



St John the Evangelist, Bexley
Part of the Bexley Team Ministry

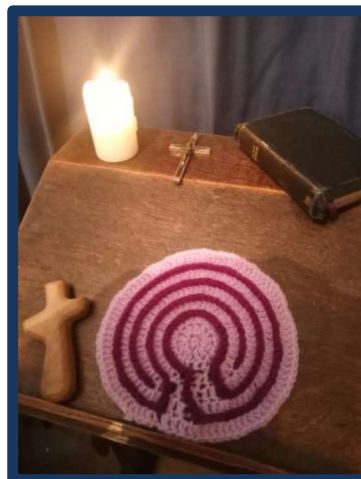


Lockdown Labyrinth

For many centuries Christians have used labyrinths as an aid to prayer and contemplation. For those who were unable to travel on pilgrimage, to walk a labyrinth provided a ‘condensed’ or local way to make a spiritual journey and walking prayer, making intentional steps along the path. You can find labyrinths on the floors of churches, cathedrals and retreat houses across the world and more locally there is an open-air labyrinth in the grounds of Bexley’s Hall Place.

Under the restrictions of the global pandemic, we are unable to make our pilgrimages, or even visit the sites of labyrinths, however we are able to engage with a ‘finger labyrinth’: A much smaller, portable labyrinth where the path to the centre is traced with a finger.

As the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have called on this period of lockdown to be a ‘month of prayer’, you may want to use this as a resource to assist with your own devotions. You may be experienced with a crochet hook, or this may be a new skill for you to develop as a ‘lockdown project’, either way we hope that your journey through the labyrinth, in the making, the journeying and the sharing will strengthen you in faith and in the depth of your relationship with God, as we journey together as a pilgrims through these difficult days.



Pattern

You will need:

- Two colours of double knit wool
- 4.5mm crochet hook
- Scissors & darning needle to finish the ends.

Note for beginners: There are countless tutorial videos online explaining each stitch used. Content and teaching style vary so feel free to 'shop around'. You may also find it useful to make a connection with a friend who can offer guidance or learn with you.

This pattern uses UK terms: (1DC UK=1SC US, 1tr UK=1DC US)

Stage 1: The Circle: (Colour 1)

The circle is a pattern which seems to come naturally to seasoned crochet enthusiasts and can frustrate the beginner. You may need a few attempts, and make adjustments to the pattern in order to ensure your finished circle is flat.

Round 1: 6 Double Crochet in a Magic Circle, slipstitch to top of first DC, pull tight to close hole

Round 2: 3 chain, 1 treble into 1st stitch, 2tr into each stitch to end, slipstitch to top of 3 chain

Round 3: 3ch, 1tr into 1st stitch, [1tr into next stitch, 2tr into next stitch], repeat bracket to end, Slipstitch to top of 3 chain

Round 4: 3ch, 1tr into 1st stitch, [1tr into next 2 stitches, 2tr into next stitch], repeat bracket to end, Slipstitch to top of 3 chain

Round 5: 3ch, 1tr into 1st stitch, [1tr into next 3 stitches, 2tr into next stitch], repeat bracket to end, Slipstitch to top of 3 chain

Round 6: 3ch, 1tr into 1st stitch, [1tr into next 4 stitches, 2tr into next stitch], repeat bracket to end, Slipstitch to top of 3 chain

Round 7: 3ch, 1tr into 1st stitch, [1tr into next 5 stitches, 2tr into next stitch], repeat bracket to end, Slipstitch to top of 3 chain

Stage 2: The Labyrinth: (Colour 2)

Surface crochet with 1DC in base of each stitch following template (see page 4).

Fasten loose ends

Praying with your Labyrinth:

As you make your Labyrinth:

Monastic communities view work and prayer as partners: As you make your Labyrinth, make your effort an exercise of prayer.

If you are new to crochet you will begin slowly and experience a mixture of frustration and achievement at each stage. Offer these to God as you go. Take your time, and remind yourself that you are making a devotional object and your journey in learning is part of your pilgrimage.

With more experience it is easy to get into a rhythm. You may find yourself making each stitch a prayer: Maybe for a name, a place or a situation. You may want to repeat a mantra such as *Maranatha* ('Come, Our Lord!') or the Jesus Prayer (see below). You may simply find your mind settling and that you are drawn mindfully into the presence of the Holy Spirit.

As you 'travel'

There is no right or wrong way of engaging with the Labyrinth.

Allow your finger to follow the path slowly.

You may find yourself offering an intention or prayer as you feel each stitch under your finger.

You may find yourself being drawn into a state of mindful stillness.

You may find the journey to the centre takes you deeper into your own soul, or deeper into God's presence.

You may find the Spirit whispers to you as you travel.

Travelling Companions:

As Lockdown continues, our connections with others are vital, if challenging to maintain. If you find yourself praying for someone as you make a labyrinth, why not send it to them? Feel free also to share this pattern with those who might appreciate it.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God

Have mercy on me, a sinner.

(The Jesus Prayer)



*“We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.”*

(Richard A M Gillard)

Pattern and resources developed by Ann Barlow & Edward Barlow, 2020

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