

## Preparations / Guidelines for the Walk

- ✦ **Take some time before you begin.** Clear your mind and disengage from the rest of your day and relax. Sit down or walk around the area; think about issues, concerns, questions, or wishes you want to take with you on this walk. Or, simply decide to clear and quiet your mind and put yourself into a receptive state.
- ✦ **Maintain silence throughout your walk,** for your own (and perhaps others) reflection.
- ✦ **Move at your own pace.** You may pause at any place where a pause feels right. You may pass others who are moving at a slower rate. The path is two ways – those going in will meet those coming out. Do what feels natural. Be aware – everything instructs.
- ✦ **When you reach the center** you may sit, kneel, stand, meditate, face several directions, or read something you may have brought along with you. Stay as long as you like.
- ✦ **Walking out of the labyrinth** is a time for integration and gratitude for the gifts received.
- ✦ **Take some time after you walk** to remain in the area for further reflection and meditation until you are ready to leave.

*The Monaghan Labyrinth is available any time of day, and at night when the parking lot lights are on, to all who wish to walk the sacred path.*

## Prayer for a Labyrinth Walk

*O GOD of many paths, I stand before this labyrinth today, metaphor of my journey to you. In the Western world I have been taught that "the shortest distance between two points is a straight line" and being an impatient person, I am uncomfortable with waiting. I have often modeled my journey to you on the straight line. But you, God of infinite patience, have shown me that there is another path, a curved path.*

*On this path, my anticipation is heightened as I approach the center, only to be led out again to the periphery. But this path more closely resembles life itself.*

*On this path, if I just put one foot in front of the other, it may seem at times as if I am not approaching my goal, while in fact, I am drawing closer all the time. But you are a God of surprises and mystery, and I don't control the path.*

*The labyrinth is a symbol of my surrender to mystery, trusting, not knowing for certain, that the path which curves in and out again ultimately leads to the Center, which is You.*

JEAN SONNENBERG



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## WALKING THE LABYRINTH AT MONAGHAN



*My eyes already touch the sunny hill,  
Going far ahead of the road I have begun.  
So we are grasped by what we cannot grasp;  
It has its inner light, even from a distance  
And changes us, even if we do not reach it  
Into something else, which, hardly sensing it,  
We already are.  
A gesture waves us on, answering our own  
wave...  
But what we feel is the wind in our faces.*

RAINER MARIA RILKE



## The Monaghan Labyrinth

The Monaghan Labyrinth was built in 2010 through the generous donations in 2006 of Monaghan Presbyterian Church members and friends to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the ministry of Rev. Charles W Best to Monaghan Presbyterian Church.

The Monaghan Labyrinth is unique in that it was designed by Jason C. Best, son of Rev. Best, to incorporate a portion of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) symbol into the design of the Chartres Labyrinth laid in the floor of the Chartres Cathedral, France around 1220. The portion of the Presbyterian symbol contained in the Monaghan Labyrinth are the flames (the fire of the Holy Spirit). A Celtic cross is also incorporated. These symbols can best be seen from the parking lot above.

Brad Hakes and friends did the construction.

### A Sacred Path to Health and Wholeness

The Labyrinth is a symbolic pilgrimage or journey to the divine.

It is old, in fact found throughout history – from Ancient Egypt to Crete to Celtic, Scandinavian and Native American cultures.

It is a tool. It holds no special powers but can help with spiritual experience.

It is not a maze. There is only one path to follow so it is not intended to confuse but to clarify. The journey toward the center is clearly marked.

It is within our tradition. It is appropriate for Christians of all traditions and people of all faiths. It doesn't have doctrine. It allows people to bring to the experience of walking their own unique heritage and beliefs. It is, in the best sense, an experience of unity in the midst of diversity.

## The Experience

There are three stages of the walk:

**FIRST**, as you enter the Labyrinth, there is a releasing, a letting go (*Purgation*) of the details of your life, the cares and the concerns that keep you distracted and stressed.

**SECOND**, as you reach the center (*Illumination*), stay there as long as you like. It is a place for clarity and insight. Receive what is there for you.

**THIRD**, as you begin the path outward (*Union*), bring back to the world a renewed vision and a refreshed spirit.

*“Walking the labyrinth clears the mind and gives insight into the spiritual journey.”*

*It calms people in the throes of life transitions. It helps them see their lives in the context of a path - a pilgrimage. They realize that they are not human beings on a spiritual path, but spiritual beings on a human path.”*

Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress  
The World-Wide Labyrinth Project

## Labyrinth Stories

*“I have been working on my fears. I walked the labyrinth and left my fears there. It was the labyrinth's gift to me.”*



*“Every time I walk the labyrinth, it is a different experience. New gifts are given. The center draws me into the heart of God.”*



*“I had been very worried about my mother's deteriorating condition for over a year. I felt guilty about being so far away. I attended Sunday worship and then walked the labyrinth. As soon as I walked in, I started crying. I cried through the entire walk. It was just what I needed to do. When I walked out, I felt a heavy burden lifted from my shoulders. I needed to cry and the labyrinth walk enabled me to let go and do what I needed to do.”*



*“I was unhappy in my job and kept vacillating on whether I should resign or not. When I was here for a meeting, I decided to walk the labyrinth with my dilemma. As I walked I kept hearing a voice in my head that said, “Focus on who is served.” At the center, it became so clear to me. Something happened to me. As I left, I felt a deep sense of peace and rightness about my life.”*

