

Lost in Wonder

The Methodist Church online Labyrinth: Text version

1. The way in

IMAGE: A door in an old stone wall.

MESSAGE: ***You are welcome***

TEXT: God says: "Beloved, I have called you by name and you are mine."

You are a precious child and made in God's image, even the number of hairs on your head is known by God.

VOICE: As you enter this labyrinth, you travel on a pilgrimage of discovery about God's love for you and for all the world. You may be challenged, inspired, energised or daunted. It is for you to choose how to respond to the thoughts and ideas presented. A labyrinth is an ancient way to journey deeper into God's presence and then to travel out again into God's world.

PRAYER: Guide me on this journey and travel with me, loving God. Open my eyes to new horizons, my mind to new ideas and my heart to the fullness of your love. Amen.

ACTION: Press button marked 'ENTER THE LABYRINTH'
– pass through the entrance into the next space.

2. Travelling Light

IMAGE: A figure stands burdened with three bags. Above them is a row of 'coat hooks'.

MESSAGE: ***Let go of those things that trouble you***

TEXT: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me: for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your soul. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

VOICE: Relax in the knowledge that the one who created you loves you eternally. Whilst you journey through the labyrinth you may choose to let go of some of the 'baggage' of everyday life. Some things you wish to leave in God's hands, others you will have to take with you when you leave. Allow yourself to travel lightly during this pilgrimage.

PRAYER: Gracious God, you care for me and know all my concerns and worries.
As I travel on this journey of prayer and discovery, help me to travel lightly, knowing that you will hold the people and problems that matter to me in your loving care. Amen.

ACTION: Choose one of the items of luggage and hang it on to a hook.

3. Eternal Love

IMAGE: A cross on a green hill.
At its base are some seeds.

MESSAGE: ***Affirming God's love in Christ, for us and for the world***

TEXT: "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8.38-39)

VOICE: However unworthy you might believe you are, God loves you – without limit. You and the whole world are shown the full extent of this love in the birth, life and death of Jesus. The power of this love is made clear in the resurrection of Jesus. Do you feel small and vulnerable when faced with the poverty, injustice and environmental chaos of our world? Find hope in the knowledge that God works through ordinary people that the world sees as powerless.

PRAYER: Thank you for love beyond limit. Help me to show your love in the world, through the actions of my life. When I feel overwhelmed by the challenges of life help me to remember that a tiny baby born to refugee parents transformed the world through love. Amen

ACTION: Click on a seed, it moves to a space and grows into a beautiful tree, along side the image of the cross.

4. The Presence of God

IMAGE: Fade between snowflake, eagle, waves... then show an aid worker offering care or a fire-fighter rescuing someone.

MESSAGE: ***Confidence in God's Presence and Action – in the world***

TEXT: "Oh God, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God." Psalm 90.1-2

VOICE: Are you searching for signs of God's presence in the world? Do you long to know God's actions. Look around you at the glories and beauty of creation. See the unique intricacy of the snowflake, the majesty of the soaring eagle, the power of the crashing wave. Remember that God is aware of the big picture but also cares passionately for the smallest detail. Look around you at stories of courage and reconciliation. See the child giving their pocket money for someone in need; the fire-fighter facing danger to save a life; the opportunities for peace in age-old conflicts. Open your eyes and see God's presence.

PRAYER: Creator God, help me to be open to signs of your handiwork displayed in the world around me. Help me to recognise your Spirit in the love I witness between people and in the active love of aid agencies and community builders who save lives and break down barriers. May the actions of my own life reflect your presence in the world. Amen.

ACTION: A frame appears that can be written or drawn in. Voice = "reflect on an event or time when you were particularly aware of God's presence in the world and write/draw the memory in this space." An on-screen instruction will say 'Click here when finished' and the framed picture moves to 'be hung' on a wall.

5. Holy Moments

IMAGE: Interior of a worship space. Set for communion.

MESSAGE: ***Confidence in God's Presence and Action – in the church***

TEXT: "While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

VOICE: Where are you most aware of God's presence? Is it a place of beauty, safety, good memory? Perhaps for you it is in your local church that you feel drawn most deeply into God's loving embrace. The bread and wine of Holy Communion are a sign of God's presence and action in the church. As you eat bread and drink wine, you share in the story of Jesus Christ and in his ongoing promise of forgiveness and new life. So stay awhile, reflect on what this meal means to you and how you can be sustained in your faith journey.

PRAYER: Loving God, thank you that your presence in the church is shown in the sharing of a simple meal. I pray that the church will be a sign of your presence in the world and that I can live in a way that demonstrates your generous love.

ACTION: Click on bread and it is consumed, click on wine and it is consumed.

6. Prayer Space

IMAGE: 3 candles around a cross.

MESSAGE: ***Underpin everything we do in God-centred worship and prayer***

TEXT: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1Thess 5.16-18.

VOICE: How do you respond to the idea of always rejoicing? Are there times when it is just too hard, too many things have gone wrong and there seems little to give thanks for? It is okay to feel like this, it is a rare person who finds life easy all the time, or feels constantly joyful. Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem and for his friend Lazarus; tears and sadness are woven into the fabric of our lives. Yet we have hope, our journey is one of light and dark working together and we are able to offer thanksgiving to God through our church worship and in our private prayers.

PRAYER: God, like a loving parent you wish happiness and joy for all your children. You know that there will be days when I cannot rejoice, when despair conquers hope and I feel sorrow. Help me to be faithful in worship and prayer and to give thanks on the days when joy defeats sadness.

I light three candles, the first as a sign of thanks for Jesus, the light of the world; the second as my prayer for all those who find it hard to rejoice today; and the third for myself, that I may rejoice always in the knowledge of your love. Amen.

ACTION: The three candles are lit in turn.

7. Action Zone

- IMAGE: Make Poverty History and Fair trade images – and an image of a locally based community project.
- MESSAGE: ***Supporting community development and action for justice***
- TEXT: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.” (Luke 4.18-19)
- VOICE: Do you ever feel that issues of poverty, conflict and injustice in the world are just too big to take in? How can you make a difference, you are just one person, one voice, one vote. You can make a difference! How you choose to spend your money makes a difference. Fair trade products make a real difference to real people’s lives. Adding your one voice to the voices of others calling for an end to poverty turns a whisper into a shout! Jesus was one person in a land without modern communication and his message is still heard 2000 years later. Do not despair, you have more to offer than you can imagine. You can make a difference!
- PRAYER: Thank you, God, for people who give their time, skills, energy and money to relieve poverty, to challenge injustice and to build better communities. Help me never to despair, remembering that with you all things are possible. Help me choose to live and act in ways that make a difference in my local community and in the wider world. Amen.
- ACTION: The background is now a desert scene. Pick up a bucket or watering-can and pour water onto the dry ground. As the water pours, the desert transforms into an ocean. Words appear (or are spoken) “Your work may be a drop in the ocean, but take the drops away and there would be no ocean.”

8. Time to talk

- IMAGE: Friends share water, talk together in a café, and stand beside a lake in a park.
- MESSAGE: ***Developing confidence in evangelism and in the capacity to speak of God and faith in ways that make sense to all involved***
- TEXT: Jesus said to the woman, “Every one who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give will never thirst; the water that I shall give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” John 4.13-14
- VOICE: What do you find it easy to talk about; your family, local politics, sport, the news, what you watch on television? What do you find it difficult to talk about; your feelings, your faith, your relationships? Are there places where you feel you can really be yourself and talk about the things that nourish and sustain you? Are you able to talk about your faith where you work, at school, with your friends? Drink deeply of the well of God’s love and find refreshment in this place. How can you share the sustaining love of God with other people in your life? Can you begin a conversation about things that really matter?
- PRAYER: On all the pathways of our lives, you are the stranger walking beside us. With gentle persistence you press the conversation, urging us to tell and to hear too-familiar stories in new ways. And, in each other’s telling, we catch your world as sudden recognition. Christ before us, Christ beside us, Christ between us. Bless are you in this moment and for ever. *(Tony CcClelland – permission needed)*
- ACTION: Take a jug and pour water into a cup, the water cascades into other cups (like a champagne glass fountain!).

9. Without Walls

- IMAGE: A video clip (taken from the Beyond the Wood and Stone DVD) showing different ways of 'being church' in different places, with different people..
- MESSAGE: ***Encouraging fresh ways of being Church***
- TEXT: Jesus invited them all to sit down upon the ground. So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. Then all 5000 people ate and were satisfied. (Mark 6.39-42.)
- VOICE: What does 'church' mean for you? Is it a place where you go to find space to worship God, to be you, to learn about faith, to make friends, to be in fellowship with other Christians? Are there other places where these things happen for you; perhaps in art galleries, theatres, concerts, your home, your work, the shopping centre, playground? If you could design a way of being church what would be included? What would it look like, would it happen in a special building or an every day place? Who would keep it going and growing? Who would feel welcome? What would make it special?
- PRAYER: Generous God, your son Jesus fed people with bread and fish, with words of great meaning and actions of love. How can I be part of a church that meets people's physical and spiritual needs? Can I be part of a new way of living that creates safe spaces for people to live, learn and grown as disciples of Jesus? Help me to be courageous and creative in making my dreams for your church come true. Amen.
- ACTION: Choose from a range of shapes the one that best represents your vision of how a church should be.

(e.g. a circle, a spiral, a web, a loose group of circles overlapping, a rectangle, a cross shape, a heart, a flower).

10. Journeying On

- IMAGE: Mix and fade old and young faces, faces from different parts of the world, people doing jobs, relaxing, laughing, comforting, breastfeeding, etc
- MESSAGE: ***Nurturing a culture in the Church which is people-centred and flexible***
- TEXT: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, 'Look, here God lives among human beings. God will make his home among them; they will be his people, and he will be their God. God will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness or pain. The world of the past has gone. (Revelation: 21.1-4 NJB)
- VOICE: The journey through this labyrinth is almost over. Soon, when you choose, you will leave this place. You are still you; you carry with you your dreams, visions, hopes and fears, memories and experiences. But perhaps you have changed? Has your perspective altered? Have you had a new idea, found a new way of looking, asked a new question? As you travel from this place, consider your next step.... is there something new that you want to try, someone you want to talk to, a place you want to visit? Beyond the exit from the Labyrinth you will find links to places for more information that might help you on your journey closer to God.
- PRAYER: Loving God, help me to celebrate the possibility of change. Help me to celebrate the journey as well as the destination. Help me to celebrate life and look for its fullness

every day. As you have guided me so far, continue to be my close companion, bless me and those who journey with me. Amen.

ACTION: Click on a folded map, labelled, 'the next step'. It opens out to a blank sheet. Voice: "Write words or draw a picture to represent one thing that you want to promise yourself, or promise God, that you will do to take a step further in your journey of life and faith. This is just for you. No one else will see your words or drawing." The map has the words: 'When you have finished click [here](#)' at the bottom.

The map re-folds and a door opens with a sign saying 'Journey On'.

THE CHURCH PORCH!

A page appears with:

A 'Notice Board' – were we list some key events in the life of the church. This will need to be kept up to date (Diane Foster to oversee).

10-12 February 2006 Julian of Norwich retreat an **MRSN** event
For details contact Malcolm Rothwell, 65, Lower Mead, Petersfield, GU31 4NR
e-mail revmar@lucy87.fsnet.co.uk

24-26 February 2006 "When the water is stirred... where are you...? Do you want to...?" an **MRSN**
For details contact: Mary Thomas, 2 Ashperton Close, Redditch, B98 7NG
e-mail mary@smrk-thomas.co.uk

10 - 12 March 2006 Prayer on The Edge A **Pray Without Ceasing** event
supported by Cliff College and the Methodist Church.
A weekend for students and other young Christians (18 - 25) to explore prayer through music, workshops, activities and much more.
Contact: Michelle Shaw 01246 582321

3 - 6 July 2006 The Gift of Prayer A **Pray Without Ceasing** event
supported by Cliff College and the Methodist Church.
Celebrating, affirming and resourcing prayer. A conference for people in all kinds of ministry to consider prayer and develop resources for future exploration of its meaning. Contact: Michelle Shaw 01246 582321

18 - 21 June 2006 International Prayer Conference
Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent.
Contact: William Porter, 01782 819021

A 'For Your Information' section (perhaps like a leaflet rack?) with links to:

www.methodist.org.uk

PDF of Our Calling and Priorities

www.praywithoutceasing.org.uk

Methodist Retreat and Development Fund www.mrdf.org.uk

www.magnetmag.co.uk

www.makepovertyhistory.org

www.freshexpressions.org.uk

Methodist Retreat and Spirituality Network www.methodistretreatgroup.co.uk

Living Spirituality Network www.living-spirituality.org.uk

The Retreat Association www.retreats.org.uk

Godly Play UK www.godlyplay.org.uk