

Using Labyrinths: An Introduction and Labyrinth Prayer Experience



Prayer and Pastoral Care

Prepared and presented by ©The Rev. Jill K H Geoffrion, Ph.D.

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How many people have no prior exposure to labyrinths?
How many have walked a labyrinth 1-5 times?
How many are regular labyrinth users?



Labyrinth Retreat. Colonial Church of Edina, MN.

The Chartres Cathedral Context, One Hour Outside of Paris



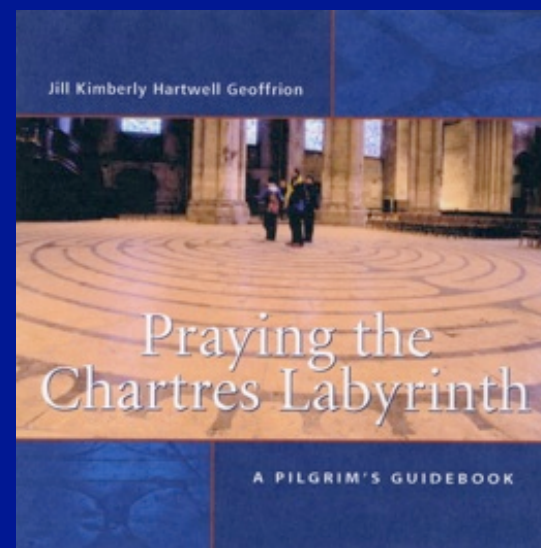
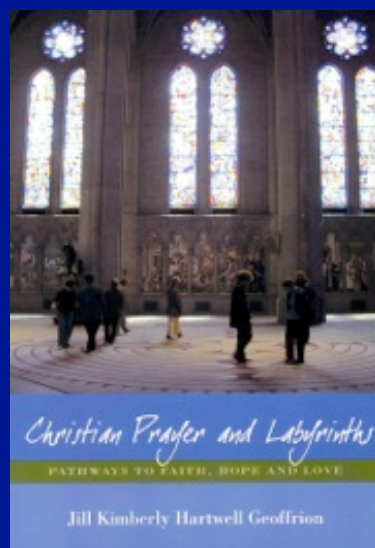
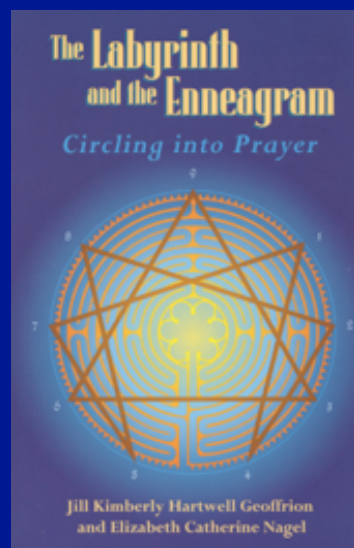
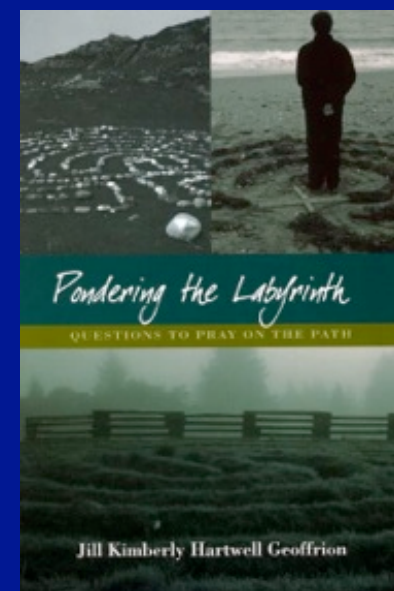
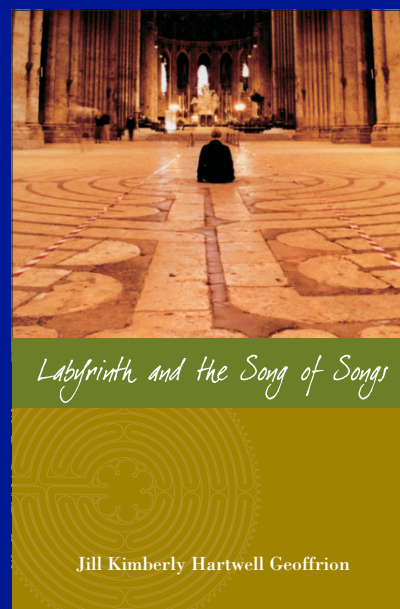
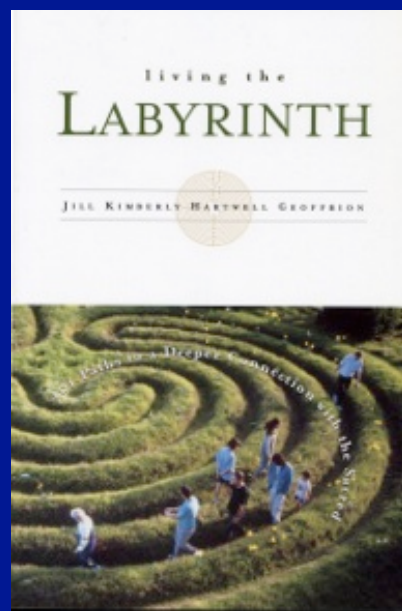
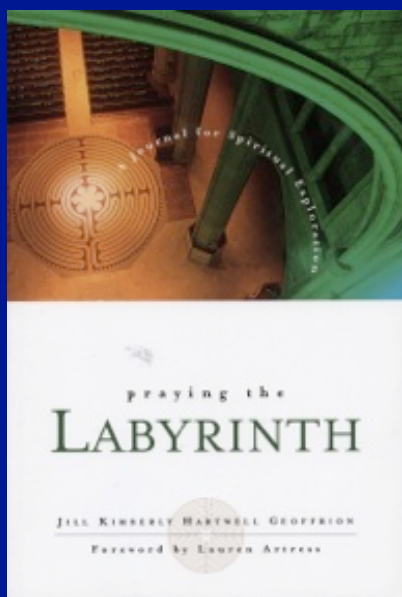
The nave looking west, woman praying in a stained glass window, Bridan sculpture of Mary

The Labyrinth in Chartres Cathedral



The labyrinth that was installed in 1201 still extends from one side of the nave to the other.

“May my teaching fall like rain, and my words, distill as the dew,
like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.” Deuteronomy 32:2



Books by Jill on labyrinth prayer

Faith, Hope and Love Global Ministries

exists to creativity inspire, teach, and encourage leaders, ministers, and other motivated individuals to live fully, grow spiritually, and serve Christ more effectively.



- ❖ Teaching short-term courses, workshops and seminars
- ❖ Coaching of individuals and groups
- ❖ Providing labyrinth prayer experiences and other creative opportunities for spiritual renewal and connections to God.
- ❖ Offering written and web resources
- ❖ Awarding educational and other special grants to qualified individuals and partnering organizations.



Installing labyrinths & doing labyrinth programming on four continents



Goma, DR Congo; Atlanta, Georgia (USA)

Chartres, France; Yangon, Myanmar

Labyrinth Prayer Yangon, Myanmar



Labyrinth Prayers for Peace Event put on in February by the Peace Studies Center, Yangon

Healing (wholeness) potential of labyrinth prayer





FLEXIBLE DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30-8:30 am	Breakfast, in silence
8:30-9:30 am	Guided Contemplative Prayer in the Cathedral
9:30-10:00 am	Break
10:00-noon	Sunday (5-7:30pm): Grounding Monday: Seeking God Tuesday: Knowing God as Father (Divine Parent) Wednesday: Following Jesus, the Son Thursday: Living by the Holy Spirit Friday: Pursuing Our Calling Saturday: Preparing to Move Onward Sunday: Taking Next Steps
Noon-3:00 pm	Lunch & Personal Time
3:00-4:30 pm	Experiencing the Cathedral: On-site Exploration & Prayer Experiencing the Depths: Crypt Tour with Malcolm Miller Experiencing the Windows Experiencing the Heights Experiencing a Mini-pilgrimage Experiencing the Labyrinth Experiencing a Silent Prayer Retreat
4:30-6:00 pm	Personal Time
6:00-6:30 pm	Guided Contemplative Prayer at the Cathedral (optional)
6:30-7:00 pm	Daily Debriefing & Group Sharing
7:00-7:30 pm	Cathedral Vespers (Sung in French)
7:30pm	Dinner (on own) & Personal Time
9:00-9:30 pm	Eventide Connections with God
9:30pm-8:30am	The Great Silence



Registration is limited to 25 retreatants.

Program cost: \$1895.00 includes accommodations, two meals each day, numerous guided cathedral visits, a half-day walking pilgrimage, and a private group labyrinth experience. Travel to and from Chartres is not included. Deposit of \$500 is non-refundable. Full payment is due by August 1, 2009.

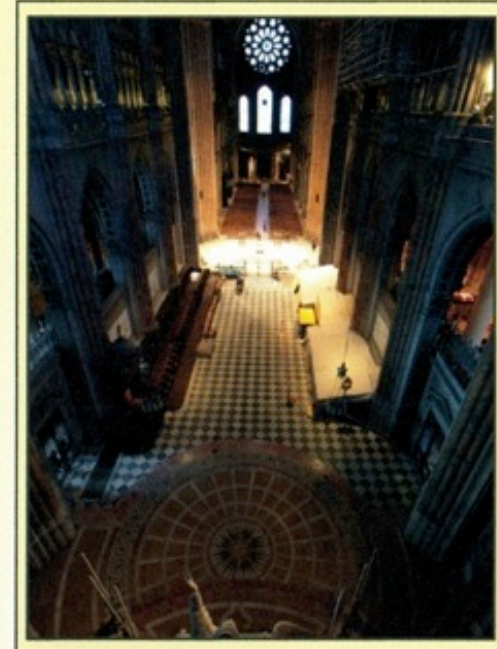
We will be staying in a monastic retreat center. Singles and double rooms with bathrooms are available on a first come, first served basis. Several rooms for couples are available. Room assignments will be made when full payment is received.

To register use the enclosed form and mail to:

FAITH, HOPE & LOVE GLOBAL MINISTRIES
1660 HWY. 100 SOUTH, SUITE 426
ST. LOUIS PARK, MN 55416
952-334-3340
INFO@FHLGLOBAL.ORG

MOVING INWARD: MOVING ONWARD CONTEMPLATIVE PILGRIMAGE

CHARTRES CATHEDRAL



✿ OCTOBER 18-25, 2009 ✿

Deepen your relationship with God.
Better envision your calling in life.





Following in the footsteps of centuries of pilgrims, we will spend significant time each day in the Chartres Cathedral praying and seeking God.

"I was glad when they said to me,
'Let us go the house of the Lord.'"
Psalm 122:1



Are you eager for spiritual transformation? Do you long to serve Christ more effectively?

RETREAT HIGHLIGHTS

Group sessions will incorporate ritual, visual presentations, song, teaching, interaction, and prayer. Special pilgrimage experiences will include: praying on the labyrinth after hours; a worship service in the ancient crypt chapel; an exclusive tour of the exterior roof-level walkways; guided contemplation of the world-class, medieval stained glass windows and sculptures; an optional six mile mini-pilgrimage to the church from the original area where the stones for the cathedral were quarried; and a half-day silent retreat.

This week-long experience is designed to support Christians who value holistic spiritual growth, are open to contemplative prayer, and want to serve God better.



RETREAT LEADERS

The Rev. Jill Kimberly Hartwell Geoffrion, Ph.D., a frequent pilgrim to the Chartres Cathedral, has published seven books on labyrinth prayer, two of which focus on praying with the labyrinth in the Chartres Cathedral.

Jill's leadership style is enthusiastic, visual, devotional, and inviting. She loves guiding pilgrims to enter as deeply as possible into the beauty and love of God as it can be experienced in Chartres.

The Rev. Timothy C. Geoffrion, Ph.D., has taught extensively on the New Testament and Christian spirituality in colleges and seminaries. His two most recent books, *The Spirit-Lead Leader* (2005) and *One Step at a Time: A Pilgrim's*

Guide to Spirit-Lead Living (2008), express the heart of his teaching and spiritual life coaching work throughout the world.

Tim's engaging teaching style blends thought-provoking questions, relevant input, group interaction, and guidance for personal reflection. He loves teaching and helping others grow in every dimension of their life.



A labyrinth is a pathway that turns back on itself,
(changes direction) before reaching a center.
The origin of the word "labyrinth" is unclear.



Millenium Park Slate & Grass Labyrinth, Plymouth, Minnesota, USA

Labyrinths are designed to lead you (circuitously) to a center.
Mazes are designed to challenge you with the unsure hope
of arriving at a center. They have different purposes!



Entrance to "Labyrinth" (Maze) in Turubari, Costa Rica
English hedge Maze. Photo ©Jeff Seward



Prayer: connection with God. Labyrinth prayer: moving connection with God.
The labyrinth is a spiritual tool used to facilitate meaningful sacred connections.



Hospital labyrinth Atlanta, Georgia (USA)

People pray on the labyrinth in all the ways they usually pray.
The “right way” to pray a labyrinth
is the way that would be most meaningful for you.



Open to God's
leading

Giving Thanks
...for what God has done...
...is doing...
...will do...

Reciting Scripture

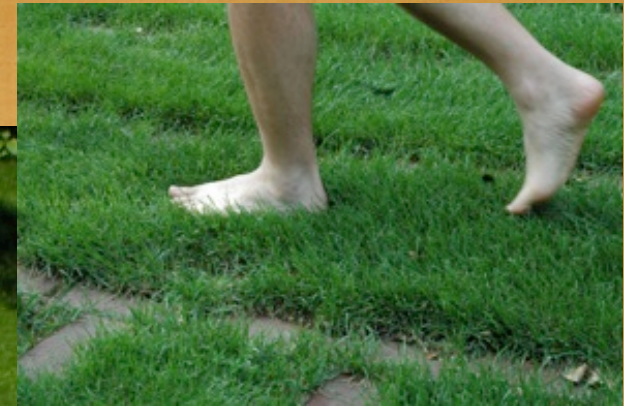
Singing

Praying a Question

In: Praying for others
Center: Resting
Out: Praying for self

University students praying an outdoor labyrinth (USA)

Many people enjoy praying with their whole bodies,
not just their minds. Labyrinths invite this.



...do you not
know that your
body
is a temple
of the
Holy Spirit within
you?

1 Cor. 6:19

Do not move the
way fear makes
you move. Rumi

Labyrinth of Life, Lakeshore stones on mulch, DeepHaven Retreats, Minnesota (USA)

Labyrinth experiences can be understood as “mini-pilgrimages”,
outer journeys with inner, spiritual purposes.
Like on pilgrimage, the way may seem very long.



Lake stones on mulch labyrinth, Minnesota (USA)

Many people report feeling calm and peaceful during and after praying a labyrinth.



“I was released from my stress bondage.”

Due to the physical design that includes multiple switchback turns, the hemispheres of the brain naturally become more balanced as one walks a labyrinth.

“All I experienced was peace.”

Grass labyrinth mown in a field. Camp Courage, Minnesota (USA)

A world-wide labyrinth movement is growing.
Labyrinths provide a “new” (and ancient) way to pray.



Church sign Baltimore, Maryland (USA)



Sign by labyrinth, Trembly Park Geneva, Switzerland

“There have been seven periods of labyrinth ‘flowering’. All occurred during times of rapid change. They usually last about 100 years.”

Jeff Saward, British historian, editor of Labyrinthos, a journal focusing on labyrinths, www.labyrinthos.net.



Riverside Church New York City (USA)

Labyrinth Prayer as Spiritual Practice

The more you “practice”, the more natural and useful it becomes.



Charism Labyrinth: Modern design created for use related to racial reconciliation

Christian Use of Labyrinths



Members of the Chemin Neuf Community Praying together on the labyrinth in Chartres Cathedral, France

Journeying with God, the path, following God's way, enjoying God's presence...
There are many biblical concepts that relate to praying the labyrinth.

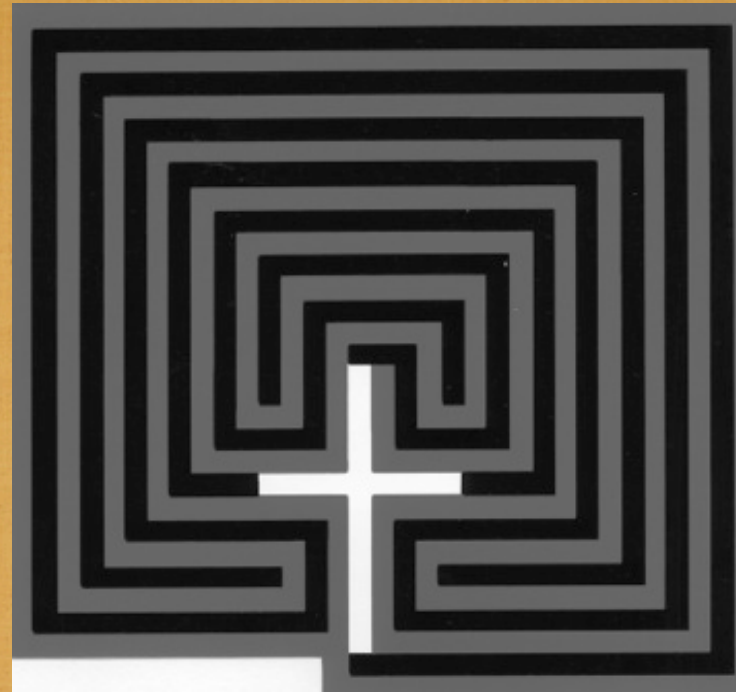


Glenridge Residence Concrete and brick labyrinth, Atlanta Georgia (USA)

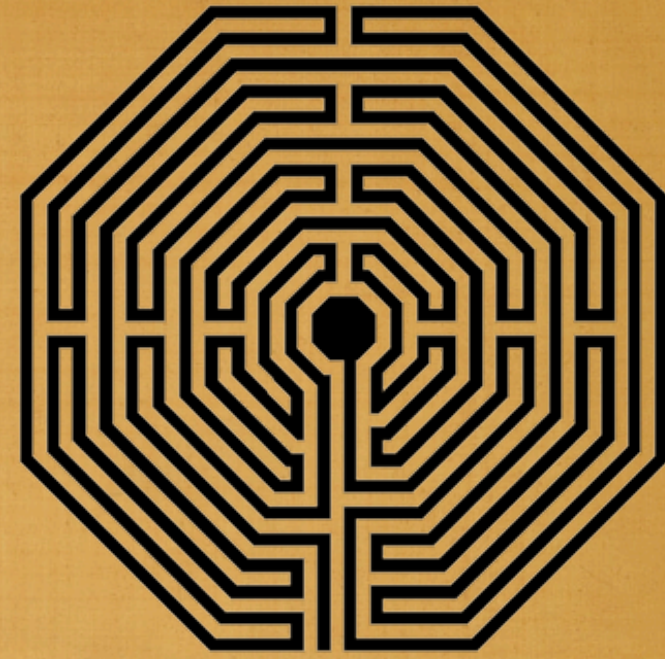
Look for a cross in the center of most labyrinths.



Cross Labyrinth,
©Maia Scott



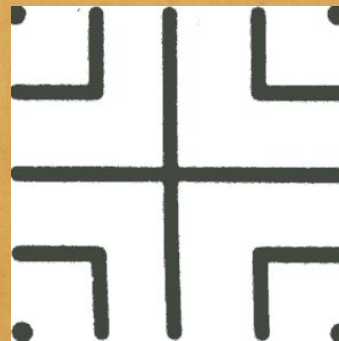
Hansen Art labyrinths, 7 circuit classical
squared, with highlighted crosses.



St. Quentin, France labyrinth,
Prepared by Cindy Pavlinak



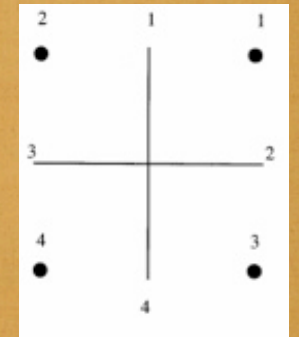
Chartres Labyrinth



7 circuit seed pattern



3 circuit labyrinth



3 circuit seed pattern

“May I never boast of anything but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” Galatians 6:14

Some describe labyrinth prayer as “the laying on of feet”



Outdoor Terrazo Stone Labyrinth Grace Cathedral, California (USA)

The Benefits of Labyrinth Prayer



Labyrinth of Life DeepHaven Labyrinths & Retreats, MN (USA)

Benefit #1: People encounter God in an intentional and extended way.
“As I was moving I began praising God and I had time to stay with my prayer...”



Lai Baptist Women's Prayer Group Yangon, Myanmar

Benefit #2: People report a transformation in their thinking and feeling.
Example: “When I started I was sad. While I was walking I began to feel joy.”



San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, California (USA)

Benefit #3: Unarticulated hopes, dreams, values, concerns, priorities, memories, perspectives, and insights surface.
“For the first time I felt that things in our country could change...”



Franciscan Retreat Center, Phoenix, Arizona (USA)

Benefit #4: People realize scriptural truth at a deeper level.
“It was as if Jesus was with me saying, ‘I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life’.”



Pastors' Leadership Seminar Goma, Congo

Benefit #5: The labyrinth provides a special place to be with God.
“I need a quiet place to go and pray. The labyrinth is my prayer village...”



11 circuit Chartres-style labyrinth, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, California (USA)

Benefit #6: Walkers can experiment with new ways of thinking and acting.
“Every time I had a destructive thought I stopped.
When I was able to let it go, I would start again.”



Rancho de los Caballeros, Wickenburg, Arizona (USA)

Benefit #7: Understanding more about one's experience of faith.
"As I walked, God showed me how He has been working in my life."



Myanmar Institute of Theology, Yangon, Myanmar)

Walking the Labyrinth: Practical Suggestions



Labyrinth shoveled onto a frozen lake. Wayzata, Minnesota (USA)

A single path always leads to the center.
You cannot “get lost” when praying on a labyrinth, but you can get turned around.



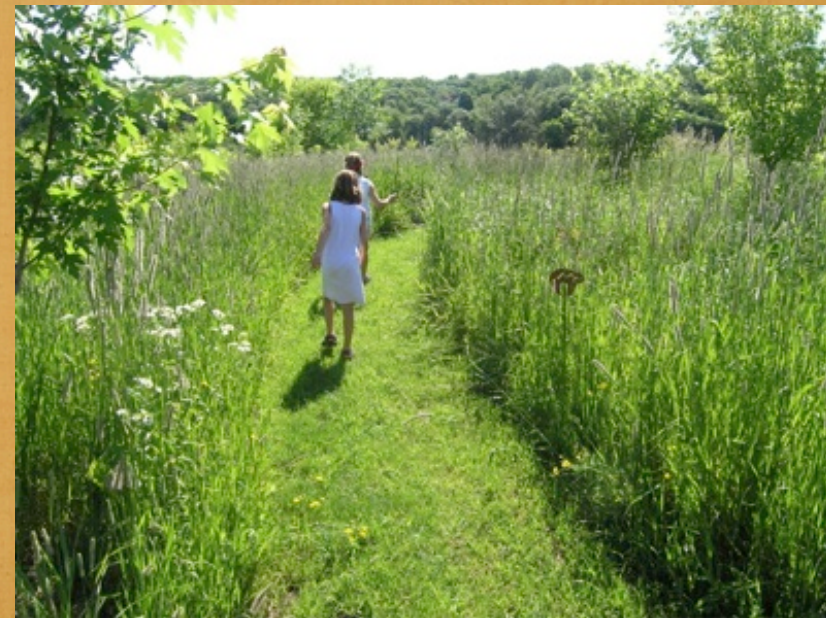
Tree of Wisdom Labyrinth, Sisters of St. Joseph Convent Building, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

When starting to walk after another,
allow a little space so that each person can find her/his own pace.



Episcopal Cathedral, Phoenix, Arizona (USA)

The speed with which you and others move on the labyrinth will vary. This is okay.



Move naturally.

Feel free to walk around people or to let them “pass” you.



HEAL Africa labyrinth Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo

If you meet someone going the opposite direction, do whatever you usually do when you meet someone on a narrow path.



7 circuit mounded earth labyrinth, Mendocino, California (USA) Photo © Cindy Pavlinak

When “watching” others praying on the labyrinth, witness what is happening with eyes of faith.



Prayer group supporting one another while walking a labyrinth, Northfield, Minnesota, USA

Walking around the perimeter of the labyrinth can be a helpful way to prepare or bring closure to a labyrinth experience.



Small-scale replica of Chartres-style labyrinth

Welcome the Unexpected!

You don't need to wonder "What kind of experience am I supposed to be having?"
Experience your experience! Greet whatever comes. Pray the distractions.



Labyrinth of Life, Deephaven Labyrinths and Retreats, MN

God can use everything that happens during your labyrinth prayer to teach, encourage, and guide you. Pray the labyrinth as if you were looking into a mirror to understand more of what God wants you to see. No matter what happens, ask yourself, “How is this like my life?”



Columbine Labyrinth, created after the school shooting as a healing space for the community (Colorado, USA)

Your prayer using a labyrinth is likely to take you places you don't expect to go.
You can always decide what is best for you. You can always leave a labyrinth.



Canvas 7 circuit Chartres-style labyrinth Princeton Theological Seminary, New Jersey (USA)

A Typical Labyrinth Experience



Colonial Church Labyrinth Retreat Edina, Minnesota (USA)

Make your way to the threshold of a labyrinth.
Before entering, prepare yourself for the journey that is ahead.



prelude...
focus...
intention...
symbolic beginning...

Led the path lead you forward. Pray in any way that flows naturally.



If you were to
trust the path
you are on,
what would you
discover?

Rest with God in the center of the labyrinth. Stay as long as you like. Enjoy!



listen deeply...
wait with God...
receive..
practice sabbath...



Be
here,
now
!!!!!!!

When you are ready, leave the center moving on the path towards the threshold (exit/entrance).



Pausing at the threshold will help you to transition intentionally.
Many find it meaningful to give thanks for the experience, whatever it has been.



It is helpful to document what has taken place so that you can continue to mine its riches. Journal, sketch, draw, or respond in another way to your labyrinth experience.



Begin by documenting what took place-- externally and internally.

Expect the meanings of your experiences to emerge over time.

What questions would be helpful to have answered before we pray using the labyrinth which has been set up in Gambrell Auditorium?



St. Edwards Episcopal Church labyrinth designed as part of the sanctuary (chairs go on the path dividers), Long Lake, Minnesota, USA

Useful Websites on Labyrinths



Christian Labyrinth Prayer

www.jillgeoffrion.com

Finding a labyrinth near you (worldwide)

www.labyrinthlocator.com

Labyrinth construction

www.labyrinth-enterprises.com

International Labyrinth Society

www.labyrinthsociety.org

Labyrinthos: Academic Journal

www.labyrinthos.net

Labyrinth Photo Gallery (Professional) www.sacred-land-photography.com/Labyrinths.html



Our Labyrinth Prayer

Be open to your experiences of God
as you move on the labyrinth.

When you are done, resist talking with others.
Take time to write or draw about your experiences.
Tim will invite us back together when it is time.

Our Prayer Song (Taizé chant)

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice.

Look to God, do not be afraid.

Lift up your voices, the Lord is near. Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.



A circular labyrinth with a central flower-like design. The labyrinth is composed of many concentric, winding paths that eventually lead to a central area. The central area features a stylized flower with five petals and a central stem. The entire design is rendered in a light blue color on a darker blue background.

Our prayers on the labyrinth

Labyrinth
Walk

Time to reflect...draw...journal...
pray...return to the labyrinth...

Sharing Our Experiences

What do we want to share with one another about our experiences of praying for healing using the labyrinth?



Companion Labyrinth, DeepHaven Labyrinths and Retreats

Time of Prayer, Thanksgiving, Blessing and Sending Forth

