



Welcome to the Journey of Faith Labyrinth

Dear Friend,

We at Christ Presbyterian Church are glad you have happened upon our labyrinth. No matter what your faith, you are welcome here. Our labyrinth is intended to be a “sanctuary without walls” offered to you, our neighbors, for your quiet contemplation. As you walk this sacred path, we hope that you will be drawn into a closer walk with God.

The Journey of Faith Labyrinth was built by the members of Christ Presbyterian Church as a celebration of our first 40 years of ministry as a congregation. Each brick was donated with thanksgiving for a blessing of faith experienced by one of our members or friends. We at Christ Presbyterian Church would like to consider you one of our new friends and we pray that this labyrinth will be a blessing to you on your journey of faith.

Wishing you the peace of Christ,
Pastor Susan Joseph Rack and
the members of Christ Presbyterian Church.

About Labyrinths

There are many ways to describe a labyrinth. It is a path of prayer, a walking meditation, a crucible of change, a watering hole for the spirit and a mirror of the soul. The labyrinth is an ancient pattern found in many cultures around the world...as far back as 4000 years. Many patterns are based on spirals from nature.

The Celts described the labyrinth as the Never Ending Circle. It is also called Kabala in mystical Judaism. The labyrinth as an exercise of spiritual journeying dates back to the Middle Ages when walking labyrinths, like the one in the floor of Chartres Cathedral in France, served as the poor person's holy pilgrimage.

Labyrinths are currently being used world-wide as a way to quiet the mind, find balance, and encourage meditation, insight and celebration. They can be found today in many venues including medical centers, parks, churches, prisons and retreat centers as a non-denominational, cross-cultural tool of well-being.¹

Our Journey of Faith Labyrinth is constructed in the Maltese design similar to the 13th century labyrinth found in the cathedral of Amiens, France. Viewed from above, a Maltese cross can be discerned in its paths.

The octagonal form of this labyrinth pattern is reminiscent of medieval baptistery architecture, and symbolizes resurrection, perfection and rebirth as celebrated in the Christian initiation rite of baptism. The number 8 is also symbolic of an abundance of fullness, being one greater than 7, the biblical number denoting completeness. Tradition holds that Jesus was raised from the dead on an eighth day, the first day of a new week, demonstrating the super-abundance of life God offers through Christ.

In addition to the octagon's significance in the Christian tradition, the number 8 is a powerful symbol in Judaism and Islam as well. Of universal significance is the notion that the corners of the octagon signify the eight points of the compass and symbolize the global inclusiveness in this sacred space.

¹ Veriditas.net, About Labyrinths.

Guidelines for Labyrinth Walking

Although the labyrinth path winds, the path is continuous so there are no tricks or dead ends. The labyrinth can be thought of as a metaphor for life's journey with God. You never quite know how far along it you are but God has offered you a sure path if you trust God's guidance. True to life, your labyrinth walk may touch your sorrows and release your joys. Walk it with a willing spirit.

The three stages of your walk are:

- ❖ ***Purgation** (Releasing) ~ a releasing, letting go of the cares and details of your life. This is the act of shedding thoughts and distractions. A time to open the heart and quiet the mind.*
- ❖ ***Illumination** (Receiving) ~ When you reach the center, stay there as long as you like. It is a place of meditation and prayer. Receive what God offers you.*
- ❖ ***Union** (Returning) ~ As you follow the same path out of the center as led you in, you enter the stage of joining with God as you return to the world outside the labyrinth. Open yourself to the healing forces at work in God's world. Each time you walk the labyrinth you may discover you are more empowered to find and do the work you feel your soul reaching for.*

Before you enter the labyrinth, quiet your mind and become aware of the rhythm of your breathing. Allow yourself to find the pace your body wants to walk. The path is a two-way thoroughfare. Those going in will meet those coming out. You may "pass" people or let others step around you. Do what feels natural and appropriate as you meet fellow journeyers on the way.

May God bless your walk here and wherever you may go with grace upon grace.

Please "Walk Off" With This Brochure

You are welcome to take this brochure with you, or to replace it in the box for another labyrinth visitor. We ask on behalf of the neighborhood that these brochures not become litter. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. We hope you will share your experience of this sacred space with your friends and return to the Journey of Faith Labyrinth often.

An Invitation to Worship at CPC

*The members of Christ Presbyterian Church would like to warmly invite you to **worship with us any Sunday morning at 10:00**. Children of all ages are welcome in worship or may attend Sunday School. Childcare for very young children is also available.*

*Christ Presbyterian Church is an open and affirming congregation who welcome singles, couples and families with a love as inclusive as God's own. We believe the Good News that Christ invites **all** to be members of God's household and citizens of the realm of God.*

If you have questions or comments about the labyrinth or would like more information about Christ Presbyterian Church, please visit our web site or call the church office. Pastor Susan or one of our members would be pleased to speak with you.

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The Reverend Susan E. Joseph Rack Th.M., Pastor