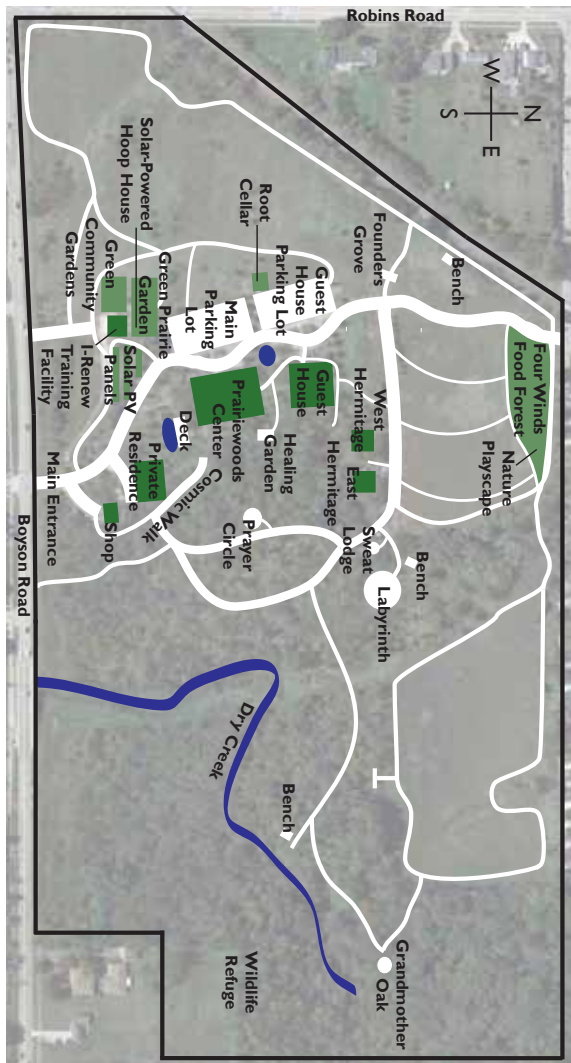


Where is the Prairiewoods labyrinth?

The outdoor labyrinth at Prairiewoods is located at the edge of the woods. To find it, follow the road on the north side of the Guest House, pass the hermitages and enter the woods. Turn left and follow the short trail that winds down the hill to the labyrinth. Prairiewoods also has a 24-foot indoor labyrinth. It is available for organizations to borrow. For more information, please contact Prairiewoods.



About Prairiewoods

Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center is an ecospirituality retreat and conference center in the Franciscan tradition. It is located on 72 acres of woods and prairie on the outskirts of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Prairiewoods offers a variety of programs and retreats, as well as conference space to rent. Please join us for an enriching experience in this relaxing, nurturing environment!



Prairiewoods is sponsored by Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.



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Find us on social media:    2-2024

Prairiewoods Labyrinth



Practice a 5,000-Year-Old Tradition by Walking our Labyrinth

PRAIRIEWOODS
A Place of Peace and Transformation



What is a labyrinth?

A labyrinth is a powerful ancient symbol of our journey through life. It has been a part of almost every culture and religious tradition in history. The labyrinth is not a maze, with dead ends and wrong turns. It is a single path that leads to the center of the circle and then back out. This winding path takes us on an inward pilgrimage to our own center and leads us toward the Divine. Even though we each have our own unique path to follow in life, in many ways our journeys are similar as we are drawn to search for truth, to overcome obstacles, to face our fears and to deal with our grief. Walking the labyrinth is a spiritual practice that can help us in that process.

Why should I walk a labyrinth?

People walk a labyrinth for various reasons, such as to receive insight about a decision, to be transformed spiritually, to heal, to reduce stress or to bring about changes in their lives. Christians might simply open themselves to traveling with Christ along the way. One traditional approach is based on a three-fold path that includes:

Releasing: As you make the inward journey, become conscious of all the things you need to let go of in your life: past hurts, resentments, addictions, compulsions, worries about selfish desires. Empty your mind of the concerns of everyday life.

Receiving: As you rest at the center, be open to new inspirations, insights and clarity about your life. Receive whatever gifts are given. How will these gifts fit into your future? Stay in the center for as long as you wish.

Returning: As you journey outward from the center, be conscious of taking ownership for any gifts you have received and ask for the power to act on new insights. Be aware of God's presence and carry the Divine light forward into the world.

How should I walk a labyrinth?

There is no right or wrong way to walk a labyrinth. You simply follow the path to the center, going at your own pace. It is helpful to walk in mindfulness and with a specific intention. Before entering, you might choose an intention and state it to yourself.

You could also take a suggestion from Buddhist spiritual leader Thich Nhat Hanh to focus all your attention on the soles of your feet, using the image of moving away from the old and into the new with every step of the journey. You might:

- align the pace of your walking with the pace of your breath
- pause briefly at each turn to say a prayer, repeat a meditative phrase or simply focus on your breathing
- repeat a phrase, prayer or mantra in your mind throughout your walk

It may help to ask yourself as you step into the labyrinth, "What am I seeking?" Then leave all expectations behind. As you walk, consciously observe what is going on within you and around you.

So pay attention. Be open. Relax and enjoy the experience.

