

Finger Labyrinth Collection

For the Tenth Triennial Gathering, we're making and collecting finger labyrinths. We have patterns for those who sew, knit and crochet. The patterns can easily be adapted for embroidery or felting, so it's a project for every fiber artist, new or experienced.

The finger labyrinths will be given to the voting members at our Tenth Triennial Convention (2017), and every participant at the triennial gathering will receive one too. If we exceed our goal of 5,000 finger labyrinths, we'll donate the additional labyrinths to chaplains in schools, hospitals, hospices and nursing homes.

Work alone or get together in a group for regular sessions. Whether you're attending the gathering or not, you're invited to participate. Don't know how to sew, knit or crochet? Find someone in your congregation who can teach you. Imagine women and girls of all ages, gathering together in prayer, creating beautiful finger labyrinths!

Knitters and crocheters may find free patterns for square finger labyrinths at irishlace.net and at evelynclarkdesigns.com. Ravelry members may search on the word "labyrinth" to find several other free and paid patterns.

In this fact sheet you'll find

- An explanation of how labyrinths are used
- Prayers to offer as you begin and finish a finger labyrinth
- Labels to attach to each finished labyrinth
- Directions for sewing and crocheting finger labyrinths

Ship finished finger labyrinths to this address for arrival before June 1, 2017.

Women of the ELCA
Finger Labyrinth Collection
8765 W Higgins Road
Chicago IL 60631-4101

Labyrinths may also be brought to the exhibit hall at the Minneapolis Convention Center during the gathering.

What is a labyrinth?

A labyrinth, an ancient symbol, offers us a metaphor for life's journey. Unlike a maze, a labyrinth has but one path; you follow the path in to the center and out again. Many people walk labyrinths for different reasons, but Christians most often walk a labyrinth in prayer or as a contemplative exercise.

During the Middle Ages, if Christians were unable to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, they often would walk a labyrinth closer to home, symbolic of the pilgrimage. The earliest known Christian labyrinth was in an ancient church in what is now Algeria, dating back to the early fourth century.

Labyrinths appear in many traditions and cultures, in many religions and philosophies, throughout human history for millennia.

Here are three suggestions for ways to be with any labyrinth. There is no right or wrong way to experience a labyrinth. Establish your own pace, and be aware of yourself as you move through the labyrinth.

- Begin at the entrance, centering yourself. Consider the prayers you will bring to your labyrinth journey. Joys and celebrations? Concerns? Thanksgivings? Offer the prayers as you move toward the center of the labyrinth. Remain at the center as you open your heart and mind to God. Return to the edge of the labyrinth, aware of God's conversation with you.



all anew

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING

JULY 13-16, 2017

Minneapolis, Minnesota

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- A labyrinth journey is not limited to prayer; it can also be a source of releasing, receiving and thanks-giving. What will you release or leave behind as you move through the labyrinth? Remain at the center as long as you wish, receiving gifts of insight and peace. Return to the labyrinth's edge, offering thanks, both for the letting go and the receiving.
- Another approach is repeating a favorite word or phrase—a mantra—as you move through the labyrinth.

Unlike a floor labyrinth, where others might be walking at the same time, a finger labyrinth is often experienced in solitude. Find a quiet space. Begin by taking time to breathe, relax and center yourself. Place a finger at the entrance and trace the labyrinth's circuit, taking time to pause at any point, breathing, relaxing into the labyrinth. Remain at the center as you wish, and when you are ready, trace your way out. When your labyrinth journey is complete, you may place both hands on the labyrinth, offering a blessing.

Prayer upon beginning to craft a finger labyrinth

Teach us your ways, O Lord, that we may walk in your truth. As I take up my tools, my materials and my small skill to craft this little labyrinth, I pray that it may be a sign of your grace, your peace, and your lovingkindness to those who will use it. This I ask in the name of your Son our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer upon completing a finger labyrinth:

Teach us your ways, O Lord, that we may walk in your truth. May the prayers that I have worked into this little labyrinth rise to you, and in return, may your blessings rain down upon its recipients. May all labyrinths, whether small or large, crafted in our homes or encountered in your world, be signs to us of your grace, your peace, and your lovingkindness. This I ask in the name of the One who is the way, the truth, and the life, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Print this tag, fold in half and attach to your finger laybyrinth

How to use this finger labyrinth

Begin at the entrance, centering yourself. Consider the prayers you will bring to your labyrinth journey. Joys and celebrations? Concerns? Thanksgivings? Place a finger at the entrance and trace the labyrinth's circuit, taking time to pause at any point, breathing, relaxing into the labyrinth. Offer the prayers as you move toward the center of the labyrinth. Remain at the center as you wish, and when you are ready, trace your way out, returning to the edge of the labyrinth, aware of God's conversation with you. When your labyrinth journey is complete, you may place both hands on the labyrinth, offering a blessing.

This finger labyrinth was made by

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(NAME)

..... IN
(NAME OF CONGREGATION)

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(CITY, STATE)

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Crocheted spiral finger labyrinth

This little spiral finger labyrinth can be finished simply, as shown, or the beginning (or is it the end?) of its path might be ornamented with a charm, tassel or loop. Worked in kitchen cotton yarn, it may serve as a spa washcloth or coaster for your teapot when it's not on duty as a finger labyrinth.

A very helpful video demonstration for starting a two-color spiral with an adjustable ring may be found at www.crocheteverafter.com. This pattern is adapted from Deja Jetmir's Baby Sensory Blanket, for sale on Etsy.

Materials:

Worsted cotton yarn (e.g., Lion Cotton, Lily Sugar and Cream);
1 ball Color A and 1 ball Color B
G hook
3 stitch markers

Abbreviations and other notes:

SC: Single crochet

HDC: Half double crochet

DC: Double crochet

2DC: 2 double crochet in same stitch

St, Sts: Stitch, stitches

Adjustable ring: See video demonstration noted above.

DC in back loop: Insert hook not under both loops of stitch below, but under the back loop only. This creates the defined "curb" of the spiral labyrinth's path.

Round 1:

With Color A, make adjustable ring. In adjustable ring, work [CH 1, SC, HDC, 2DC]. Place marker. Remove hook. Now join Color B: put a slipknot on the hook and work in same adjustable ring [CH 1, SC, HDC, 2DC]. Place marker. Do not remove hook. Draw ring closed. 8 sts.

Round 2:

With Color B on hook, 2DC in back loop of the four sts of Color A in row below (that is, SC, HDC, 2DC). Place marker, remove hook. With Color A, 2DC 2 in back loop of the four sts of Color B in row below. Place marker. Do not remove hook. 16 sts.

Round 3:

With Color A on hook, [2DC in back loop of each st] 8 times. Place marker. Remove hook. With Color B, [2DC in back loop of each st] 8 times. Place marker. Do not remove hook. 32 sts.

Round 4:

With Color B on hook, [2DC in back loop of next st, DC in back loop of next st] 8 times. Place marker. Remove hook. With Color A, [2DC in back loop of next st, DC in back loop of next st] 8 times. Place marker. Do not remove hook. 48 sts.

Round 5:

With Color A on hook, [2DC in back loop of next st, DC in back loop of next 3 sts] 6 times. Place marker. Remove hook. With Color B, [2DC in back loop of next st, DC in back loop of next 3 sts] 6 times. Place marker. Do not remove hook. 60 sts.

Round 6:

With Color B on hook, [2DC in back loop of next st, DC in back loop of next 5 sts] 5 times. Place marker. Remove hook. With Color A, [2DC in back loop of next st, DC in back loop of next 5 sts] 5 times. 70 sts.

End:

You might choose to finish by simply tying off the last st of each color, or chain 2 and attach a charm to the last st of each color, or whatever else feels right. In any case, weave in the ends securely.

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Quilted finger labyrinth

Supplies needed:

- Backing fabric: 10½ inch square of 100% cotton
- Low-loft batting: 8½ inch square
- Front fabric: 8½ inch square of 100% cotton (little design, should read more like a solid)
- Paper labyrinth pattern, cut to 8½ inch square
- Straight pins
- Thread to contrast with front fabric

Instructions

1. Assemble the quilt sandwich:
 - Place backing fabric on surface, with wrong side facing up.
 - Center the low-loft batting on top of the backing.
 - Place the front fabric on top of the batting, with the wrong side facing the batting.
 - Center the paper labyrinth pattern on top of the front fabric.
 - Pin the layers together. It's enough to place one pin in each corner.
 - Make sure the back is smooth, with no puckers.
2. Adjust the straight stitch size on your sewing machine to a very small stitch length.
3. Stitch the four layers together, beginning at an entry point on the labyrinth pattern. Depending upon the pattern selected, you may have to stop and start the stitching in order to trace the entire pattern with the straight stitch.
4. Remove the pins and tear away with the paper labyrinth pattern. The paper will easily tear away because you used a very small stitch length.
5. Using a zig-zag stitch (or another dense decorative stitch), stitch over the straight stitch. Remember to adjust the stitch length as necessary. You are now creating the labyrinth pattern.
6. To create the binding, begin by folding the backing fabric on one side up so that the raw edge meets the edge of the quilt top. Finger-press the fold. Then fold the backing up onto the quilt top. Pin in place. Continue with the other three sides, mitering the corners as you go. Working on the quilt top, stitch the binding in place with a straight stitch, a small distance from the inner binding edge. This creates a scant half-inch binding.

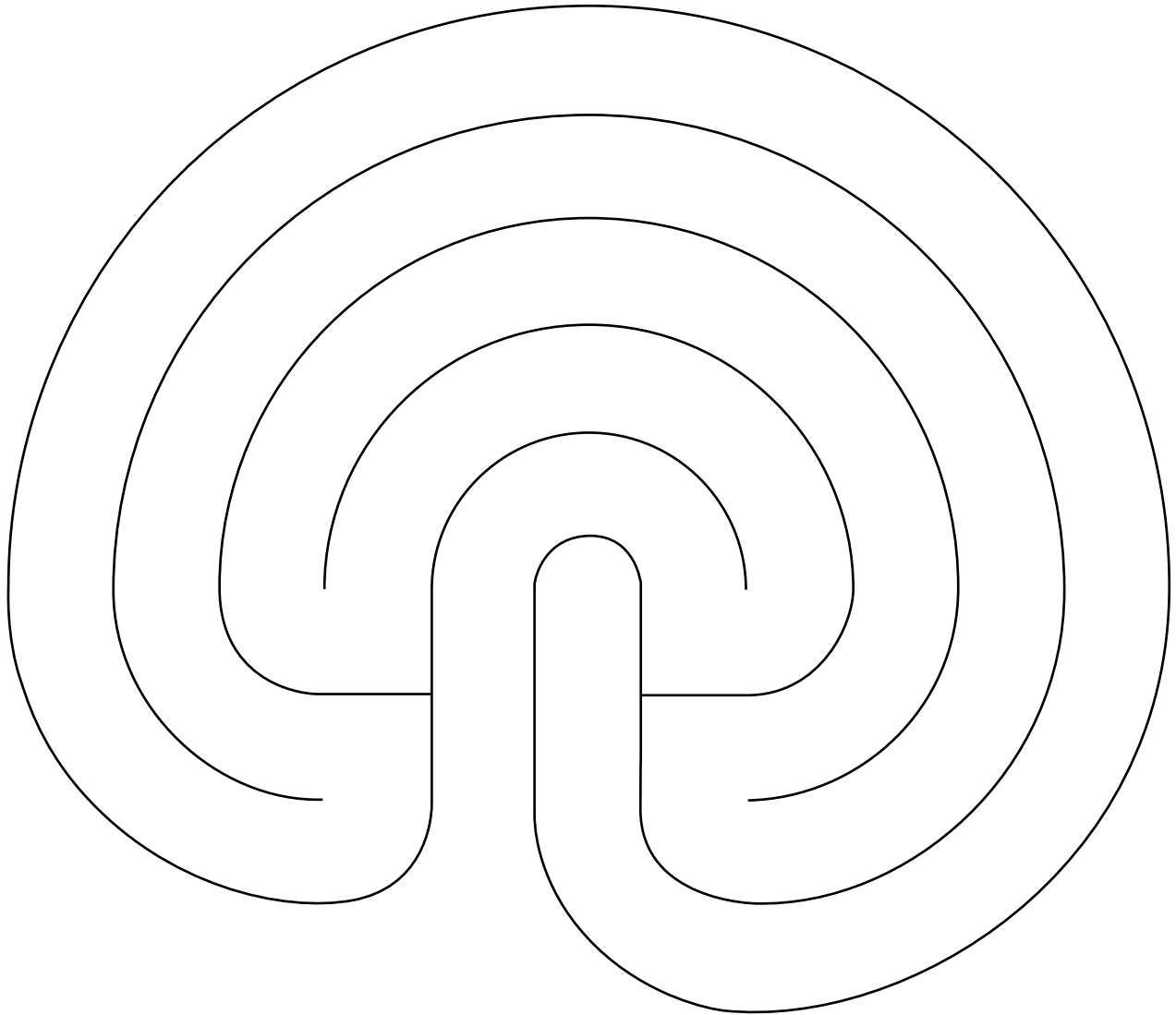
Tips:

- Select a quilt top fabric that reads like a solid or has a subtle small print. A busy fabric will distract from the labyrinth's design.
- If making multiple labyrinths, select a neutral thread color to use on all labyrinths, making sure there's enough contrast between the thread and the quilt top. Gray works well. Because a zig-zag stitch can use a lot of thread, wind more than one bobbin at once so you don't have to pause mid-project to wind a bobbin.
- Depending upon the labyrinth pattern used, some buckling of the surface can be expected because of the zig-zag stitch. The tighter the stitch, the greater the possible pucker. The quilted labyrinth can be ironed and most of the buckling will go away.
- Replace needle as needed. The paper pattern will dull the needle.
- As an alternate to steps 2 and 3, before step 1, you might trace the pattern onto the front fabric, either placing the fabric on a light box or tracing the pattern with tracing paper and a wheel. You might also consider printing the design directly onto the front fabric.

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Pattern 1

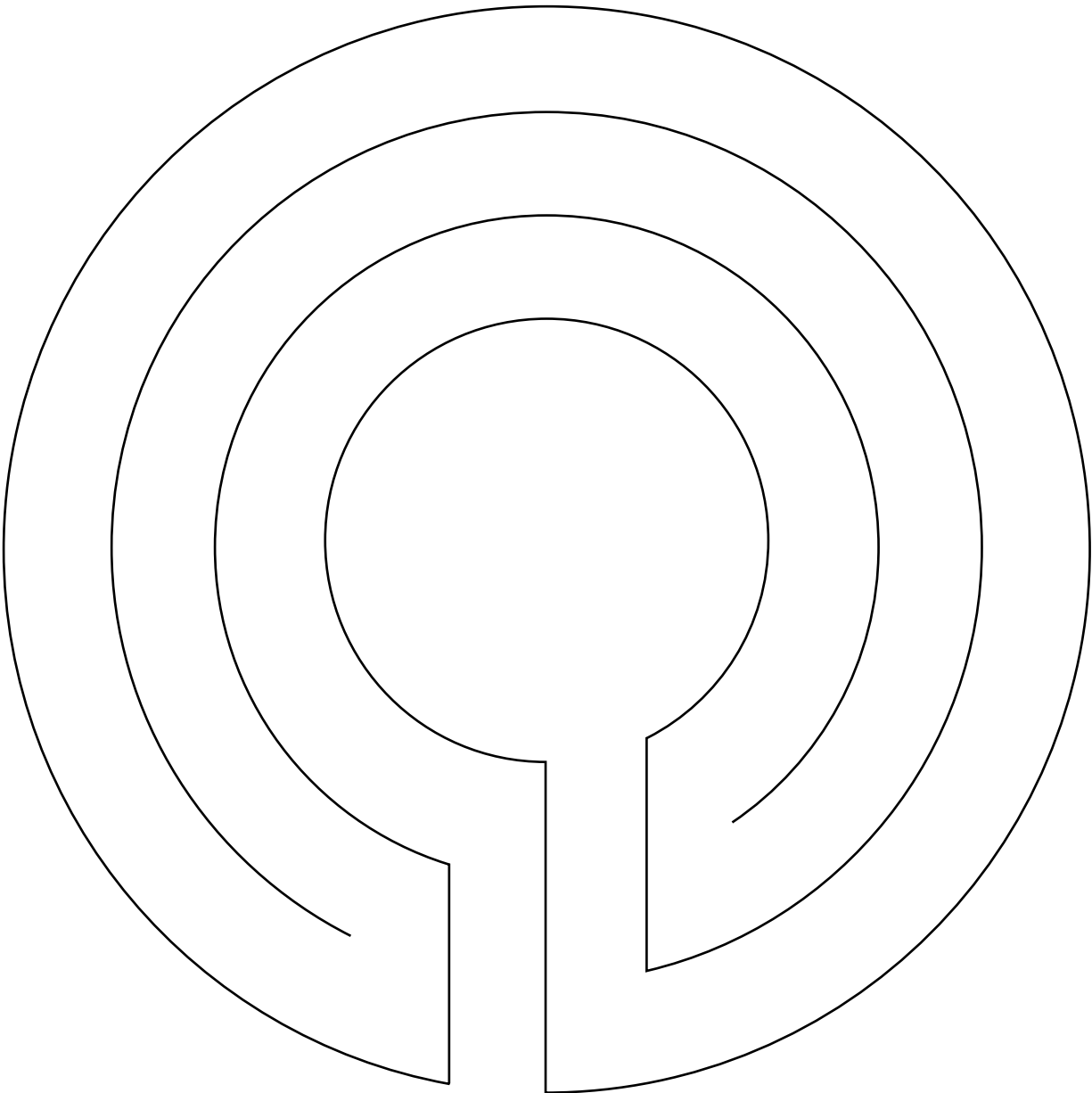
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Finger Labyrinth Collection

Pattern 2

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Finger Labyrinth Collection

Pattern 3

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