

How to make and use a Labyrinth

Labyrinths are ancient pathways found across the world.

The winding path helps us to 'unwind', to let go and rest in God. Members of the early church as well as Medieval pilgrims have used them as a support for prayer. They can provide a pilgrimage experience for those who follow the path.

Today, labyrinths are being created in churches, retreat centres, schools, hospices and cathedrals to offer a spiritual space for prayer and reflection providing a stilling space in a busy world.

A labyrinth is different from a maze.

A maze is full of dead-ends and designed to get you lost.

A labyrinth has only one path that always leads to the centre... if you stay on the path you cannot get lost.

There is no right or wrong way to walk a labyrinth... no set pace... just follow the path in your own time...

Finger labyrinths can be used for prayerful reflection when it is not possible to walk a full-sized labyrinth.

Labyrinths are easy to draw and make - They can be made out of any available materials... twigs and branches, sand, pebbles, scarves, tins and packets of food and then walk and pray for those using a Food Bank and donate the food afterwards or even chalk in a car park.

Once you are familiar with the design you can make simple finger labyrinths too. Finger labyrinths are ideal for those who have walking difficulties, are housebound, in prison or travelling away from home.

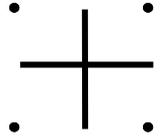
This resource contains:

1. Instructions for making labyrinths of different sizes
2. A suggestion for a labyrinth pilgrimage walk
3. A template for some mindful prayer colouring
4. An A4 template to photocopy and use as a simple paper finger labyrinth



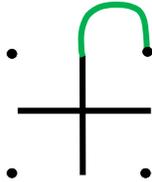
How to draw a 3 circuit Classical Labyrinth

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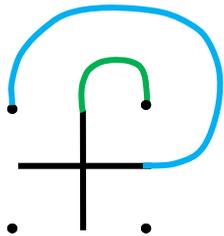


This is known as a seed pattern...

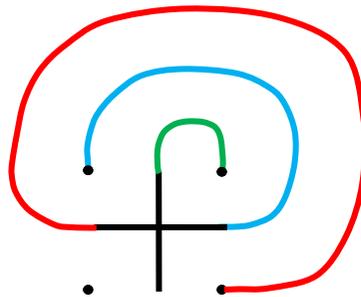
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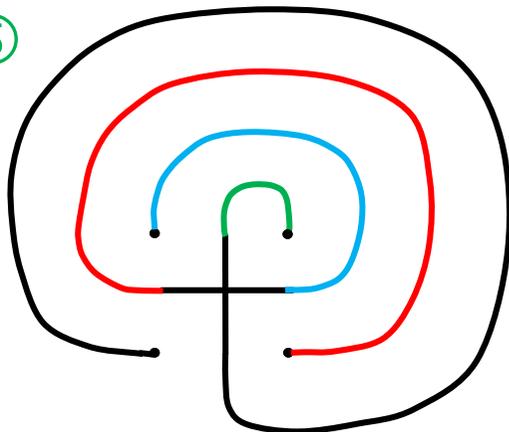
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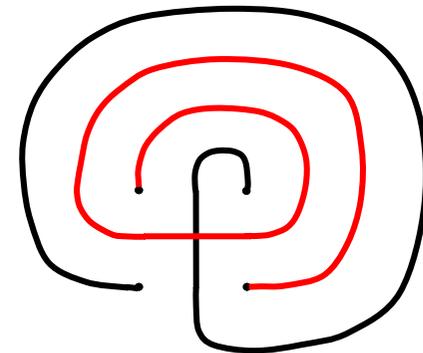
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It's easy to make a simple labyrinth to walk in your home, chapel, church, courtyard, garden or beach...you can even mow the pattern into a lawn....

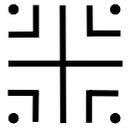


You can see that this labyrinth is actually made up of just 2 lines.

It is easy to lay out with rope, chalk or stones. Lay out the 'red line' first.

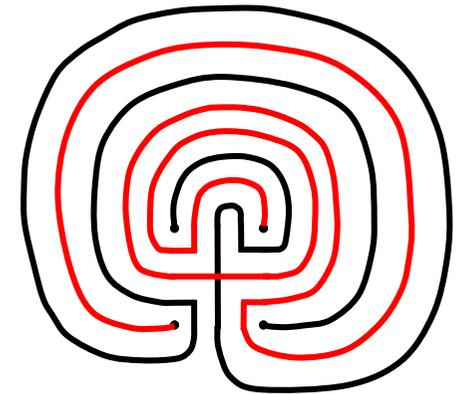
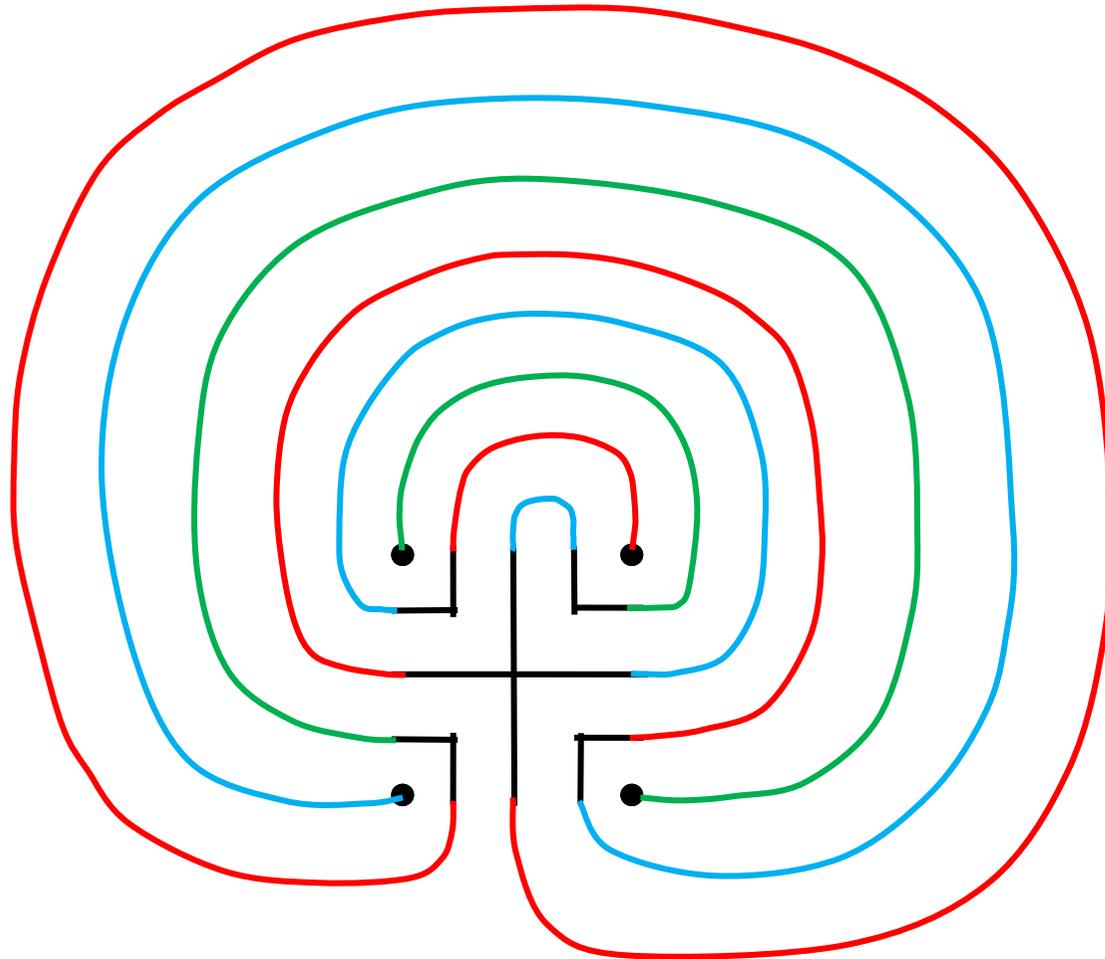
For a path width of 40cms you need approximately 3m² of space, approximately 11.25m of rope or materials for the 'red line' and 12.5m for the 'black line'...

How to draw a 7 circuit Classical Labyrinth



The seed pattern for a 7 circuit labyrinth has the addition of 4 right angles.

The construction format is the same as the simple 3 circuit labyrinth overleaf...

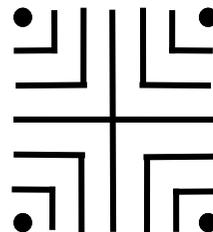


This 7 circuit labyrinth is also made using only two lines...

It takes a little maths to work out widths and distances in order to set one out on the ground... but it can be done!



Take away 2 right angles for a 5 circuit labyrinth....



Add 4 more right angles for an 11 circuit labyrinth....!

Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road...

Luke 24:32

Labyrinths have been spiritual symbols of pilgrimage for Christians for centuries.

A pilgrimage offers us the opportunity to open our hearts and minds and walk humbly with God... and on this sacred journey we can learn a little more about ourselves, explore thoughts and feelings and discern new ways that might be before us...

A pilgrimage is often regarded as a journey to a holy place. A labyrinth journey also gives us a place to remember, recognise and welcome God's holy presence at the centre of our lives. How can you walk and pray for renewal and mission today?

You are invited to walk with a pilgrim heart on the labyrinth today as you follow these 7 steps into some of the significant moments of any pilgrimage...

[1] Deciding to go on a pilgrimage...

Before you set out... take a moment to think about

Why you are here today?

Who or what 'nudged' you to come?

Why did you say 'Yes' ?



[4] Pausing on the way...

Stop on the path anytime you want to...

Pray into your thoughts and let go of those thoughts you don't need just now... focus on the thoughts that seem most important...



[3] Walking the path...

The path may seem a little unusual at first... but as you walk soften your shoulders, release any tension in your body...

... enjoy the rhythm of your breathing

... notice any thoughts and feelings...



[2] Preparing to walk...

Pilgrims travel light... only take what you need for the journey...

Prayerfully place all those you love and all the things that keep you busy in God's hands... and step onto the path..

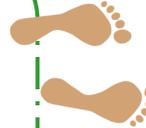
[5] Arriving at the centre..

It is good to arrive...

Rest for a while...

Give thanks for the journey, for this time of seeking a deeper closeness with God...

...and welcome God's peace and blessing...



[6] Returning back along the path...

When you are ready ... make your way back along the path...

Notice any changes in how you feel... any new thoughts...new decisions...?

When you come to the exit, step out, pray a concluding prayer and re-connect to your day.



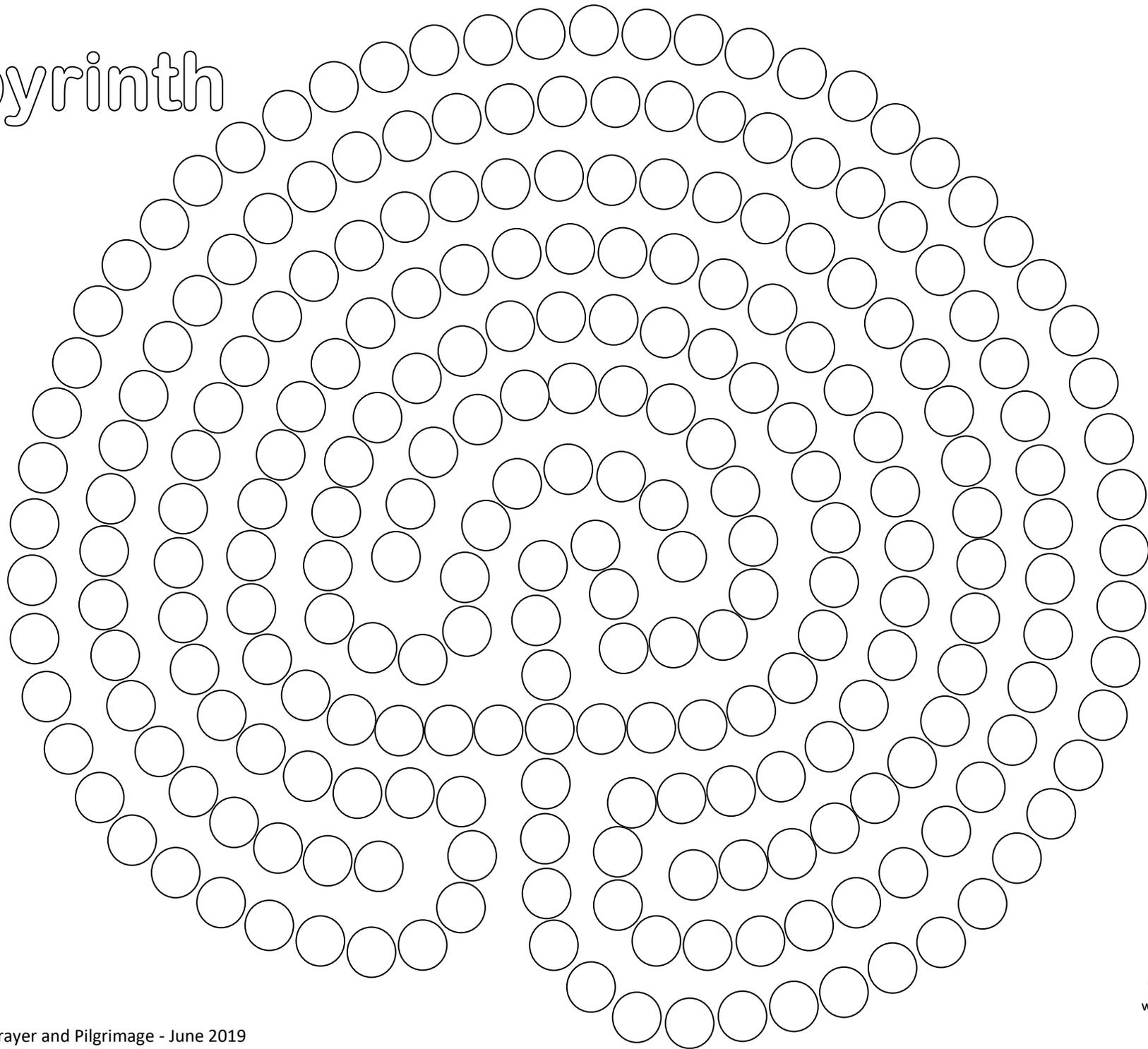
[7] Reflecting on your Pilgrimage...

You might like to find a way of remembering this prayer walk...

... writing in a journal or painting or drawing or creating something symbolic of your journey...

Reflect on them and stay in touch with the God moments of your pilgrimage.

Labyrinth



Praying with a Finger Labyrinth

- ◆ Sit comfortably, be still and gently pray: *I place myself in your presence O Lord, my God.*
- ◆ When you are ready... slowly trace the labyrinth path with a finger, use a finger on the hand that you do not write with, just let your thoughts come to the surface and let them flow... Jesus is with you every step of the way, you are never alone. You are always loved by God.
- ◆ When you reach the centre...consider your thoughts... What would you like to say to God at this moment?
- ◆ ...stay in the centre for a while and spend some time in prayer and reflection receiving God's love and blessing.
- ◆ When you are ready... return along the same path... return gratefully, prayerfully ... what do you notice about how you are feeling? Do you have any new thoughts or decisions to consider?
- ◆ As you exit the labyrinth give thanks and praise to God: *Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and shall be forever. Amen.*



*...did not our hearts burn within us as he
talked to us on the road...*

Luke 24:32