UNITY
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Welcome to Unity's Labyrinth

What is a Labyrinth?

A Labyrinth is a walking path for prayer and meditation found in almost every religious tradition around the world. The earliest Christian labyrinth dates back to the 4th century and was used as a way to teach about the spiritual journey when most people could not read. Labyrinths come in different designs and can be made from a variety of materials, but all are based on the sacred geometry of the spiral and circle found in nature. There is only one path into the center and back out again. It is different from a maze in that there are no tricks or dead ends. The same labyrinth can generate a variety of experiences for those who walk it. The act of moving quiets the mind. *"The simple act of walking the labyrinth invites us back into the center of our being."* (Artress, Lauren. *Walking a Sacred Path.* Riverhead Books. New York: 2006.)

Why Walk the Labyrinth?

Persons may walk the labyrinth for many reasons, including curiosity.
You may begin walking and discover your reasons along the way.
Here are some possible uses of the labyrinth:

Prayer and discernment	Search for meaning
Self-reflection	Processing grief
Reducing stress	Healing and wholeness
Meditation	Mind-heart-body connection

How Do I Walk the Labyrinth?

There is no right or wrong way to walk a labyrinth. The labyrinth is a metaphor for your spiritual journey. Allow everything that happens to you on the way speak to you about where you are on your journey with God. Find your natural pace and move as you wish. Some people find it helpful to journal about their experience once they finish walking the labyrinth.

There are three stages to the walk:

Releasing – *The journey in* – What distractions or resistances are you called to shed as you journey closer to God?
Receiving – *The center* – Feel free to linger here. Rest in God's presence. What is God's invitation to you?
Returning – *The journey out* – What is God's call in your life? Whom are you being called to become?

Walking with Others

"Since labyrinth walking is usually a nonverbal activity that can be shared by many people at the same time, it allows people to connect through the activity of walking rather than talking. This builds relationships before words can tear them apart." (Artress, *Walking a Sacred Path.)*

Here are a few guidelines for walking with others:

- Pause at the beginning before you begin to walk. Wait about a minute after the person in front of you entered the labyrinth to give plenty of space between walkers.
- Walk at your natural pace. Feel free to move around others or let others move around you.
- The path through the labyrinth is a two-way street: you will meet people coming out as you go in. Do what feels natural when you meet.
- If when moving around others you lose your place, you will either go back to the center or back to the beginning. Use this experience to learn something about your own journey.