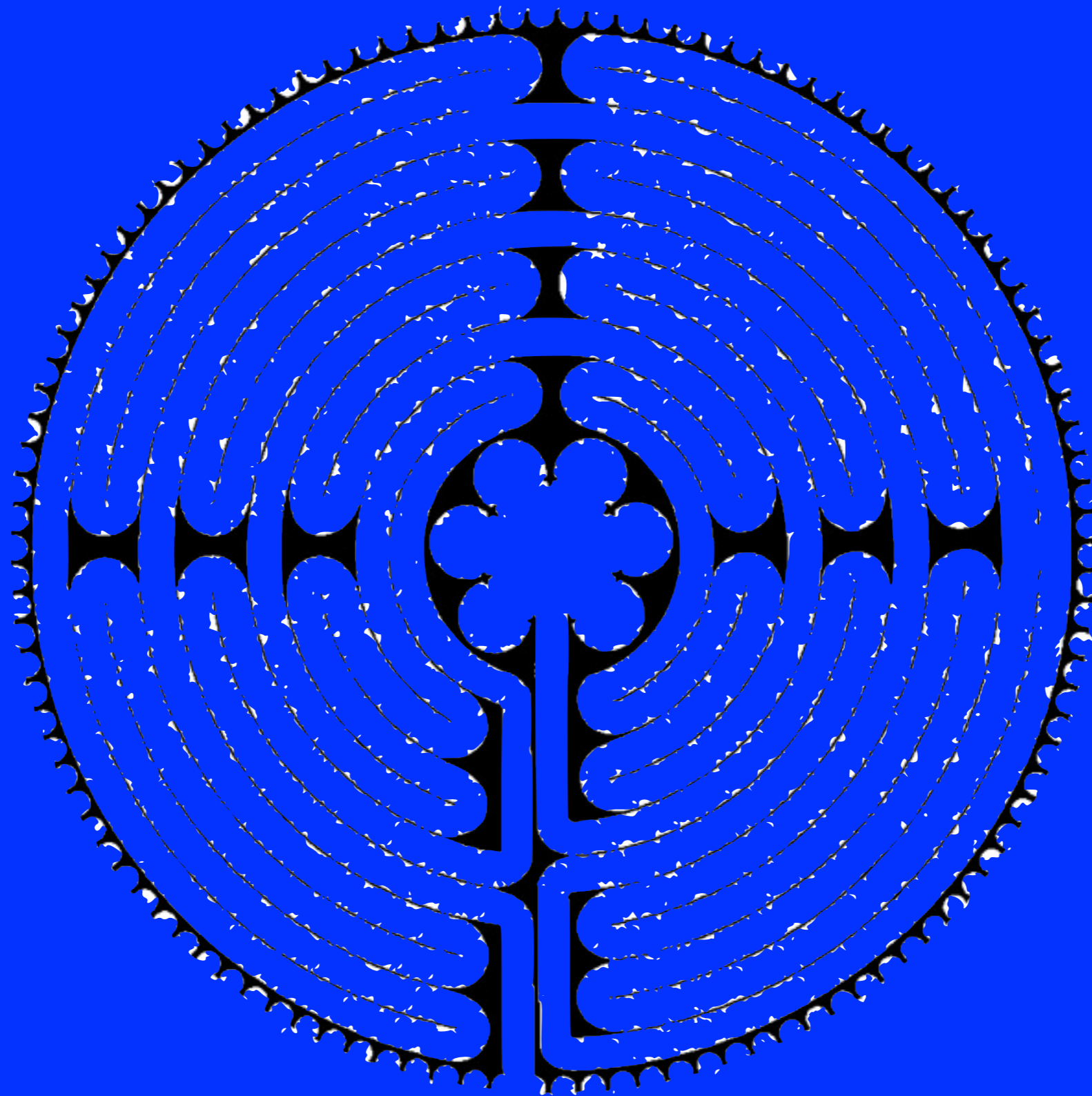
“Speak God, Your servant is listening.”

Right now
I am feeling...

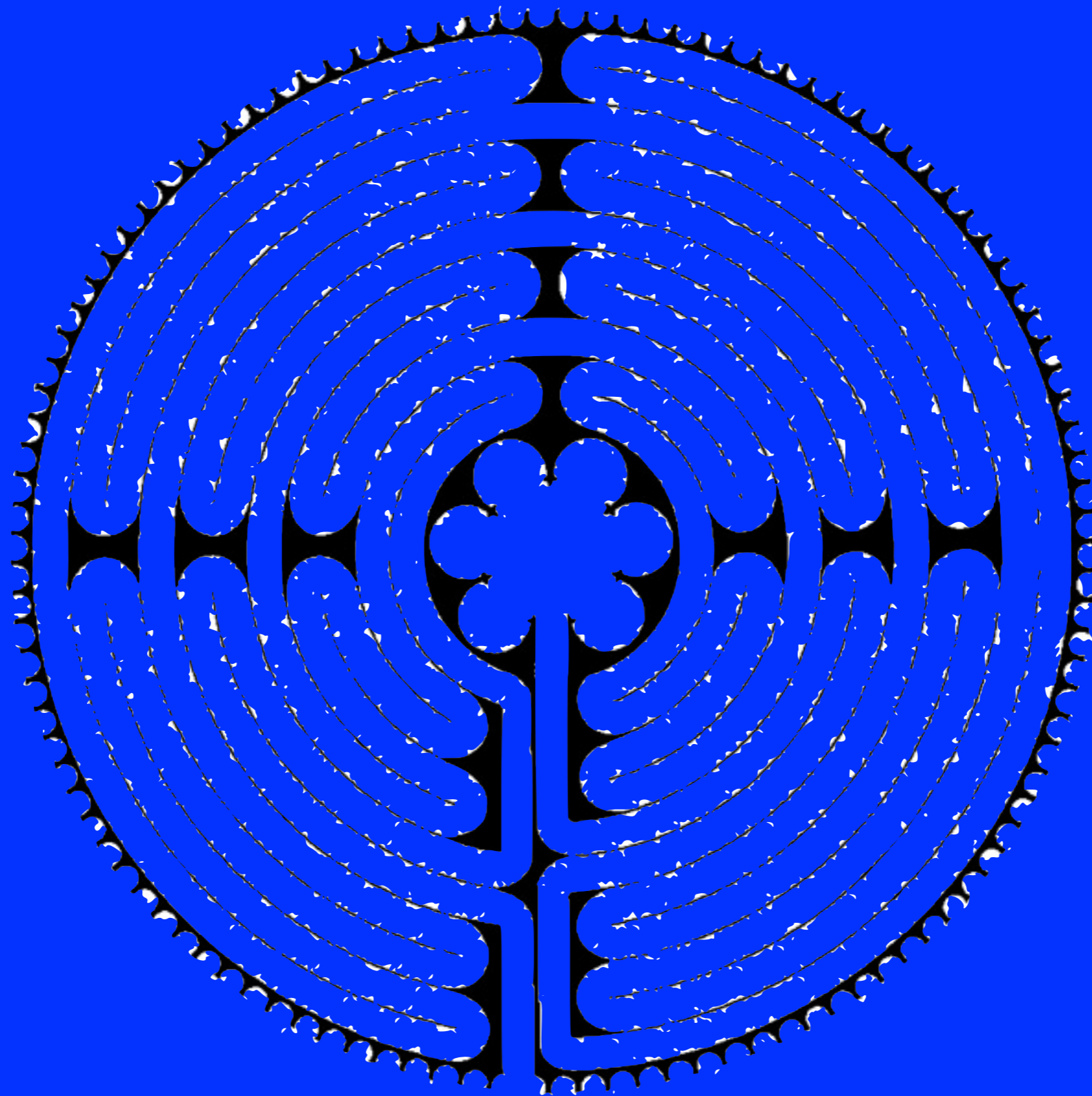


 Aggressive	 Agonized	 Anxious	 Apologetic	 Arrogant	 Bashful	 Blissful
 Bored	 Cautious	 Cold	 Concentrating	 Confident	 Curious	 Demure
 Determined	 Dissappointed	 Dissaproving	 Disbelieving	 Disgusted	 Distasteful	 Eavesdropping
 Ecstatic	 Enraged	 Envious	 Exasperated	 Exhausted	 Frightened	 Frustrated
 Grieving	 Guilty	 Happy	 Horried	 Hot	 Hungover	 Hurt
 Hysterical	 Indifferent	 Idiotic	 Innocent	 Interested	 Jealous	 Joyful
 Loaded	 Lonely	 Lovestruck	 Meditative	 Mischievous	 Miserable	 Negative
 Obstinate	 Optimistic	 Pained	 Paranoid	 Perplexed	 Prudish	 Puzzled
 Regretful	 Relieved	 Sad	 Satisfied	 Shocked	 Sheepish	 Smug
 Surly	 Surprised	 Suspicious	 Sympathetic	 Thoughtful	 Undecided	 Withdrawn

I experienced...



What do I want to remember about this experience?



A top-down view of a cobblestone path. The path is composed of irregular, greyish-brown stones. In the center, there is a circular pattern of stones, possibly a well or a decorative feature. The text is overlaid on the path.

What is the prayer of my mind and heart right now?
Let's pray together.

Ministry website www.fhlglobal.org

Labyrinth resources by jill www.jillgeoffrion.com

Journey blog by jill jillgeoffrion.wordpress.com

Articles by Tim: www.spiritledleader.wordpress.com



Jill's email: jill.geoffrion@fhlglobal.org