1: Introduction
Take a few moments to quiet your spirit and prepare yourself for this labyrinth journey.

This year, we have chosen to enter this time by looking at narratives from the life of Jesus as we come to the events of his death that we remember on this weekend. We all know how Good Friday ends, but perhaps by experiencing the life of Jesus in very real ways, we can begin to look at the death of Jesus in a different light.

For this Easter Labyrinth, seventeen sets of artists have created individual stations that will allow you to make this journey. The stations come directly from scripture. Walking and praying the stations with an open heart and mind allows us to enter into the mystery of this weekend of sorrow through a different lens. All of us are on a journey with God and our understanding of that journey is intermixed with our understanding and images of God. Please approach these stations with an appreciation for the creator’s journey and how it may expand and enrich your own journey.

2: Renewing Our Baptism
BIBLE STORY
“In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan River. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” Mark 1:9-11

REFLECTION
Baptism gives us the assurance of God's peace and God's love. To fully experience that peace and love, and to give it out to others, we can renew the baptismal blessing every day by letting go of our thoughts and worries, grudges, guilt and momentary pleasures, centering instead on Jesus’ life, Jesus’ words, and Jesus’ actions.

ACTIVITY
Touch the water and invite Jesus to touch you with God’s ever-forgiving peace, kindness and wisdom.

3: Jesus in the Wilderness
“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness.” Luke 4:1

During his time in the wilderness, Jesus was faced with difficult decisions. He was hungry, tired, tested, and isolated from his community. However, scripture reminds us that he wasn’t totally alone because the Holy Spirit was there with him. Everything else was stripped away from him, but there is no separation from God.

Take a blank rock in you hand. Hold it while meditating on these thoughts. (Feel free to take a card and sit in one of the pews while you meditate.)

Looking back at your life, was there a wilderness time?
Were you changed by spending time in that place?
With little else to distract you, did you find God in that place?
Perhaps you find yourself in the wilderness today. Perhaps in a relationship, your job or school, your family, your health, within your spiritual community or your spiritual journey?

If you would like, write a word on the rock that represents your wilderness time or experience. If you feel like you are still in a wilderness time, place your rock, word up, in the sand. Others will pray for you as they come through. You may want to say a prayer for those who have left rocks before you, those who are also experiencing wilderness times.

If you have passed through this wilderness time, turn your rock over and place it flower side up by the green, growing plants.
This story of Jesus in the wilderness reminds us that we are never alone. God makes beautiful things grow out of wilderness. Leave this station, reminded of God’s presence in your life.

And when his time in the wilderness was over “suddenly angels came and waited on him.” Matthew 4:11

4: Jesus Returns Home
BIBLE STORY
“When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of God is upon me, because God has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. God 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 God’s favor." And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" Luke 4:16-22

REFLECTION
These people are well known for their contributions, but they would not have seen themselves as greater than any of us. They were children that grew up and followed the path they were meant to take. As difficult as it must have been, they found and embraced love, peace, courage, and wisdom.

ACTIVITY
What beauty have you found on your path?
What beauty has yet to come?

5: Call and Response
BIBLE STORY
“As Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers casting a net into the sea – for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.’ Immediately they left their nets and followed him.” Matthew 4:18-20

REFLECTION
The art of “hymn-lining” is a celebrated tradition, handed down from generation to generation that dates back to slavery in the United States. It is a form of call and response that incorporates African tonal languages and rhythmic and percussive hand clapping and stomping. Today, hymn-lining a dying art, and as one moves up the social ladder, there is less emphasis on hymn-lining. Its disappearance deprives congregations a key means of passing on a vital cultural heritage.

Jesus called ordinary people to follow him and continues to call today.
How is Jesus calling you?
From where is Jesus calling you?
To where is Jesus calling you?

ACTIVITY
Put on the headphones and allow yourself to pray in song.

6: Jesus as Teacher
BIBLE STORY
“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the realm of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the realm of heaven.
Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Matthew 5:1-12

REFLECTION
In the book of Matthew, Jesus’ gives a long sermon where he outlines many of his main teachings, beginning with the Beatitudes. The people that Jesus lists as blessed are not what the world would associate with blessedness, but instead Jesus turns this idea upside down. God loves the people on the bottom. The people who thirst for power are not blessed but the people who thirst for righteousness and peace are blessed. The Beatitudes call us to reassess how we are living our lives and to think like those whom Jesus calls blessed.

Jesus’ list of blessings is also very poetic. It has a rhythm and repetition that makes it feel like a poem. This type of language makes the listener hear the words differently. Poetry allows us to engage words more deeply, to hear things in ways that might have gone over our heads.

ACTIVITY
As you reflect on the Beatitudes, you are invited to turn the Language of Jesus into a simple poem – a haiku – and write it in the journal as an inspiration for others.

How to write a Haiku?
A haiku is three lines long and is defined by the syllable length of each line--five syllables, seven syllables, five syllables. 5.7.5. There is no required meter or rhyme, but you are not limited in your creativity by anything besides the syllable limit.

Some examples of Haiku:

Heads hung in mourning
Wait for the Lord, wait with hope
God will bring comfort

the world is breaking
the children of God bring peace
Building up with God.

7: Jesus as Healer
BIBLE STORY
“There was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, ‘If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.’ Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, ‘Who touched my clothes?’ And his disciples said to him, ‘You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, ‘Who touched me?’” He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, ‘Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.’” Mark 5:25-34

REFLECTION
What is it that needs to be healed or made whole in your life?
What is preventing you from calling out to Jesus in the crowd, engaging Jesus and asking directly for what you need, want, or hope for?
In this story, Jesus and the woman both give to and receive from each other.
How do you give healing?
How do you receive healing?

ACTIVITY
Take pieces of broken glass, symbolic of any brokenness in your life, and lay them down before God in the mosaic. Allow the creative process of doing the mosaic to commemorate a moment of healing, of radiant energy, as you receive from God and give to God.

8: Step Out of Your Boat, Onto the Water
BIBLE STORY
The disciples were terrified when they saw Jesus walking on the water. At first, they thought he was a ghost. Peter called to him: ‘If it is you, tell me to come to you over the water.’ ‘Come’, said Jesus. So Peter stepped out of the boat, and walked on the water towards Jesus. But when he saw the strength of the wind he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried, ‘Save me, Lord!’ Jesus at once reached out and caught hold of him, and said, ‘Why did you hesitate? You of little faith, why did you doubt?’ (Matthew 14:28-31)

REFLECTION
Challenges face us all throughout life.
Questions and fears often arise, which can be overwhelming and throw us off course.
Should I even attempt this?
What direction should I take?
Will I fail and possibly bring on more problems?

ACTIVITY
Focus on God and have faith. Your fears will fade when you hold God close by.
Step out of your boat, onto the water.
(You may walk on top of this piece.)

9: The Abundance of Jesus
Jesus was teaching a large crowd of people, and it was getting late and they were hungry. He directed his disciples to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass.

Please have a seat in the pew and read the Bible story and reflection.

BIBLE STORY
The disciples knew they did not have enough food to feed the huge crowd. They thought the people should leave to find their own food.

But Jesus answered, “You give them something to eat.”

They found five loaves of bread and two fish.

Jesus gave thanks to God and broke the loaves.

Then He gave the bread and fish to His disciples to distribute to the entire crowd. In the end, over 5,000 people ate and were full, and the disciples collected baskets and baskets of leftovers!
REFLECTION
Jesus chose to feed the people through His disciples. Perhaps they didn’t know what they were doing, they just followed His command, trusted Him, and distributed food to each person, one by one. There was so much to go around, they must have been surprised to see all the leftovers!

Reflect on how God has chosen to feed others through you. How can you spread God’s Love? God relies on us to follow Him and to trust Him so that His Love may be spread through the whole world. Often, we don’t know what we are doing, or even know that we ARE spreading His Love, but we need to only trust and we will be guided and be His hands in the world. Through us, enough love can be spread to fill hearts and there will be more than enough to go around!

ACTIVITY
Write a short message of love on a paper heart - listen to the Spirit to guide your writing. Take the heart with you, and leave it for someone. It can be for a family member, a friend, a neighbor, or for someone you don’t even know. Don’t let them know it is from you - just help spread God’s love!

PRAYER
Dear Lord, help me to spread Thy fragrance wherever I go.

Station 10: Jesus Blesses the Children
BIBLE STORY
“People were bringing little children to Jesus, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the realm of God belongs.’ And Jesus took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.”
Mark 10:13-16

REFLECTION
When the world says, “No,” Jesus says, “Yes.”
When the world says, “Go away,” Jesus says, “Come to me.”

ACTIVITY
You are invited to draw your self-portrait and add it to the paper quilt, knowing that Jesus welcomes you by saying, “You are a special child of God.”

11: Mary Anoints Jesus
BIBLE STORY
On his final walk to Jerusalem, Jesus stops to enjoy a meal where he feels perhaps most at home in the world. Jesus loved his friends Martha, Lazarus and Mary. He mourned the death of Lazarus with his sisters. Then Jesus called Lazarus back to life. Incredibly Lazarus who was dead for days now sits at dinner while Martha serves. Mary anoints Jesus’ feet with costly perfume and wipes them with her hair, an extravagant act. But she is silent. Her meaning is clear only to Jesus.

REFLECTION
Let’s imagine what filled Jesus’ mind as the fragrance filled the house and his dear friend knelt to care for him. What did Jesus hear?
Perhaps for just a moment, did Jesus allow his mind and heart to fill with the adoring love of his dear friend?

ACTIVITY
Listen to Mary’s song of love by putting on the headphones. Or just read her words. Lavish yourself in a bit of precious oil by pressing your fingers on the sponge, and making the sign of the cross on your wrist or forehead. Breathe in the scent of extravagant adoration. Then, when you are ready, walk on alone.
Station 12: Jesus Stops First, Then Proceeds to Enter Jerusalem

**BIBLE STORY**

Jesus is on a mission, his eyes fixed on Jerusalem. He’s so close to arriving at his destination, and he has such an expansive following with him. Then comes a single cry from alongside the road, “Have mercy on me,” And Jesus, in all his full momentum, stops.

**REFLECTION**

How do you stop when you’re headed somewhere?
Who do you need to stop for?
Remember, it’s never too late to stop, even if you missed the opportunity the first time.

Has someone run right past you, not stopping when you called out?
Instead of getting upset, try praying for them because they might be experiencing an overwhelming sense of anxiety and busyness in their life.

**BIBLE STORY**

Jesus then rides a donkey into Jerusalem, on a road covered in palm branches and onlookers’ cloaks. Shouts of “Hosanna,” fill the air. “Save us, of Blessed One who comes in peace and humility.”

**REFLECTION**

Jerusalem represented the heart of political, military, and religious authority in Jesus’ day. Jesus entered the world challenging the powers of Jerusalem and he’s leaving the world in this same way. Where are our Jerusalems today?

**ACTIVITY**

Stop.
Sit.
Observe.

13: At the Table

**BIBLE STORY**

“When the hour came, Jesus took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, ‘I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.’ Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.’” Luke 22:14-20

**REFLECTION**

When was your last supper?
The Last Supper was also the First Communion. What has become a ritual and sacrament for Christians began as a meal Jesus shared with his friends. Jesus used Holy Communion as a way for his friends to remember him and his teachings. We continue this tradition when we break bread and drink from the chalice as a part of services today.
Think about your last meal. Who did you share it with? Where were your favorite meals? Think about the stories, the laughter, and the joy you have shared.
Now, think about communion. Who do you share communion with? How is it different from any other meal?
Look around you, who else is seated at your table? How can you commune with them?

**ACTIVITY**

You’re invited to take a seat. Lift up a plate. Engage in the written dialogue around the table. Take a piece of bread. Remember that all are welcome at God’s table. Taste and eat, for it is good.
Station 14: Jesus Prays in the Garden

BIBLE STORY
The night before Jesus died, he went to pray in a garden called Gethsemane. He began to be distressed and agitated, saying, “I am deeply grieved, even to death.” And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and cried out asking God to take the cup of suffering away from him. Then he added, “Yet not my will but your will be done.

ACTIVITY
Wrap your shoulders with a prayer shawl found on the pew where you are seated. Surround yourself with the blessings that were poured into this shawl during its creation. Think about the pain of that moment and the anguish that Jesus went through. Now think of someone who is afraid today, someone who is going through the process of making an agonizing decision, who knows that doing the “right thing” will be difficult. Pray for them now. You are welcome to write their name, roll it up, and place it inside the prayer shawl displayed on the pew in front of you.

Station 15: Jesus is Arrested, Tried, and Sentenced to Death

REFLECTION
Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John portray Jesus’ life devoted to God and others. Showing love through listening to God and serving those who struggled—especially the poor, the alien, the outcast, and even the despised tax collector—Jesus, in his journey, showed his disciples “the way.”

As a most devout Jew, Jesus modeled a life of selfless love in a land under the yoke of Roman domination that exploited the poor and compromised the Temple leadership. He attracted disciples to this journey with him in this “way” of sacrificial love.

Because this “way” threatened religious, political, and social authority, Jesus was arrested, tried, and sentenced to death.

ACTIVITY
Place a chain around your neck, replacing the spot on your shoulders previously enfolded by a prayer shawl. Feel the weight of the chains. Think about the many forms of imprisonment in the world today. Some people are guilty of crimes. Some are innocent prisoners of conscience. Some people feel like prisoners, trapped in their houses by illness or fear. Some are treated like prisoners, torn from their families, separated from those they love most in the world. Feel the weight in your heart. Imagine for yourself how we, personally or collectively, might emulate Jesus in service to those who today are “the least of these.”

Shake the chains.
Hear the cries of those who suffer.

16: Jesus is Crucified

BIBLE STORY
“They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.” Acts 10:39

REFLECTION
Take a moment to reflect on the many forms of social suffering in the world around us and in recent history.
Take a moment to reflect on the meaning of the cross for you.

ACTIVITY
You are invited to write your thoughts on a piece of paper and lay them at the base of the tree, knowing that Jesus understands this suffering.
17: The Burial of Jesus

REFLECTION
In the events leading up to the burial of Jesus, we see so much suffering. Mother Mary suffered watching her son as he suffered. Jesus' followers must have been filled with despair, fear, and guilt. Onlookers must have felt horror and unrest. Jesus moved past suffering in death. But what about those who mourned for him? What about the witnesses to the suffering and mourning? What did they do to move past grief and fear? How did they turn the memory of a violent act into hope? Can we find beauty in the wake of such violence?

ACTIVITY
Lift the flaps.

REFLECTION
As onlookers, we grieve with those that mourn the sudden passing of their loved ones who died as victims of gun violence. We empathize with their suffering and lament the terror of those that witnessed such horror. Even still, we find hope in the change that must occur after such events. We find beauty in the memory of the loved ones and how we come together to console one another and make a difference in their honor.

ACTIVITY
Take a butterfly. Take a moment to thank God for the beauty in the life of Jesus and how his death transforms our grief and fear into hope and the realization of beauty.