



Labyrinth Walk

Journeying to the Heart of the Divine

By Rev. Tony Clark

The labyrinth is an ancient symbol that has been used in many cultures and religions as a focus for meditation and prayer. They can be found in ancient sites in Egypt and Greece, as well as embedded in the floors of cathedrals in Europe.

Designed Pathway

Although some labyrinths include dead ends that make it difficult to navigate, spiritual labyrinths are created with a defined pathway and a center that is meant to represent our journey to discover unity with the Divine.

Because of the way a labyrinth is designed, it provides no direct linear path to the center, as it winds from near the outside to near the center. The next step or even several steps may be obvious, but it is difficult to see beyond the next turn, obfuscating the final point.

The twists and turns of the labyrinth are often compared to a river on its way to the ocean. There is purpose in the switchbacks, and the curves of the river, even if we may not see it. All of this is a metaphor for life and the complicated detours that we often must take along the way. The path might also be likened to the classical literary form of the hero's journey.

The good news is you cannot get lost in a labyrinth, because, unlike a maze with tall walls, a labyrinth has very short dividers for the path. Rocks, twigs, brick pavers set into the ground, paint, or varying textures like polished or roughened granite, are all used in various places to give the path its shape.

The Labyrinth as Spiritual Path

Walking a labyrinth can offer a deep spiritual experience. It is a lived physical metaphor for the life lived in God. Just when you think you know where God's path is leading, the path changes, turns, circles back on itself or guides you farther away from where you intend to go. You must trust the path, and the Designer of the path, that it will take you to the center and back out again.

As you prepare to enter the labyrinth, you are invited to bring an intention. This could be a spiritual burden you are carrying, or a question you may have for which you are seeking clarity. Participants often enter with an object, such as a religious icon, a personal talisman or something from nature such as a stone or flower.

When entering a labyrinth, the idea is to walk with intention, letting the object remind you of what you are seeking, or holding the question or burden in mind as each step takes you more inward to your own center.

With intention, you can bring your spiritual burdens or questions on the journey, then leave them at the center for God to work on.

Sometimes the walk itself leads to an epiphany; an answer to a question comes to you or you achieve more clarity around an issue. More often, participants experience a lightness of being as they leave the center and re-enter the path that will lead them back out of the labyrinth, knowing their burden or question is now in the hands of the Divine to resolve.

Renew · Refresh · Refocus

at Centering Space

A Sponsored Ministry of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine

14812 Lake Ave, Lakewood, OH 44107

216.228.7415

www.centeringspace.org

Labyrinth Walk at Centering Space

Rev. Tony Clark, an ordained UCC pastor, has created a labyrinth on the Centering Space property near Lake Erie that will last a season or more. Come visit us at any time to walk this ancient meditation pathway.