

Walking the Sacred Path

There is no right way to walk the labyrinth, but the following may help you gain the most from your walk:

- Allow 20-30 minutes for your walk.
- Walk with an open heart.
- Do not expect your walk to be like anyone else's.
- You may meet others on the path; simply allow them to pass. You may wish to pass others if they are not moving at your pace.
- Remain in the center as long as you wish, then follow the path out.
- Some people begin and end their walk with a simple ritual, such as bowing, making a sign of the cross, or touching the ground. Do what feels right for you.



The Labyrinth Walk is presented by the Spiritual Formation Ministry of Davidson United Methodist Church

Questions?

Contact Doris Beard, Labyrinth Keeper
ddpoviewo5@aol.com or 704-895-7810



In addition to DUMC's canvas labyrinth offered at intervals throughout the year, Davidson College has a permanent, outdoor labyrinth open to all, any time.

It is conveniently located in Hobart Park, immediately across from the Baker Sports Complex parking lot.

Contact College Chaplain, Rob Spach
(rospach@ davidson.edu or 704-894-2423),
with questions or for further information.

Walk the Labyrinth

- Rediscover an ancient spiritual tool for modern day transformation •



November 4, 2010 • 7:00 p.m.

A special evening with Labyrinth Keeper,
Doris Beard; reservations required

November 5, 6, 7, 2010

3:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Chapel is open, come as you are able

Allow 20-30 minutes for walking
this sacred path.

You will be greeted by soft music,
candle glow, and sacred quiet.



Davidson United Methodist Chapel
304 South Main Street
Davidson, NC 28036

The Labyrinth

The labyrinth is an ancient spiritual tool, a path of prayer leading to a center, and back out again. The sacred walk represents our inward/outward journey, much like the turns and returns of our path through life. The labyrinth is not a maze; there are no dead ends.

Unlike mazes, these labyrinths have a single path in and out; there are no false entrances or dead ends. For centuries, these labyrinths have been ignored, removed, or suppressed. Slowly, Christians are rediscovering the significance of these important spiritual instruments which once held such power of prayer and reflection.

Within Our Christian Story

History tells us that, originally, Christians were expected to travel to the Holy Land once during their lives. However, as travel was often difficult and dangerous, labyrinths were designed and sanctioned as alternative pilgrimages.

As a tool for spiritual centering, the labyrinth is a pilgrimage to the Divine. Sometimes known as a body prayer, or walking meditation, the journey quiets the mind and moves the soul toward wholeness and renewal.

Labyrinths have a history steeped in traditions and cathedrals. They are undergoing a revival as hundreds of churches, hospitals, hospices, prisons, and schools across the country have added them to their grounds to help people find both spiritual and physical health.

Walking the Labyrinth

Join fellow pilgrims and walk through the labyrinth as a gentle yet powerful discipline of transformation. When you arrive, a labyrinth guide will provide you with simple instructions for walking and reflecting.

Walking the labyrinth is a personal act - there is no right or wrong way. The path to discovering God is as varied and unique as each individual seeker.

The three-stage circular walk directs us...

- Inward for releasing (purgation)
- Center for receiving (illumination)
- Back out for returning (union)

Moving Into the Labyrinth

The first step of a labyrinth walk is an inward one, taken before you begin your walk. A pause before entering the labyrinth allows you to prepare for the walk and shed the concerns and preoccupations of daily living. Take time to touch into inner stillness and reflect on where you are in your life.

As it has for centuries, moving into the labyrinth begins by stepping one foot in front of the other on the single course path and opening your heart to the awesome wonder of the journey.

The labyrinth has a single path into and out of the center. That is to say that it is unicursal. Once you have started to walk the labyrinth, you are on a path without deviance or hindrance to your journey to the center. There is no particular way to walk the sacred path. There is no need to rush. Taking time for meditation and contemplation with each step is an important part of make the journey to the center. Some will walk the path fast, others more slowly. Walking the labyrinth is your private journey, so walk at a pace that is most meaningful to you. You may, however, want to allow a minimum of 20 minutes.

Walking the path is your time with God. Many people do not get a feel for the labyrinth experience until they have walked it at least three times. If others are walking with you, please respect the sacredness of their experience by maintaining a prayerful silence. As each person begins the walk at different times, you may encounter someone along the pathway. As there is only one path in as well as out, this is to be expected. Pause and let your fellow journeyer pass in prayer-centered meditation.

The Center

Once at the center of the labyrinth, you are invited to pause and open your heart and life to Christ. The center is the place to meet the Lord and to be open to the fullness of God's blessing and receive what is there for you. You may want to stay for awhile and consider the meaning of the inward journey. Pilgrims were said to find illumination, clarity, and insight inside the center. Take note of any sensations or changes in your awareness of self, time, feelings, surroundings. Follow the path back to the entrance.

Listen for God

Enjoy your walk. Suspend expectations and judgment. Reflect. Be receptive. Experiment. Each walk in the labyrinth is unique. The labyrinth is a metaphor for where we are in our lives and in our relationship to God and others.

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On the return journey, be mindful of God's call for discipleship. Your return is not only to conclude your walk, but to step back into the world with thanksgiving (hearing, once again, the Church's proclamation: "Let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.") As you depart the labyrinth, its open entrance stands available as a sacred place to always enter and encounter God's joy.

God ahead, God behind
God be on the path | wind...
God above, God below,
God be everywhere | go.
Celtic Prayer