

Walking a Sacred Path A Labyrinth Experience



The Labyrinth is an ancient spiritual tool known for its transformative and healing qualities. It is a Sacred Path one walks in a spirit of seeking. It dates back thousands of years and has appeared in diverse cultures across the globe from Crete to Native America. The Labyrinth here at Lake Huron Retreat Center is a reproduction of the thousand-year-old Labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral in France.

It is said when one fully engages in the walk of the Labyrinth one can experience a quieting of the mind, an opening of the heart and a calling forth of a sense of wholeness, oneness, peace and possibility. Its winding, circuitous walk is a form of walking meditation and prayer. Walking the Labyrinth is a spiritual act of pilgrimage, symbolizing one's walk with God or journey through life.

This meditative walk can be viewed as a three-step process. First moving toward the center, walker's *release*, or *let go* of cares and concerns which distract them from God; in the center, they pause, perhaps for several minutes to receive *clarity* or *illumination*; on the way out walkers may perceive a sense of unity, bring back to the world a *renewed vision* and experience a *refreshed spirit*.

The Labyrinth is a metaphor of going home. We hope you will join us for a pilgrimage home – home to your inner self.

Guidelines to Walking the Labyrinth

As you enter this experience, we offer these suggestions:

- ❖ *Take some time before you begin.* Disengage from the rest of your day and relax. Sit down or walk around the outside of the Labyrinth; think about issues, concerns, questions or wishes you will reflect upon during this journey. Or, you may simply decide to clear and quiet your mind and put yourself into a receptive state.
- ❖ Maintain *silence* throughout your walk, for your own and other's reflections. Entering the Labyrinth and proceeding toward the center is a time for *letting go*.
- ❖ Proceed at *your own pace*. Some walk at one speed, some vary their steps and pace along the way, some even dance! You may pause at the turns or at any place where a delay feels right. You may pass others who are moving at a slower rate.
- ❖ In the *center*, you may sit, kneel, stand, meditate, face several directions, or silently read a scripture or poem you may have brought along. Being in the center is a time of *being open and receiving* from God.
- ❖ As you meet other walkers moving in the opposite direction, feel free to step to one side, if necessary, to *provide space for meeting and passing*.
- ❖ Following the path outward is an expression of being *ready to go in a new way*. As you leave the Labyrinth, you may wish to turn and pause to *express silently your gratitude to God*.
- ❖ We invite you to *take some time after your walk* to remain in the Labyrinth vicinity for further reflection and meditation.