

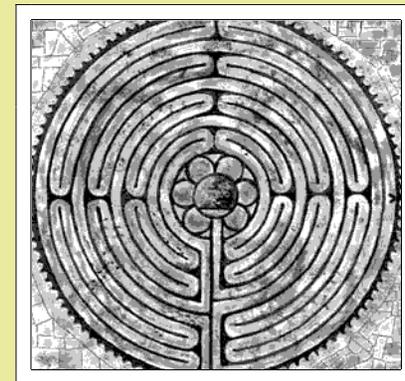
NORTH VALLEY FRIENDS TRAIL

Self-guided Tour

The North Valley Friends Trail is a 3/4 mile trail (1 mile if you do a figure eight), featuring twelve peace poles, prayer flags and a large labyrinth.

You are invited to utilize the trail at any time.

Thank you for joining us!



North Valley Friends Trail

Peace Elements:
a gift of North Valley Friends Church.

<http://trail.northvalleyfriends.org>

For information visit <http://trail.northvalleyfriends.org>

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- 7) Read the death and resurrection story in Mark 15-16. Then as you move into the center, prayerfully reflect on Jesus suffering. Spend some time in silence in the middle, contemplating Jesus' death and then as you prepare to leave the middle, focus on the resurrection, prayerfully reflecting on his resurrection and presence in your life as you journey out.

PRACTICAL TIPS

- 1) Prayerfully prepare yourself before entering the labyrinth, giving this time to God.
- 2) Give space between yourself and the person in front of you, especially when entering.
- 3) When you come to another person, just step around: remember, everyone is praying, so allow people to be a part of your experience and try not to allow others to be a distraction. Don't spend energy trying not to think about other people, but when your attention is drawn to someone else and away from prayer, just gently bring yourself back.
- 4) There probably will only be room for about 3-4 people in the center at a time, so remember that the prayer experience is occurring when you're walking and in the middle, and be mindful not to spend too much time in the middle.
- 5) Spend a few minutes in reflective prayer when your done.

ROMANS 12:18

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Question: Who does everyone include for you? Is there anyone with whom you think it is impossible to live at peace?

MOTHER TERESA

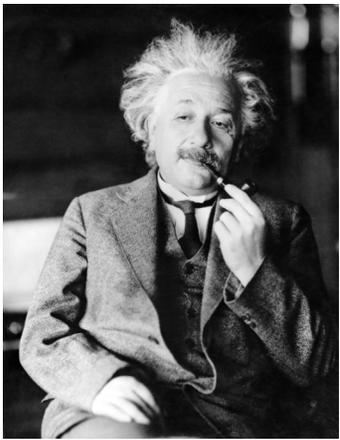
When we see God in each other we will be able to live in peace —Mother Teresa, Indian Catholic nun and humanitarian (1910-1997)

Question: Why is it hard to see God in each other? Who is someone in whom you have seen God that you weren't really expecting to see God?



Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was born in 1910 in Macedonia. At the age of 18 she began her training as a nun. She was sent to a convent in Calcutta, India where she took the name Sister Teresa. After teaching in a Catholic High School for many years she became increasingly appalled by the poverty she saw outside the walls of the convent. She felt called to serve God by living among and helping the poor, sick, hungry, and dying people of Calcutta. She began by starting an open-air school for the children living in the slums. Soon others came to help; they feed those who were hungry, cared for the sick, began orphanages; even helped those who were dying to feel loved and wanted. Mother Teresa formed "The Missionary Sisters of Charity".

It began as a small order with 13 members in Calcutta; today "The Missionary Sisters of Charity have more than 4,000 nuns running orphanages, AIDS hospices and charity centers around the world. They care for refugees, the blind, disabled, aged, alcoholics, poor and homeless as well as victims of floods, epidemics, and famine. In 1979 Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace, and in 1985 she was awarded the Medal of Freedom from the United States.



ALBERT EINSTEIN

We must be prepared to make the same heroic sacrifices for the cause of peace that we make ungrudgingly for the cause of war.

Albert Einstein, American physicist and philosopher (1879-1955)

Question: What sacrifice have you made or are you willing to make for peace?

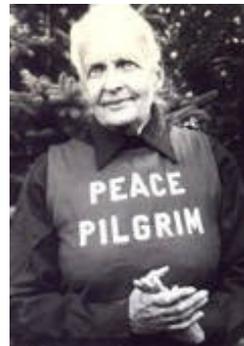
Albert Einstein was born in Germany on March 14 1879. Albert is most famous for his Theory of Relativity, relating mass and the speed of light and energy. He has won a Nobel Prize for his work in physics. But he was also a tireless advocate for world peace during the last 20 years of his life. His political activism began during WW1 when he called for an end to the war. After having witness the destructiveness of this war he became one of the world's leading spokesmen for pacifism and greater international cooperation. Einstein emigrated to the United States in 1933 due to his concerns about the rise of Hitler in Germany. He wrote a letter to President Roosevelt in 1939 warning him that Germany might be developing an atomic bomb and suggesting that the US begin its own atomic research. Many believe that this letter that led to the formation of the Manhattan Project, which produced the atomic bombs later dropped on Japan. Although Einstein never worked on this project he felt that that writing the letter was "the single greatest mistake" of his life. After the war he continued his struggle for world peace believing that a third world war would be the total destruction of civilization. For the remainder of his life, Einstein campaigned for the abolition of all nuclear weapons and the creation of World Government able to ensure a secure and lasting peace.

PEACE PILGRIM

This is the way of peace: overcome evil with good, and falsehood with truth, and hatred with love.

Peace Pilgrim/Mildred Norman Ryder, spiritual teacher and non-violence advocate (1908-1981)

Question: Do you think good, truth, and love can always overcome evil, falsehood, and hatred? Why or why not?



Christ). *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart* (going back into the world with Christ yoked together with Christ in ministry).

QUOTE

Thomas Kelly, 20th Century Quaker author:

We are torn loose from earthly attachments and ambitions... (purgation, letting go) And we are quickened to a divine but painful concern for the world (unification, coming out into the world together with God). *God plucks the world out of our hearts* (purgation, letting go) , *loosening the chains of attachment. And He hurls the world into our hearts* (unification, coming out together with God), *where we and He carry it in infinitely tender love.*

WAYS TO USE THE LABYRINTH

- 1) Letting go when walking in (confession, letting go of things that seem to be weighing you down or blocking you to God's activity in your life). Listening to Christ in the middle (receiving forgiveness and call to change). Then take what you heard in the center back into the world.
- 2) Using Ps. 139:23 "Search me, O God, and know my heart," or the Jesus Prayer, "Jesus Christ, have mercy on me," as you move into the middle. Rest ingand listen in the middle. Moving out with a word of praise: "Bless the Lord, O my soul."
- 3) Saying the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) as you walk into the middle (prayerfully examining your life). Listening. Saying Beatitudes as you walk out (prayerfully considering how to live those out in the world).
- 4) Praying through a life transition. Giving thanks for the past as you move in. Resting in God in the middle. Moving into the new calling as you move out.
- 5) Moving through fears as you move into the middle (rest/peace). Resting in Christ in the middle. Moving out in the confidence and power of Christ.
- 6) Sharing with Christ your desires (for relationships, for the future, for loved ones) as you move into the middle. Resting in the middle and listening for Christ's response to your desires and for Christ to share his desires with you. Then move out in union of desires.

WALKING THE LABYRINTH

HISTORY

In 636 AD, Jerusalem was captured by the Muslims. For several centuries, it was okay for Christians to travel to the Holy Land, and this became very important to them. But then in the eleventh century, some fanatical Muslims started to prevent Christians from journeying to the Holy Land. This is when the Crusades began.

During the time Christians weren't permitted into the Holy Land, another way of making a sacred journey or pilgrimage was created. Instead of walking to Jerusalem, people would walk the labyrinth as a substitute. As this practiced developed, there came to be associated with it three movements:

- 1) *The going in - purgation*: "letting go" as you walk in to the center
- 2) *Illumination* - listening in the center
- 3) *Union* - taking the illumination, or what you received in the center, back into the world

WALKING THE LABYRINTH TODAY

Today we don't make a big deal about going to Jerusalem. As Quakers we see all of life and all places as sacred. One place isn't more sacred than any other place. Our approach to the use of the labyrinth is simply one of a creative prayer exercise which allows us to use all of who we are: mind, heart, soul, and body in prayer.

This is simply a prayer exercise. There isn't anything unusually sacred about the labyrinth. It's simply a tool. Hopefully a helpful tool. But you could do this sort of prayer anywhere.

There is no "right" way of doing this prayer exercise. The right way is the one that allows you to become open to Christ. But it's important to remember that the entire experience is with Christ. Christ is not in the middle and you're journeying to Christ, but Christ is on the entire journey with you.

SCRIPTURE

A scripture passage that helps understand how the labyrinth might be used is Matt. 11:28:

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened (letting go, unburdening myself), and I will give you rest (being in the center, resting in

Mildred Norman Ryder was born on July 18, 1908 in New Jersey.

At the age of 44, after a 15-year spiritual journey of transformation, she began her calling to be a pilgrim for peace. She called herself Peace Pilgrim and she spoke to anyone who would listen about world peace and "inner peace" since this, she believed, was where peace lays.

For the next 28 years she walked over 25,000 miles, 7 cross country treks. Her only possessions were the clothes on her back and a blue tunic that read Peace Pilgrim. She traveled penniless and without the support of any organization, She walked until she was offered shelter and fasted until she was offered food. Her message was a simple one: overcome evil with good, hatred with love and falsehood with truth. To do this, she believed, various stages of maturity must be reached, starting with the self: inner peace first, then peace will be attainable among individuals, the community, the nation and the world.

JAMES 3:17-18

The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.

Question: Where else could wisdom come from besides heaven? What would it look like, compared to heavenly wisdom? What else could peacemakers sow in besides peace?

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.

Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

— Martin Luther King, Jr., American pastor and civil rights activist (1929-1968)

Question: When is a time where you saw someone try to drive out darkness with darkness or hate with hate? When is time you saw light drive away darkness and love drive away hate?



Martin Luther King, Jr. was an African-American pastor who advocated for social change through non-violent means. He was an outspoken speaker against the war in Vietnam, but he is best known for his work in the American Civil Rights movement in the 1950's and 60's. Martin Luther King, Jr. was born in a time when black people did not have the same rights as white people. They had to use separate bathrooms and drinking fountains. Black children had to go to different schools than white children. They had to sit in the back of buses.

MLK fought to change this unfairness through non-violent means such as sit-ins at lunch counters where black people were not served. He staged a bus boycott where blacks no longer rode buses. Peaceful marches were organized. One famous march was in Washington D.C. where over 200,000 marched and listened to his now famous "I Have A Dream Speech". Because of these tactics the laws began to change.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

ROSA PARKS

If our lives demonstrate that we are peaceful, humble and trusted, this is recognized by others. If our lives demonstrate something else, that will be noticed too.

Rosa Parks, American civil rights activist (1913-2005)

Question: How has your life demonstrated peace, humility, or trustworthiness? Who is someone who has noticed?

Like Martin Luther King, Jr. Rosa Parks lived in a time when Black people did not have the same rights as white people and they were treated unfairly in many ways. One unfair situation was a law requiring African-Americans to ride in the back of the City buses. On Dec. 1, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama when Rosa was 42 years old, she sat in the black section of the bus, but when 4 white men got on she was told give up her seat to these men. She was tired, but more importantly she was tired of being treated so unfairly. So she refused to move and was arrested and put in jail. This began a bus boycott by African-Americans and others. They refused to ride the city buses, instead biking or walking often miles

to get to their jobs and other destinations. This was the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement. She is often called "The Mother of the Civil Rights Movement."

CREATING A PRAYER FLAG

These questions may help you as you think about what you want to put on your prayer flag:

- *What situation do you want to speak peace into?*
- *What do you want to hear from the Prince of Peace?*
- *Is there an international situation where you want to bring peace?*

Allow Christ to speak to you. What do you notice?
Is there a situation, words or images that arise?

- *What is your hope and prayer for peace?*

Write or draw your prayer on one of the fabric flags provided.

PRAYERS FOR PEACE

Various faith traditions, in their hunger and desire to be in communion with God, have found meaningful expressions for symbolizing or communicating their prayers. These are not necessary for God to listen to us, but are often helpful for us to center ourselves or to have a tangible way to express our prayers. Many fold their hands, bow their heads or kneel down. The Israelites would burn incense in the temple as a visual image of their prayers to God. Many people use a candle to help them set aside their busyness and focus on being in the presence of Christ, the Light. Many Native American traditions use lit sage as a representation of their prayers rising to God. People of all faiths still travel to in Jerusalem to place their written prayers in a crack in the Wailing Wall. Prayer flags are often used to express our yearning for peace.

A prayer flag is a colorful panel of cloth and originally was found strung along mountain ridges and peaks high in the Himalayas to bless the surrounding countryside. The tradition of hanging flags began more than 2000 years ago in Tibet. When Buddhism was introduced to Tibet in the 7th century Buddhist monks began to print symbols on the flags as blessings to be sent out to the world with each breeze and they became known as prayer flags. Since the Chinese invasion of Tibet thousands of Tibetans have had to flee from their country and live in exile around the world. Prayer flags continue to represent the tradition of sending out prayers, but they also are a reminder of a nation of people who have been robbed of their home. Prayer flags are still stamped with prayers and hung to let the wind carry their messages in Tibetan refugee villages.

Many Christians now use prayer flags as a tangible expression of our desire to reach out to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Our prayers for peace may be an overall yearning for the cessation of violence in the world. It might be an expression of grief coupled with our compassion over a natural disaster. Another person's prayer might be a cry for a sense of God's love and wisdom in the midst of a personal crisis. Our prayer for peace might be for our world, our nation, our community, our church, our family or for our self. These prayers are written on the flag, sewn together on twine then hung outdoors. When we see these flags blowing in the breeze and hear them rustle in the wind we have a tangible reminder that we can trust God with our heart's yearnings for peace; we can be reminded of our prayers being lifted to Christ as the Prince of Peace and Wholeness, the one from whom true peace emanates. Today you have the opportunity to make our own prayer flags. After you have written or drawn your desire for peace on the cloth provided, you may hang it on the line on the trail or we will hang it for you.



CHIEF JOSEPH

I believe much trouble and blood would be saved if we opened our hearts more.

Chief Joseph, Nez Perce chief (1840-1904)

Do you agree with Chief Joseph? Why do you think it is hard for people to open their hearts more?

Joseph, whose tribal name meant Thunder Rolling in the Mountain, was a chief of the Nez Perce, a Native American tribe of the Wallowa Valley in Northwest Oregon. Like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi who advocated for peace in the midst of their struggles for justice, chief Joseph knew that violence only led to more violence and he struggled to avoid conflict.

In 1847 the US government tried to seize the tribal lands of the Nez Perce. Joseph tried to negotiate, not fight. At first it looked as if he was successful, but the orders were given to relocate his people to a reservation, or special land set-aside for Native Americans, in Idaho. To avoid a violent conflict with the army, Joseph began to move his people toward Idaho. But conflict did breakout between the Indians and the whites, so Chief Joseph tried to lead 800 of his people to the safety of Canada. They fled 1100 miles with the US army in pursuit for 3 months and were finally trapped just 40 miles from the Canadian border. Those who had not escaped or been killed in the skirmishes and battles along the way were sent to Indian Territory in Oklahoma and eventually transferred to a reservation in Washington.

DOROTHY DAY

There is nothing we can do but love, and, dear God, please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbor, to love our enemy as our friend.

Dorothy Day, American journalist and co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement (1897-1980)

Question: Can you think of a time when your heart got bigger and you could love more?

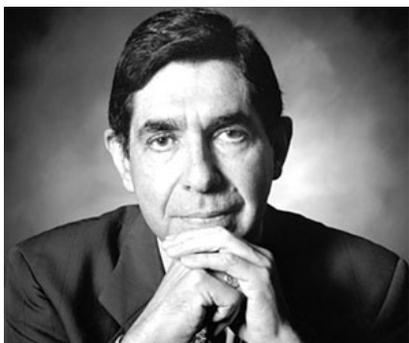
Born in 1897, Dorothy Day along with Peter Maurin founded The Catholic Worker movement. The vision of



The Catholic Worker was to work toward a world made better through love, sacrifice, freedom for all, and resistance to those things that would demean others. They began by feeding, sheltering, and living with the poor of New York City. They also began a paper also called The Catholic Worker to support non-violent means for social action, to make the lives of the poor better. This led to the opening of a hospitality house in the NYC slums. A few years later there were 30 similar places in the US, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Now there are over 100 such communities in Australia, Germany, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, and Sweden.

Day has received great recognition from the Roman Catholic Church for her activities in support of peace and nonviolent social change. With her death in 1980, she is under consideration for sainthood.

OSCAR ARIAS SANCHEZ



It is not the product of a victory or a command. It has no finishing line, no final deadline, no fixed definition of achievement. Peace is a never-ending process, the work of many decisions by many people in many countries. It is an attitude, a way of life, a way of solving problems and resolving conflicts.

— Oscar Arias Sanchez, Costa Rican president and 1987 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, (1940-)

Question: In what situation are you in the “never-ending process” of working for peace?

Oscar Arias Sanchez was born in 1940 in Costa Rica to a wealthy family. He became well known for wanting to form a government that would be more accessible and responsive to the people. He was elected president of Costa Rica and served from 1986 to 1990. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987 for his efforts to end several civil wars in other Central American countries. He again served as president of Costa Rica from 2006 to 2010 and continues working for ways to make a peaceful, socially just, and economically fair and sustainable world.

JESUS

You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

— Matthew 5:43-44

Question: Do you have an enemy? What makes it hard to love that person? Pray for that person right now.

MAHATMA GANDHI

If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children.

— Mahatma Gandhi, Indian political reformer (1869-1948)

Question: Do you think our children are being taught war or peace? Why?

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, in Porbandar, a coastal city in India. He spent 20 years in South Africa working to fight discrimination and the unfair treatment of Indian Immigrants. It was there that he created his ideas of non-violent resistance against injustice. He returned to India living a very simple lifestyle. He worked vigorously to free India from the rule of the British; this happened in 1947. And he worked to make the lives of the very poorest of India’s people better. Many civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. used Gandhi’s ideas of non-violent resistance in their own struggles against injustice. Mahatma (meaning great-souled) Gandhi was chosen for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1948, but he was assassinated before it was presented to him.

