

## **The Labyrinth.... Then and Now**

The labyrinth as a sacred symbol has been used by many cultures and religious traditions. Examples of different labyrinths have been found at ancient sites throughout the world as widely distant as Scandinavia, Great Britain, Mexico, and India. Some are 3,700 years old and their origins remain a mystery.

All labyrinths offer deep spiritual, emotional and physical comfort to those who take advantage of this powerful yet calming experience. The labyrinth can allow us to focus on the present moment and can enable us to see who and where we are, and can assist in providing the energy, the vision and the courage to act on it.

The earliest known Christian labyrinth is located in a church in Algeria, with the words “Sancta

Ecclesia” (holy church) inscribed in its center.

During the Middle Ages, labyrinths were created on the floors of many European cathedrals to be walked as a substitute for the great Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The most famous of these is at Chartres in France. This pattern is also used at Washington National Cathedral in the District of Columbia.

### **A Prayer asking God’s Blessing**

Bless this labyrinth and all who walk it, O God. By the power of your Holy Spirit, make this a safe path, a path of discovery, a holy path. May all who walk this path be strengthened to serve all creation in your name.

Amen.

## **How to Walk a Labyrinth**

There is no set ritual for walking a labyrinth. The basic advice is to enter the labyrinth slowly, calming and clearing your mind. This may be done by repeating a prayer or chant.

Open your senses and focus on the process of taking slow and deliberate steps. Bring to mind a prayer or spiritual question to contemplate during the walk to the center. Reaching the center, pause to reflect, pray, listen for an answer or for deeper revelation. Now begin the return journey. Pray or reflect further. Upon exiting, use further reflection, prayer, or journaling to absorb the experience more fully.

## **Ocean View Presbyterian Church's Labyrinth**

Is 50 feet in diameter and has six walking circuits with a walking path leading up to it. The entrance will be through an arbor. The edge stone will be grey and set in concrete. The walkway will be 3/8" red gravel.

There is one entrance in and the same entrance out. Five 6-foot trees will be planted around the labyrinth to provide shade as the years pass.

Four benches will eventually surround the labyrinth, so that participants might sit and ponder or journal about the experience.

### **Who walked this land before us?**

In the early 1700's a tribe of indigenous people called the Assatiagues were forced out of Berlin, MD by the English. They

first went to Dirickson Creek, but then moved to the southern banks of the Indian River, from Piney Neck to Millsboro and Long Neck. In Sussex County they were fishermen, farmers, and small animal hunters. They moved to the beach in the summer to fish.

A story remembered by Wanda Powell, who lives on Oakland Avenue, across from the church – she relates that the Indians came to Bethany each summer, dragging teepees, alligators, and supplies. While there, they entertained the locals and visitors.

In 1705 they petitioned the Maryland Assembly for land for a reservation. In 1713 they were granted 1000 acres to establish a reservation (now the land below the Indian River, considered a part of Maryland. Indian Artifacts have been found in Ocean View and Millville.

*Information provided by  
Ocean View Historical Society*

7/30/2022

**Welcome to.....**

## **The Labyrinth At Ocean View Presbyterian Church**

**67 Central Avenue  
Ocean View, Delaware 19970  
302 539-3455  
[www.ovpc.org](http://www.ovpc.org)**



**“Solvitur ambulando”**

**“It is solved by walking.”  
St. Augustine**