



Guided Labyrinth Walk

October 3, 2024

Opening Prayer

Spirit of the Harvest Time,
help us gather in the goodness
of all we have sown these last few months.

From the seeds of food planted
to the dreams we have cultivated,
bless all that has come to fullness
that it be in service of life.

Spark gratitude in our hearts
for this moment of fullness
so we know ourselves as vessels of your abundance.

Let this harvest be a gathering in of love.

We gather in the image of the Creator

who is a community of love.

We gather in the name of the Redeemer

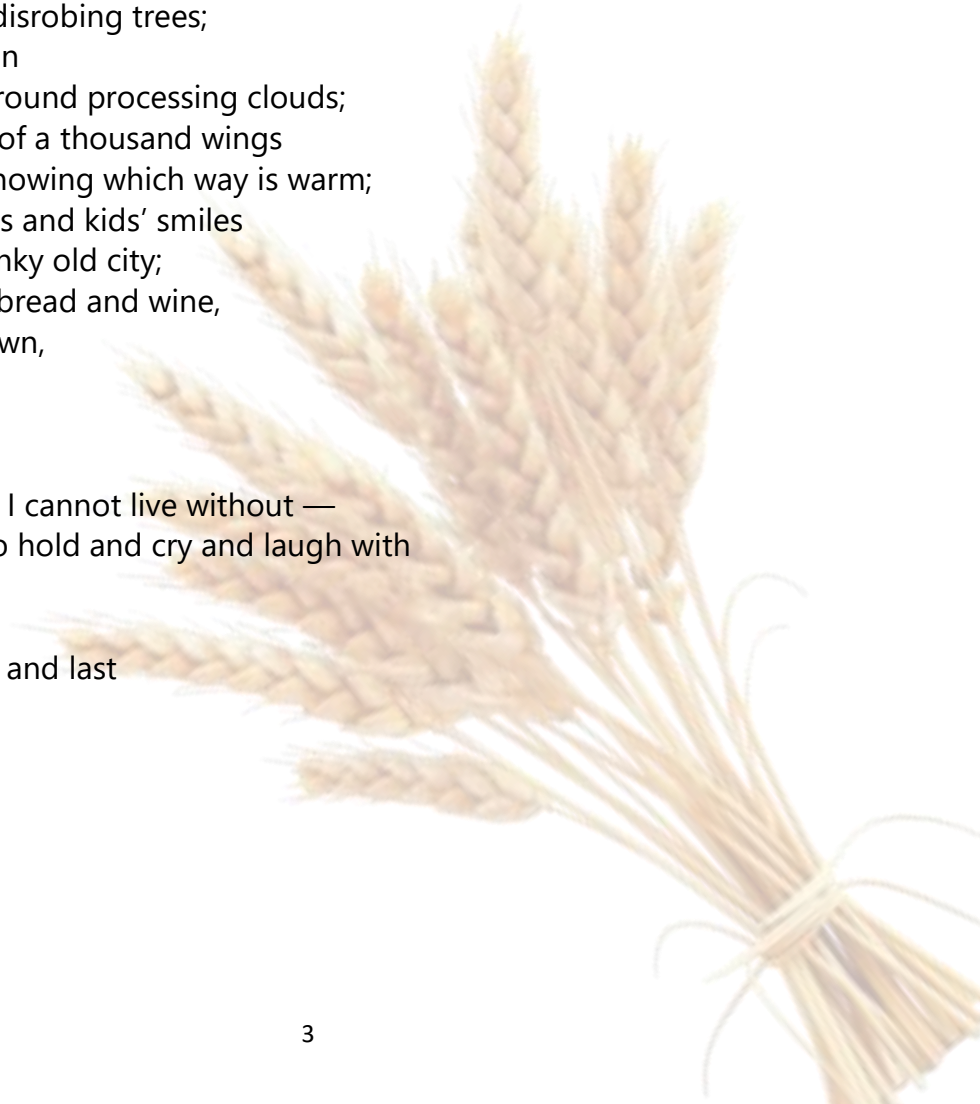
who reconciles all of creation.

We gather in the presence of the Life Giver

who inspires new life and renews it.

Reading: Waken in Me a Sense of Joy by Ted Loder

O extravagant God,
in this ripening, red-tinged autumn,
waken in me a sense of joy
 in just being alive,
joy for nothing in general
 except everything in particular;
joy in sun and rain
 mating with earth to birth a harvest;
joy in soft light
 through shyly disrobing trees;
joy in acolyte moon
 setting halos around processing clouds;
joy in the beating of a thousand wings
 mysteriously knowing which way is warm;
joy in wagging tails and kids' smiles
 and in this spunky old city;
joy in the taste of bread and wine,
 the smell of dawn,
 a touch,
 a song,
 a presence;
joy in having what I cannot live without —
 other people to hold and cry and laugh with
joy in love,
 in you;
and that all at first and last
 is grace.



Litany: Listening to Autumn by Macrina Wiederkehr

Autumn is slipping through summer's branches
and I am listening.

I am listening to the poetry of autumn.

Come, Holy Spirit, I am listening.

I am listening to the trees taking off their lush green garments.

I am listening to the leaves turning, turning, ever turning.

I am listening to the burning bush of autumn.

I am listening to the falling of this season.

Come, Blazing Spirit, I am listening.

I am listening to the music of the forest's undergrowth,

to the crunch of leaves beneath my feet,

to the miracle of crumbling leaves becoming earth again.

I am listening to the beauty of fragility of aging.

Come, Ancient Spirit, I am listening.

I am listening to the wheel of the year turning

to the cycle of the seasons,

to the call for the harmony and balance.

I am listening to the circle of life.

Come, Eternal Spirit, I am listening.

I am listening to days grow shorter,

to the air turning crisp and cool,

to the slow waning of the light,

to the stars that shine in cold, dark nights.

I am listening to the growing harvest moon.

Come, Spirit of the Universe, I am listening.

I am listening to happy harvest cries,
to hearts overflowing with thanksgiving,
to tables laden with gifts from the earth,
to baskets overflowing with fruit,
I am listening to the bountiful gift of autumn.

Come, Spirit of Abundance, I am listening.

I am listening to a call for inner growth,
to my need to let go of material possessions,
to my need to reach out for invisible gifts.
I am listening to a call for transformation.

Come, Life-giving Spirit, I am listening.

Closing Prayer

For everything that emerges from the earth
thanks be to you, O God,
Holy Root of being.

May we know that we are of You
may we know that we are one in You
may we know that we are one with You
together one.

Guide us

open us

lead us,

that we may know the holiness of wholeness

that we may learn the strength of humility

that together we may live close to the earth

and grow in grounded glory.

Glory be to you, Great Creating Spirit, and on earth peace.

*This concludes our service. We invite you to walk the labyrinth or be seated
and consider the harvest and the plenitude that your life holds.*

What is a labyrinth?

A labyrinth is a pattern, usually in the form of a circle, that has one path, which begins at the outer edge and winds around to the center. Unlike a maze, there are no dead ends. The path inward is as important as the path outward.

A classical labyrinth has seven cycles, each representing a stage of life, and seven U-turns as we learn to change course throughout life. The turning circuits of a labyrinth remind us that life changes and we experience transformation.

Walking the Labyrinth

Walking the labyrinth is an “active way of praying.” It allows for integration of mind, body, and spirit. There is no “right” way to pray and no “right” way to walk a labyrinth. It’s about letting go, relaxing, and allowing the presence of the Creator to lead and speak to you.

Walking the labyrinth may provide a variety of experiences. The walk may provide a greater sense of closeness to the Creator, nature or fellow walkers and the community. The walk may provide clarity on problems and questions or relief from a stressful world. Walking the labyrinth may bring comfort and peace.

Sources and resources for further reading:

- *Exploring the Labyrinth: A Guide for Healing and Spiritual Growth* by Melissa Gayle West (2002, Penguin Group)
- *Walking the Sacred Path: Rediscovering the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Practice* (Revised & edited by) Lauren Artress (2006, Broadway Books)
- *The Circle of Life: The Heart's Journey Through the Seasons* by Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr (2005, Sorin Books)
- *Praying with the Earth* by John Philip Newell (2011, The Canterbury Press)



Spiritual deepening toward wholeness.

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