



Walking the Labyrinth at St. Columba's

Welcome to St. Columba's Labyrinth! You are about to step on to an ancient path that is thousands of years old. Following the footsteps of Christians of medieval times, the labyrinth is used today as a form of walking prayer or meditation.

According to Veriditas, which promotes labyrinths world-wide, labyrinths are used to "quiet the mind, recover balance in life, and encourage meditation, insight, self-reflection, stress reduction, and to discover innovation and celebration. They are open to people as an interfaith, cross-cultural blueprint for well-being... walking integrates the body with the mind and mind with the spirit."

Walking the Labyrinth Path

The labyrinth is a metaphor for the spiritual journey. It is a sacred pattern that leads the seeker on a path to its center. It is not a maze; there are no dead-ends. A single path goes to the center and back out again.

Before walking, please silence your cell phone and to preserve the labyrinth, remove your shoes and walk in socks (your own or a pair provided). Guides can assist anyone with a disability who would like to experience the labyrinth.

There is no "one way" or "right way" to walk a labyrinth. One approach includes these stages:

- ❖ **Remember:** Pause at the entrance to the labyrinth to remember life's many blessings. Bring your focus inward, perhaps setting an intention for your walk.
- ❖ **Release:** As you progress toward the center, allow your thoughts to fall away. Walk at your own pace. Release concerns. Quiet the mind. (If you are walking more quickly than the person in front of you, just gently pass the person.)
- ❖ **Receive:** Reflect and pray in the center. Open your heart and receive whatever is there. Stay as long as you like.
- ❖ **Return:** Return on the same path to where you began, grateful for the time spent and what you have received. Take a few minutes to sit quietly or journal to reflect on what you are carrying back into your life. (As you walk the path in or out, you may meet other walkers going in the opposite direction; just move slightly to the side and around them.)

Options for Experiencing the Labyrinth

- Feel free to leave the labyrinth anytime during your walk, or to follow the path to the center and then exit, or to walk the perimeter going clockwise. In all cases, please be respectful of other walkers.
- Use a finger labyrinth available at the walks. A guide can provide one for you.
- Sit in a chair or on a floor cushion and experience the labyrinth by watching the walkers.

***The St Columba Labyrinth Team welcomes your feedback!
Leave your suggestions or comments in the basket provided.***

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(Some text adapted from Veriditas, 2013)***