



St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church

Welcome to our Labyrinth

Our labyrinth, simply put, is a place to walk and meditate or pray, and focus your thoughts as you get in touch with a holy space inside of you. We hope that walking it will aid you in your spiritual journey, whether you seek prayer, meditation, transformation, or any peaceful experience. Most people walking a labyrinth find that it promotes self-reflection, integrates mind, body and spirit, awakens spirituality, and restores simplicity in our hectic lives. We all could benefit from that, right? You're welcome to quietly enjoy our sacred outdoor spaces - the labyrinth and memorial garden - at any time during daylight hours.



What is a labyrinth?

A labyrinth is a single, meandering path that winds from an entry to the center, in one path, and back out again the same way. It has no dead ends like a maze, and nothing to frustrate, confuse, or block you as you walk.

How do I walk a labyrinth?

You simply start walking from the entry, stay between the lines, and follow your feet! The path winds toward the center, but you never have a choice to make about the direction you're going. To leave the labyrinth, follow the path back out. There's no right or wrong way, no good or bad speed, no proper or improper motive - it's all up to you.

Before you enter, pause for a few moments to quiet your mind and become aware of your breathing. If you walk while someone else is walking, simply step out of the way and go back to wherever you were after they pass. Labyrinth walking is a meditative activity, so keep the noise down so everyone has quality time with their own thoughts. Be respectful of others' space.

Why do people walk a labyrinth?

The reasons are as varied as we are as individuals. Some reasons are:

- to relax and feel at peace
- to let go of worries and concerns
- to cope with grief and loss
- for insight on specific problems
- for healing of mind, heart or body
- to open the flow of creativity
- for vocational discernment
- to express thanksgivings to God
- for recovery from illness or before an operation
- at new beginnings - relationships, marriage, birth, adoption
- to share spiritual experiences with friends and family
- to connect with the beauty of the earth

Use three R's as you walk

On the way in, **Release** - Try to find a relaxed, calm state - open your heart, discard concerns, unwrap and release problems, unload emotions, shift your mental state. Let go of the details of your life, open your heart and mind. Cast off what does not serve your good.

At the center, **Receive** - Pause. Be open and receptive, listen to any inner voice, or to silence and stillness. The center is a great place for rest, meditation, or prayer, to experience what the moment opens up to you. Stand, sit, kneel, or lie down. Stay there as long as you need.

On the way out, **Return** - Consider your experiences in the labyrinth today. Perhaps you experienced satisfaction, comfort, new energy, healing, peace. Perhaps you can integrate your experiences and apply them to your life. Look for a new awareness.

What do you do when you're done walking?

Please put this sheet back in our box for someone else to use.

Our memorial garden is a quiet place with benches if you want to sit with your thoughts. The gate latch pulls up from the top of the gate. Please latch the gate as you come and go. If you want to converse with a friend, we have tables and benches on the lawn in front of the church.

For Christians:

We invite you to walk the labyrinth and pray. It may help you relax and focus on God. As you follow the path inward, try to move closer to God at the center. At the center, practice being in the presence of God. As you return, you are returning to the world, benefitting from time in God's presence, to live in the fullness of a relationship with God, and to do God's work. What you learn in the labyrinth you take back out into your life.

Some Christians choose to use a phrase, breath prayer, or mantra to center themselves as they enter and release. Here are some:

- Lord, have mercy
- Lead me, O God
- Be still and know that I am God
- Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy
- Jesus
- Lord Jesus, come
- Jesus, let me feel your love
- O Lord, show me your way, lead me in your paths
- Holy One, heal me
- Holy One, guide me
- Jesus, Alleluia, have mercy
- Holy Wisdom, guide me
- Lord, let me feel your presence
- Here I am
- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me

Spiritual questions

If using our labyrinth stirs spiritual questions in you, our interim rector, the Very Rev. Ron Pogue, is here to help. Contact Father Ron at ron.pogue@stmartininthefields.org.

About our church

St. Martin-in-the-Fields is an open & accepting community where the love of Jesus lives and transforms through worship, education, fellowship and service in the church and in the world. We're a unique tapestry of people from various backgrounds and lifestyles. We welcome you warmly and without exception. Come share your faith journey with us.