

THE ORKNEY LABYRINTH



EAST MAINLAND CHURCH, KW17 2SB

WELCOME TO OUR LABYRINTH, A PLACE OF PRAYER, MEDITATION, AND CONTEMPLATION WHERE WE INVITE YOU TO PAUSE FOR A FEW MOMENTS AND REFLECT.

WHOEVER YOU ARE, AND WHATEVER YOUR REASON FOR USING THE LABYRINTH, WE WISH YOU GOD'S BLESSING.

<https://eastmainlandchurch.weebly.com/labyrinth>

What is a Prayer Labyrinth?

An ancient pattern, like a complex spiral, marked on the ground with just one path leading into the middle and back out again. In medieval times, labyrinths were usually associated with Christian worship.

Known as the "Roads to Jerusalem," they were often substituted for pilgrimages to the Holy Land when the Crusades were too dangerous and expensive to undertake. The most famous of these, the Chartres Cathedral labyrinth in France, dates from 1200 AD. Our labyrinth is based on this design. As a prayer tool, the labyrinth helps us slow down and focus on God's love. As you walk among the turnings, you lose track of direction and the outside world, thus quietening your mind.

Unlike mazes, where choices of direction have to be made and it is impossible to see the end of the journey, labyrinths offer no choices and lead to a central goal that is visible at every stage of the journey.

Guidelines for the Walk:

Walking a labyrinth for the first time can take a bit of getting used to. The path is yours to walk as you choose – your walk can be serious, prayerful, or playful.

Take time to walk at your own pace – fast or slow – with no pressure to perform. Walk it with an open mind and an open heart. It touches our sorrows and releases our joys – you may have a great sense of calm or you may find yourself feeling unsettled, fidgety, or restless. Just go with your feelings and allow them to emerge.

If you feel dissatisfied with your first attempt, then walk it again. No two walks will ever be the same. The more you walk it, the easier it becomes.

Quiet your mind and become aware of your breath – see if you can slow your breathing to a relaxed pace. Allow yourself to find the pace your body wants to go. The path is two ways. Those

going in will meet you coming out. You may "pass" people or let others step around you. Do what feels natural.

Three Stages of the Walk:

RELEASE – Walking in: A time to let go of the details of your life or what blocks you. This is the act of shedding thoughts and distractions. A time to open the heart and quiet the mind. Making space for God to meet you.

RECEIVE – The Centre: When you reach the centre, stay there as long as you like. It's a place of rest, meditation, or prayer. Receive what is there for you to receive.

RETURN – Walking out: As you leave, following the same path out of the centre as you came in, you enter the third stage, which is joining God. A time to gain direction or comfort from God to do the work for which you feel your soul is reaching.

Walking the Labyrinth:

Journeying into the centre and then back out, this labyrinth takes approximately ten minutes to complete.

As you follow the path, you are first directed towards the central point and then away from it, each loop bringing you on a convoluted course to the centre. This is symbolic of life's journey.

The physical construction of the labyrinth ensures that you are compelled to journey slowly; this "slowing down" itself being central to the prayer and meditation process.

On reaching the centre, it is suggested that you pause for a few moments in silence and contemplation, allowing the peace of this area to wash over you.

Anxiety is endemic in our fast-paced society, but the promises of God help to transform our thinking and calm our souls. Our labyrinth helps to reduce stress and calm anxiety in times of need.

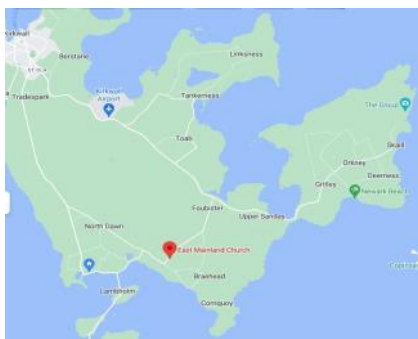
"Nothing can be loved at speed. God leads us to the slow path; to the joyous insights of the pilgrim; another way of knowing: another way of being." - Michael Leunig



Further resources for walking the Labyrinth can be found on our website or by scanning the QR code below.



Find us with-what 3 words: though seagulls furnish



EAST MAINLAND CHURCH SERVICES SUNDAY 11AM

Many thanks to Alan Aim for all his research and work in cutting out our Labyrinth.