

Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church

Sunday Worship Service: 11:00 AM

Sunday School: 10:00 AM

Children's Church and Nursery provided

Open Hearts...

Open Minds...

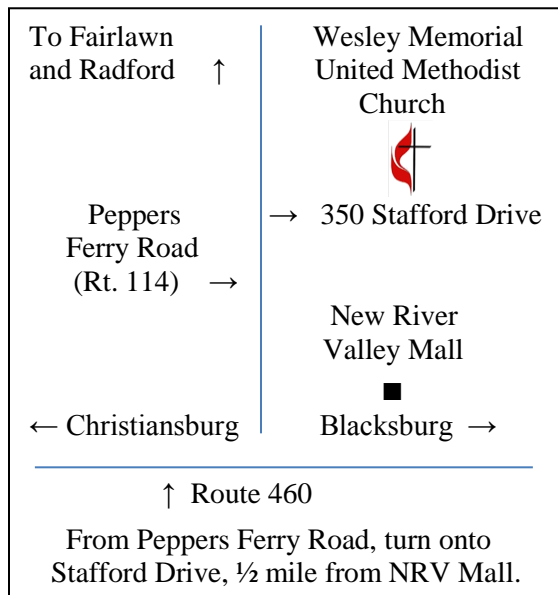
Open Doors...

The people of the United Methodist Church

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Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church

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Welcome to our Labyrinth



Symbolic journey ~ inward ~ outward

Walking is one of the various practices in use today for seekers of a spiritual experience. By walking a labyrinth, one can travel long distances in a small space. The labyrinth walk overflows with metaphor and meaning. The labyrinth represents a journey, a pilgrimage, a conscious taking of time to seek God.

Many of the major stories in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures involve journeys. Moses and his people journeyed toward the Promised Land; Joseph and Mary went home to Bethlehem to be counted; Jesus journeyed to resurrection; and Paul was converted on the road to Damascus – all powerful stories of journeys – journeys to find the Promised Land, to find home, to find God, to experience the Holy Spirit. We humans quest for God and self-knowledge. We too want to experience the holy movement, the presence of the holy. WE KNOW THIS: we cannot discover anything unless we look; we cannot move forward while standing still.

All over the world, people are searching for ways to express their deep desire to be on a journey to oneness with the Holy of Holies. Some people may question why others would spend 30 or 40 minutes walking around and around the circular path of the labyrinth, but that is not the point. The point is that a choice has been made, a spiritual discipline has been chosen; the presence of the Spirit is being sought through the journey.

To walk in the ways of the holy requires that you be strong in your inner self; that you equip yourself with truth, justice, faith and courage; and that you be in constant prayer, alert and willing to persevere. Walking in this way is not like going out for a stroll; it is like going on a journey. It is intentionally to choose to be on a spiritual path. The call is to be on the move, trusting in the journey, open to seeing new things in new ways. When one takes that first step in the labyrinth, one opens up to the possibility of encountering God on the path.

Just as there are not wrong turnings in the labyrinth, there are no right or wrong rituals to bring meaning to your walk. To help focus your attention, spending a short time in preparation is helpful. An inward statement of your desire or intention for the walk will help you focus before beginning. The labyrinth walk is truly an inward journey and an outward sign of your willingness to be open to how God lures you. Expect to encounter the holy on this path with certain knowledge you are reaching and experiencing the center – home.

After your walk, you may find it helpful to journal or record any insights or images that came during your walk.

Adopted from "Labyrinths from the Outside In," Shaper, Camp; Skylight Publishers, VI.

Walking in the Labyrinth

There is no right or wrong way to walk the labyrinth.

- Adults are generally serious or contemplative when using the labyrinth, whereas children may experience the labyrinth in a fun and playful way.
- You can walk the labyrinth in your own chosen attitude or mood. You can pray out loud, silently, seriously or in a playful way. You can play music or sing, walk alone or with others.
- Listen to the sounds of nature, take in the peacefulness and pay attention to your experience.

Suggestions:

1. **Focus:** Pause and wait at the entrance, Become quiet and centered. Give acknowledgement through a bow, nod or other gesture and then enter.
2. **Experience:** Walk slowly and purposefully. Observe the process. When you reach the center, stay there and focus several moments. Leave when it seems appropriate. Be attentive on the way out.
3. **Exit:** Turn and face the entrance. Give an acknowledgement of ending, such as "Amen."
4. **Reflect:** After walking the labyrinth, reflect on our experience. Use journaling or drawing to capture your experience.
5. **Walk Often**

Adopted from www.lessons4living.com