

# What exactly is a Labyrinth?

## ***Background***

The Labyrinth is a single, spiraling path that leads to a central area. You walk the same path back out returning to the beginning. There are no tricks or dead ends unlike mazes. The labyrinth is often referred to as an archetypal image as it emerged in different cultures over 4000 years ago and is thought of as a mirror or metaphor for the spiritual journey and the evolutionary spiral of life. The Labyrinth you are walking is a replica of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century Labyrinth in Chartres Cathedral, France.

## ***The Walk***

There are three stages to the walk.

- ***The Walk to the Center – Releasing, Letting Go***  
We release or let go whatever we need to and those things which are no longer serving us or others.
- ***At the Center – Receiving***  
A place of meditation and prayer. The center is a place to pause for a while and be open to receiving whatever you need. It is a place of listening and sensing what needs or wants to emerge within you or within a situation or issue you are reflecting on.
- ***The Walk Back – Return, Integration***  
We crystallize the insight or idea and return to the world renewed and empowered. The return path is the start of embodying this new insight or way of being.

## ***Guidelines for the Walk***

- There is no right or wrong way to walk or move in a labyrinth.
- Do what is right and natural for you.
- Please remove your shoes before walking to protect the canvas.
- Allow yourself to go the pace your body wants.
- There will be comings and goings on the labyrinth as we start the walk at different times and meet people on the path – do what feels natural to accommodate or pass others.