ABYRINTHS are ancient human symbols that date back more than 4,000 years. For many Christians, labyrinths held a specific purpose: they served as a way to make a sacred pilgrimage even if one could not undertake an actual journey to a holy place (the shrine of a saint) or to the Holy Land. They engaged the body, the soul, and the mind—focusing upon movement along a defined path toward the center, and back again. Today, labyrinths are used for prayer, introspection, meditation, centering, or relaxation.

HOW TO WALK THE LABYRINTH:

1. **Preparation**: Take a deep breath or pause for a moment of silence, clearing your body and mind, as you approach the entrance to the labyrinth.

2. **The Journey Inwards**: As you follow the path toward the center, go at your own pace, and use the time to pray, listen, reflect, and feel. One step at a time, let yourself lose track of the outside world as you move toward the center.

3. **At the Center**: As you linger in this space, considered the most sacred of the labyrinth, receive what is there for you to receive.

4. **The Return Journey**: Reflect on what you have learned, and let yourself feel gratitude for the journey and insights. Remember them as you re-enter the world.

Unlike a maze, the labyrinth is not a puzzle and does not have dead ends. The labyrinth is one single-coiled pathway leading toward a center and then back to the world again. To follow the way of faith in a labyrinth is to journey to the sacred center and then return, renewed, to the world.