

Advent 2020

I Believe...Even When

Epworth United Methodist Church

A virtual labyrinth walk / meditation

Photos and design by Judy Cayot

Welcome to the Labyrinth

Labyrinths are ancient patterns found in many cultures around the world. They date as far back as 5,000 years. Mazes are different than labyrinths. There are no dead ends in a labyrinth. Their design is based on the spiral in nature, with one path leading to the center and back out again.

Suggestions for an enjoyable walk (for group walks though much applies if you walk alone):

- Take a moment before you start into the labyrinth to center yourself and be present in the moment – focusing on your breath sometimes helps
- Allow space between people when entering the labyrinth
- Find your own natural pace, feel free to pass people or to stop
- The path is a two-way street; you may meet people going in or coming out. Do what feels natural.
- When you arrive at the center, stay as long as you want
- Follow the same path out
- Some folks see the labyrinth as a three-part journey –
 - Releasing: letting go of burdens/worries/regrets on the way in
 - Renewing: in touch with the source of life/spirit in the center
 - Returning: re-entering the world on the path out – taking whatever you received
- There is no right way or wrong way to walk a labyrinth

I Believe...Even When

I believe in the sun, I believe in the sun,
even when, even when it's not shining.

I believe in love, I believe in love, even when,
even when I don't feel it.

I believe in God, I believe in God, even when,
even when God is silent.

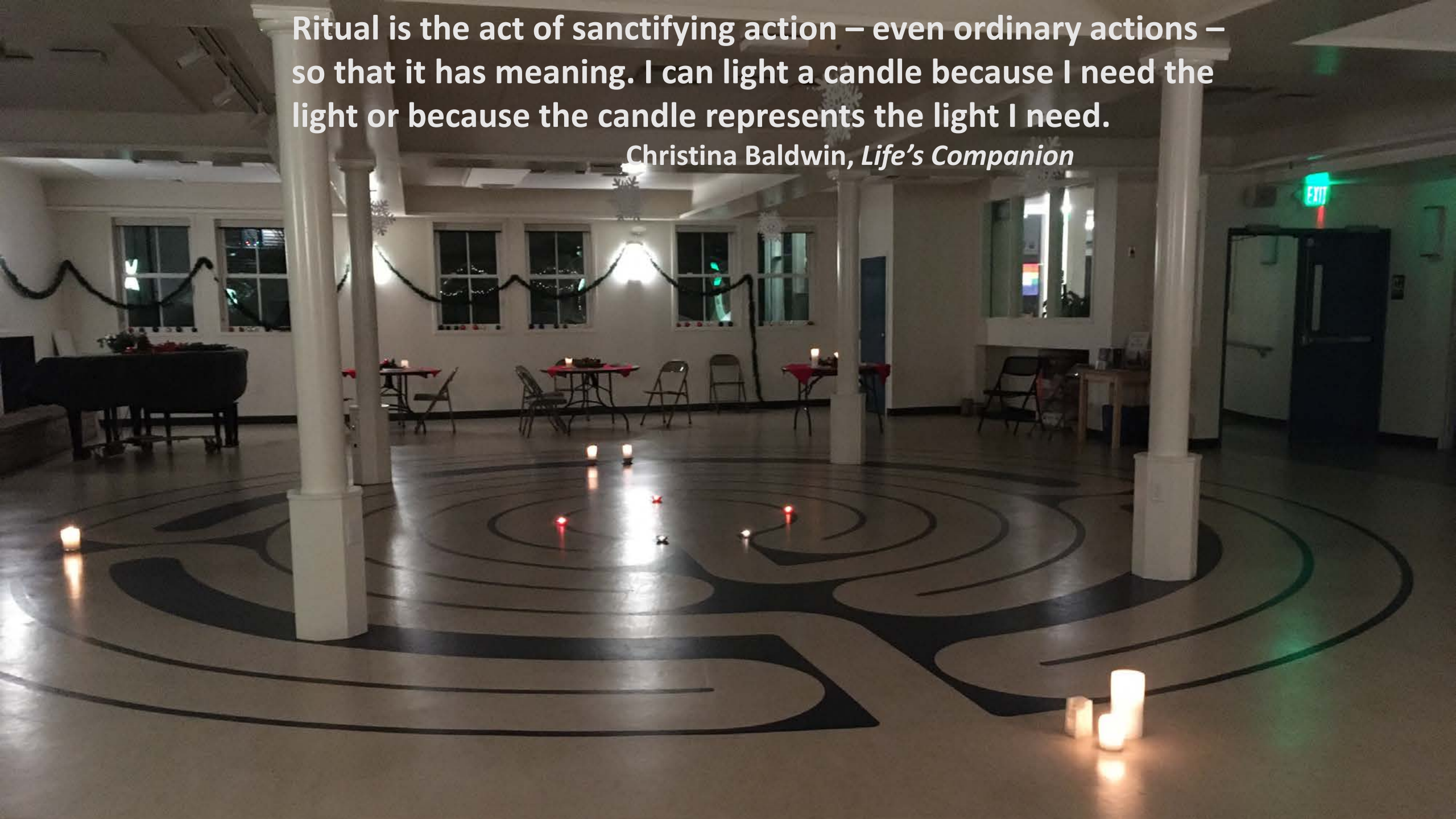
Epworth United Methodist Church - labyrinth



Grateful for this space...even though we cannot be there now– take a minute to feel in your body the times you have walked here - and the community that gathers in this room. Hear the laughter, feel the hugs.

Ritual is the act of sanctifying action – even ordinary actions – so that it has meaning. I can light a candle because I need the light or because the candle represents the light I need.

Christina Baldwin, *Life's Companion*



Stained Glass Reflection on Grace Cathedral Labyrinth

***Imagine. Something yearns in
us to come round right.
Something creaky, rusty,
heavy, almost calcified within
us tries – in spite of us and all
of our fears and self-deceptions
– to turn and turn and creak
and turn again and come
round a little truer.***

**— Victoria Safford, *Walking
Toward Morning***



Courtyard Labyrinth at St Alban's Church in Albany

I define hope as distinct from optimism or idealism. It has nothing to do with wishing. It references reality at every turn and reveres truth. It lives open-eyed and wholeheartedly with the darkness that is woven ineluctably into the light of life and sometimes seems to overcome it. Hope ... is a choice that becomes a habit that becomes spiritual muscle memory. It's a renewable resource for moving through life as it is, not as we wish it to be.

Krista Tippett, *Becoming Wise*



*There is
light in the
darkness.*

*You just
have to
find it.*

bell hooks



The Peace of Wild Things

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives
may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great
heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still
water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

William Berry, Collected Poems



Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve
labyrinth in an old quarry

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the
words,
And never stops at all,
And sweetest in the gale is
heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.
I've heard it in the chilliest land,
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.

Emily Dickinson

View from path to
Land's End in San Francisco





Relax, breathe, feel the earth...Do nothing extra

Sometimes light streams all around us, enveloping us in warmth and hope. Sometimes dark engulfs us, a single star our only light. Some days it seems we bushwhack through thick brush for hours to behold a solitary ray of sun. Some days we are luminosity itself.



With the perspective that gratefulness offers, we are able to find our way. We are reminded that we have been in the dark before, that we have found light and it has found us, and that there are others waiting in deeper darkness, imploring us to shine.
Editors of
Gratefulness.org

Revelation
(After Juliana of Norwich)

then showed me he
In right hand held
everything that is

the hand was a
woman's
creation all lusty
a meek bird's egg

nesting there waiting
her word and I heard it

*new born I make you
nestling I love you
homing I keep you*

Daniel Berrigan

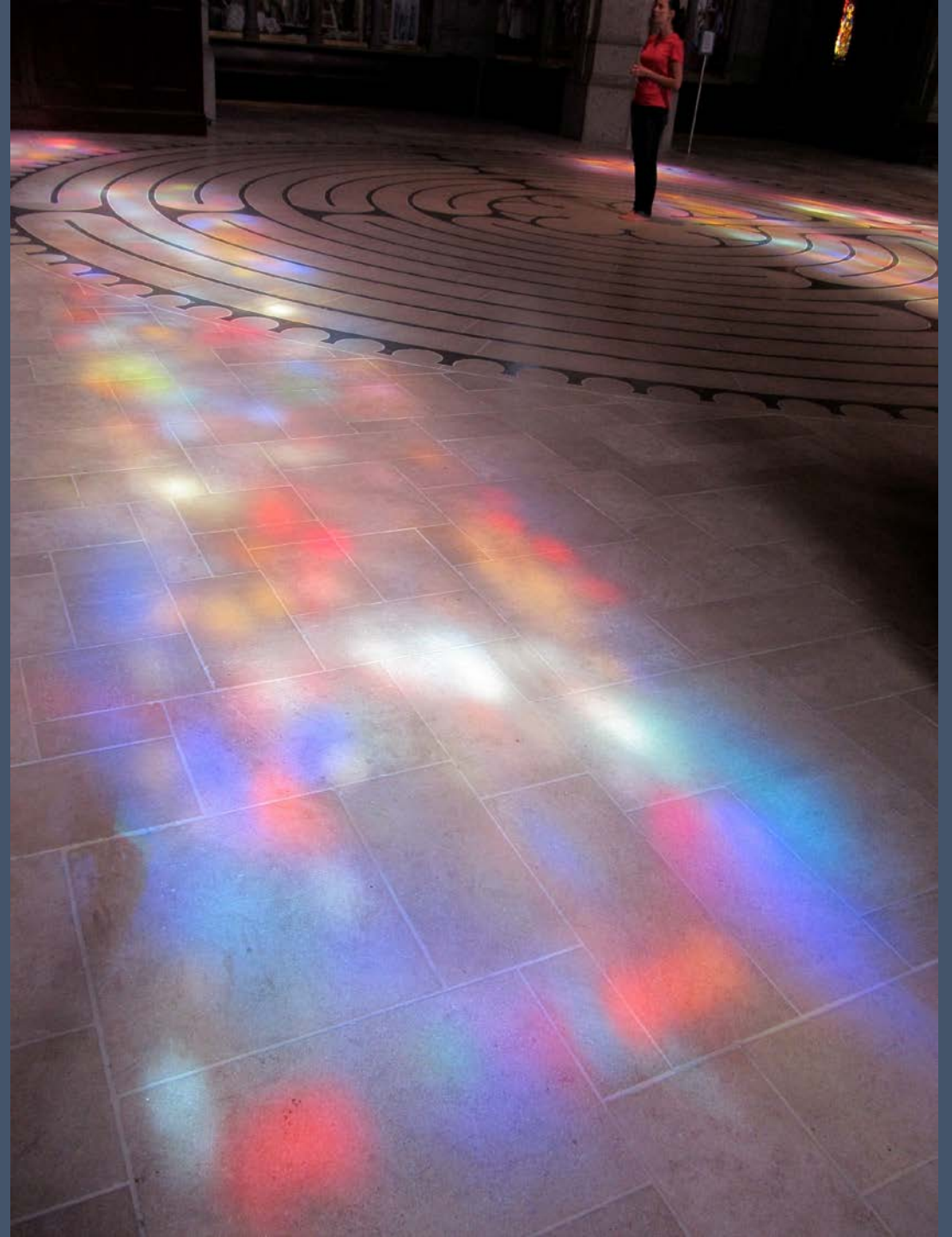
More smiling, less worrying. More compassion, less judgment.
More blessed, less stressed. More love, less hate.

— Roy T. Bennett, *The Light in the Heart*



**She told me about a group of people in Ginen
[kind of like Heaven...] who carry the sky on
their heads. They are the people of Creation.
Strong, tall, and mighty people who can bear
anything. Their Maker, she said, gives them
the sky to carry because they are strong. These
people do not know who they are, but if you
see a lot of trouble in your life, it is because
you were chosen to carry part of the sky on
your head.**

Edwidge Danticat, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*



As you move from this meditation into the rest of your day – or into preparation for the night – please remember you are loved. The world needs people who love and who know they are loved. In closing, I offer you this ee cummings poem/prayer...in a time of depression and sadness, I said this prayer aloud every morning. It helped me remember that gratitude is a place to begin, and to begin again.

Blessings on your journey, Judy Cayot

i thank you god for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and love and wings and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any-lifted from the no
of all nothing-human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

ee cummings