



The Labyrinth Ministry

As part of the renovation to the worship space, the chancel, when restored to a traditional arrangement for singing Evensong, was also made flexible, allowing for a re-arrangement of the stalls to accommodate a portable cloth labyrinth. At the moment this ministry is in its early stages of development and days and times when the labyrinth will be available for use will be posted shortly.

What is a Labyrinth? Why do we walk them?

The labyrinth is an ancient human symbol known to go back at least 3500 years and is probably much older. It appeared on all inhabited continents in prehistory. A labyrinth is not a maze, but a walking meditation device with a single winding path from the edge to the centre. The same path is used to return to the outside.

Combining a number of even older symbols, including the circle, spiral and meander, the labyrinth represents the journey inward to our own true selves and back out into the everyday world. Walking a labyrinth is a right brain task (creative, intuitive, imaginative), and can induce or enhance a contemplative or meditative state of mind.

The labyrinth symbol was incorporated into the floors of the great Gothic pilgrimage cathedrals of Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries. The most famous extant design is that at Notre Dame de Chartres outside Paris. This labyrinth was built of honey coloured limestone with marble lines around the year 1200 and is now over 800 years old.

How to Walk a Cloth Labyrinth.

Before walking any labyrinth, it is best to quiet the active mind. Try stretching, deep breathing, or just standing still and being quiet before you begin your journey.

A few simple rules of the road should suffice:

- Please walk only in stocking feet. Clean socks are available for your use while here.
- Clear your mind. Surrender to the journey with an open heart and an open mind.
- Allow your body to find its own pace. How you walk and your tempo are unique to you.
- It is common to pass other walkers or to be passed by others due to our natural differences in walking speed. Your pace may vary from walk to walk as well.
- Please remain quiet as a courtesy to the other walkers.
- You may wish to think of the walk as a three-fold path: **Releasing** of concerns and worries on the journey in, **Centering** prayer or meditation, and **Empowerment** of new commitments on the journey out.
- The single path between the painted lines runs two ways. Those entering may meet those on their journey out. Gently make room for others as you pass.

Relax and Enjoy...

There is no wrong way to walk this ancient mediation device!