

Our Emmanuel Labyrinth

EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH
MERCER ISLAND

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BOX AFTER USE

HOW TO WALK

Emmanuel welcomes all to enjoy our labyrinth as a place of peace and renewal. Consider yourself invited into this walking meditation; an amble with the potential to quiet your mind, open your heart, and lead you toward insight.

For participants of all ages, walking an outdoor labyrinth offers opportunity for reflection, insight, nature appreciation, and healthful, prayerful participation in life. Providing a labyrinth path on our campus is a ministry of the congregation, adding an



accessible spiritual retreat for us and our larger community.

Labyrinth pathways have roots in ancient cultures. This pathway is designed to resemble the eleven-circuit labyrinth design inlaid on the floor at France's Chartres Cathedral during the thirteenth century.

Historically, labyrinths have provided a symbolic form of pilgrimage for those unable to travel far away from home. Currently, walking a labyrinth is considered a contemporary form of purposeful prayer, engaging the body, the mind, and the spirit.

As you enter, the path becomes readily apparent. You are encouraged to quietly follow the path until it takes you to the center, where you are welcome to pause for reflection. When ready, turn to return on the same path, going back to the start where you began.

*"Begin your contemplative walk,
clearing your mind and opening your heart.
Relax, walk at your own pace.*

*The center is a place for prayer and meditation; open yourself to new awareness and insight.
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*Return when you are ready,
following the path out.*

*As you encounter other people when you walk out, simply allow them to pass undisturbed.
Peace be with you along your journey."
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Seattle*

Suspend your expectations. As you walk toward the center, relax, leaving daily details of your life behind you. Find your own pace. Walk, dance, skip, or roll along, depending upon how many fellow pilgrims are sharing the labyrinth with you. You may, with respect, pass people on the turns or generously let others step around you.

When you reach the center take time to pause, listen, and reflect.

As you retrace your steps back to the beginning, you may wish to bring any insight or inspiration from your labyrinth experience into your life. Each pilgrim's experience will be different, and your own experience may vary from walk to walk.

Enter the labyrinth path here. Follow the paving stones through straight, curved, and turning sections. If you are walking, turn away from the darker pavers to continue on the terra cotta colored pavers.

If you are in a wheelchair, pushing a wheelchair, pushing a stroller, using a walker, or simply prefer a simpler walk, please use the outside lane. Once around, you may choose to follow the straight run of pavers up into the center of the labyrinth, then return to the beginning retracing the path that brought you to the center.

"But the oldest practice is still the best. Take your soul for a stroll. Long walks, short walks, morning walks, evening walks - whatever form or length it takes, walking is the best way to get out of your head. Recall the invocation of the philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, who said, 'Above all, do not lose your desire to walk. Every day I walk myself into a state of well-being and walk away from every illness; I have walked myself into my best thoughts.'"

*- Phil Cousineau
The Art of Pilgrimage:
The Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred*

Emmanuel's labyrinth is provided by a gift from Emmanuel's Memorial Fund and dozens of donors who participated in the labyrinth fundraiser, "Clean Sweep for Our Labyrinth."

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