



Gathering 2016

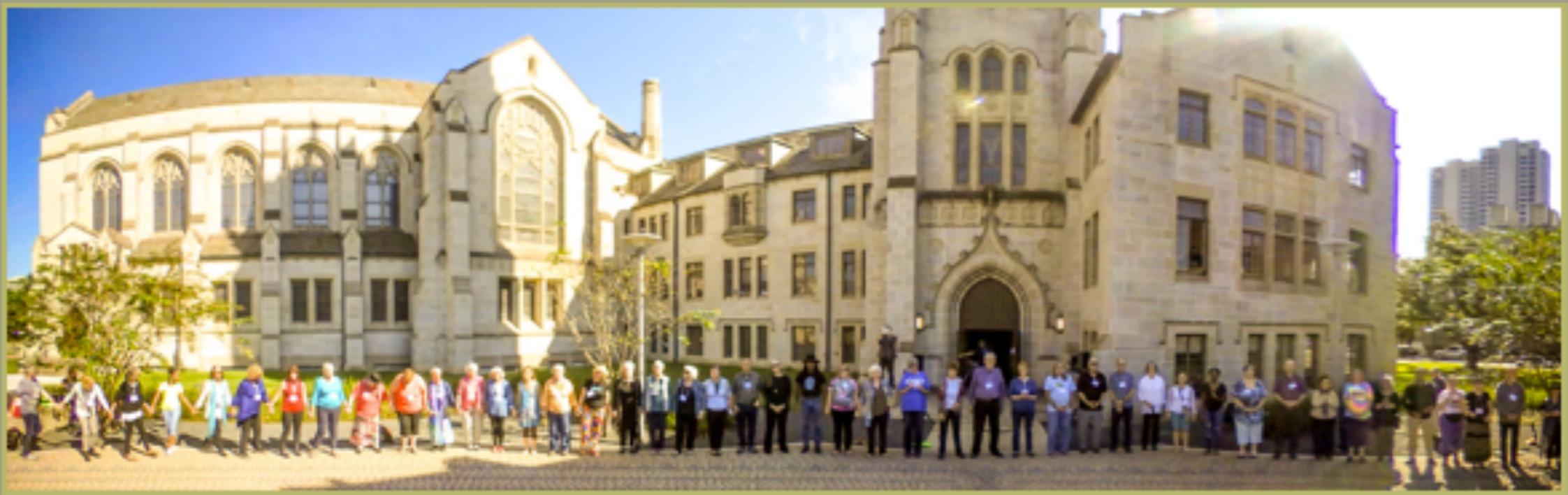
Diverse Journeys on a Common Path

The Annual Gathering of the Labyrinth Society

November 10-12, 2016
St. Paul's Cathedral
Houston, Texas



Photo by Chris Newlin



The Annual Gathering of the Labyrinth Society is a casual, public conference spanning three days with special workshops and local tours before and after the main event. It is a time for celebrating labyrinths as experts and enthusiasts gather from around the world for learning and sharing. It is a time to network with others who use and love labyrinths, learn new approaches, experience new labyrinth designs, and support the spread of labyrinth wisdom and community around the world. You can have lunch with a labyrinth expert from another continent, try your hand at building a labyrinth, or shop for unique items not available anywhere else.

The Annual Gathering includes featured speakers, workshops, sales of labyrinth-related products, a silent auction, and a wide variety of labyrinths for walking. The location and theme for the Annual Gathering changes each year, allowing us to visit many regions.

St. Paul's United Methodist was chosen to host the 2016 TLS Gathering. Founded in 1905, the church declares its mission to “maintain a sacred space in the heart of Houston where people seek, find, and respond to God’s love and grace.” - St. Paul’s Internet Site

<http://www.stpaulshouston.org>

ABOUT THE LABYRINTH SOCIETY

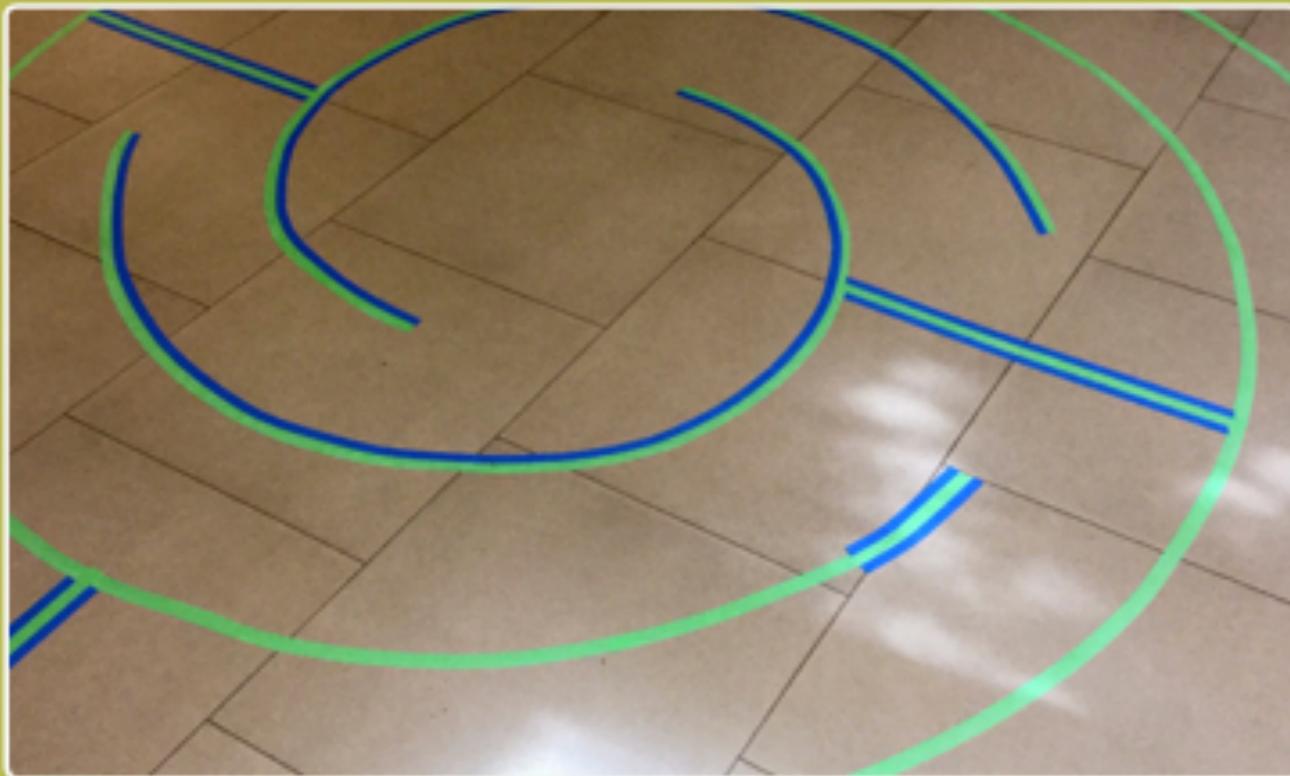
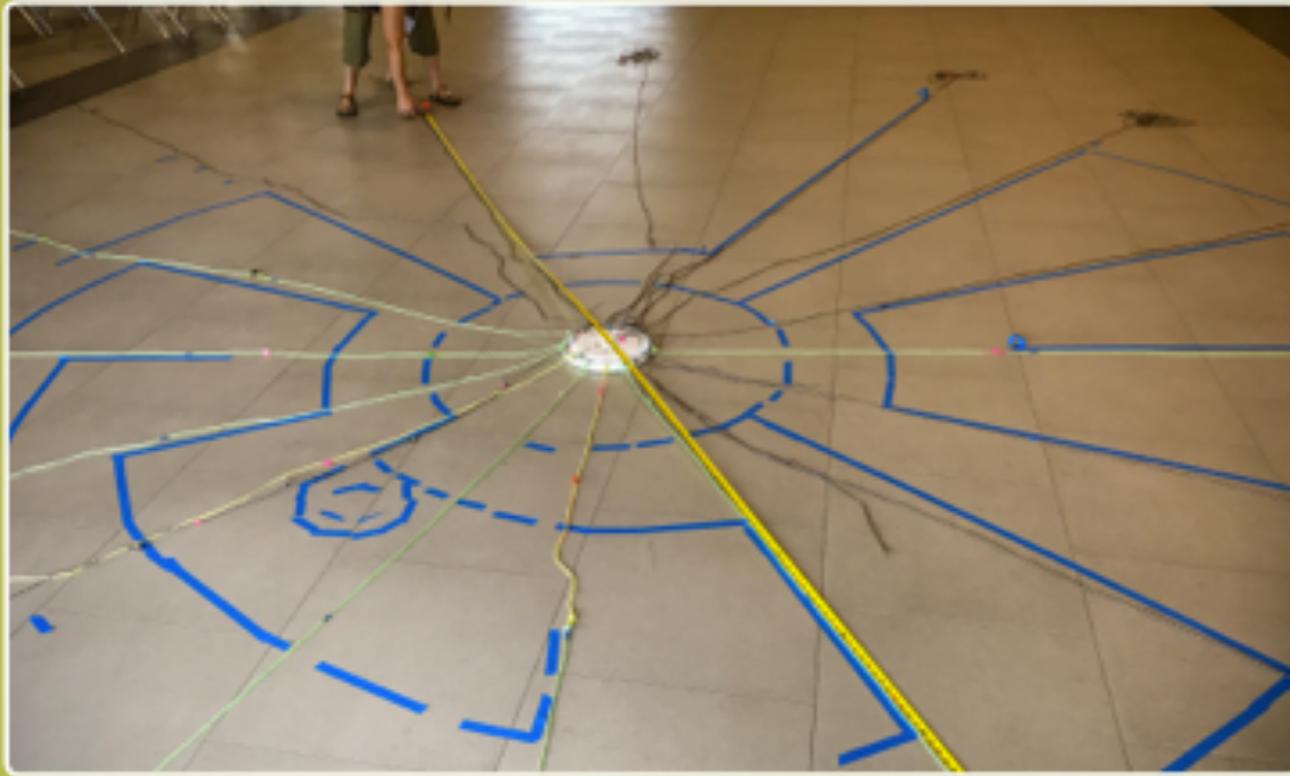
The journey of The Labyrinth Society (TLS) is very similar to that of a labyrinth walk. The “labyrinth landscape” has changed significantly since The Labyrinth Society’s inception in 1998. At that time when someone mentioned “labyrinth,” a blank stare or a quizzical expression usually followed. Today, after years of TLS members sharing labyrinths with the world, labyrinths have become more mainstream, and people are building labyrinths world wide. The Labyrinth Society Global group’s page has more than 6,000 Facebook members from all over the world, and there are posts in English, German, Dutch, Spanish, and other languages. Each of these people touches countless others. TLS has made great progress toward its goal of bringing labyrinths to the world.

The Labyrinth Society is evolving to meet the changing needs of the growing worldwide labyrinth community. The TLS mission is, “to support all those who create, maintain and use labyrinths, and to serve the global community by providing education, networking and opportunities to experience transformation.”



This beautiful stone labyrinth was installed by Marty Kermeen in the summer of 2011. During the 2016 Gathering it became a centerpiece for the opening and closing ceremonies and was used by many throughout the Gathering.

Labyrinths of varied fabrics, designs, and styles graced St. Paul's campus during the 2016 Gathering.



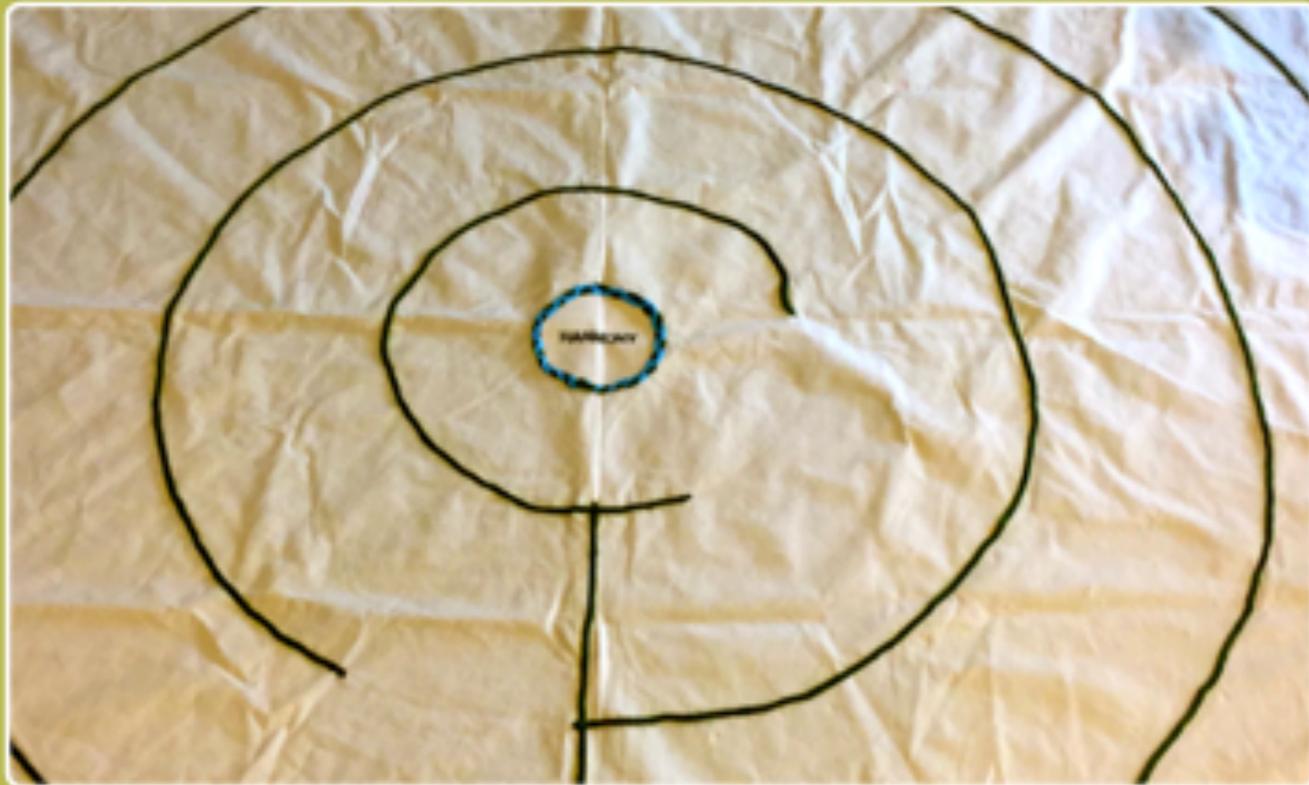






Photo by Chris Newlin

“Every time I walk the Labyrinth at St. Paul’s, I see Marty (left) working in the sweltering heat, creating lasting beauty with a profound spiritual invitation. I will always remember your generosity in stopping to talk with different ones of us who yearned to be connected from the ground up.”

-Judy Leatherwood on visiting St Paul’s Labyrinth (built by Robert Ferré, Debi and Marty Kermeen)

WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS

One principle feature of the annual gathering is the variety of workshops and presentations that allow experts to present and share their insights, research and efforts at ‘spreading the word.’ The 2016 Gathering included three Pre-conference workshops, 19 conference sessions, and three Post-Gathering Labyrinth Tours.



Stephanie Graham “Labyrinth and Sacred Spaces that Celebrate Diversity”



“My Celestial Labyrinths Pre-Gathering Workshop was so much fun to prepare for and present. I like how everyone is working and concentrating—not even paying attention to the camera in the first photo—then proudly displaying their favorite drawings in the next.”

- M.E. (Beth) Langley Veriditas
Certified Labyrinth Facilitator



For more go to:
www.lastinglabyrinths.com



The *Quick & Easy Labyrinths for Community Events Pre-Gathering* workshop was hosted by professional labyrinth designer and builder Lars Howlett. Developed for a monthly art walk in his neighborhood, he taught participants how to create small, simple labyrinths with cheap and common objects that others could experience and enjoy. Students learned to draw three and five circuit patterns using easy methods then practiced installing them working together as a group using inexpensive materials.





Participants in Lars' presentation learned first-hand how Classical and Chartres-style labyrinth could be easily adopted for a variety of settings, sizes and designs.

For more go to: <http://discoverlabyrinths.com/lars-howlett/>

Photos of Gathering 2016 Workshops and Presentations





“This TLS Gathering was like every other one I've attended: Totally Unique and Awesome! Every one I've been to has had an underlying feeling of welcome and an energy of co-creation, and yet each one has had a personality all its own. I think that the reason is threefold. Labyrinths draw kindred spirits, kindred spirits share, and sharing enriches and deepens everyone's experience. The people, places, and ideas converge. A Gathering is made.”

-M.E. (Beth) Langley, TLS Nominating Committee Chair



Opening day of the Gathering featured two Pre-Gathering Workshops, a reception hosted by the Energy Keepers, plus the “New to TLS Mix and Meander.” In the evening, we participated in an Opening Night Ceremony and Group Labyrinth Walk.

A highlight of opening day was the dance by Core Performance Company, whose ‘walk’ piece brought youthful energy, music, dance, and interpretation to the labyrinth.

After dinner Marty and Debi Kermeen presented, “Labyrinths: Interactive Art and Vibrational Fields” and shared slides, photos, and stories about their work as master labyrinth builders and promoters. The evening drew to a close at the 365 Club Labyrinth Walk / Reception.





Photos of The Labyrinths Society First Day's General Session



Opening Night ceremonies included a labyrinth walk and a performance by the Core Performance Company.



Editor Note: Rose Shields, a Core performer was kind to respond to these questions:

Can you describe how you came to your interpretation of the labyrinth in the Walk piece you performed at the Gathering?

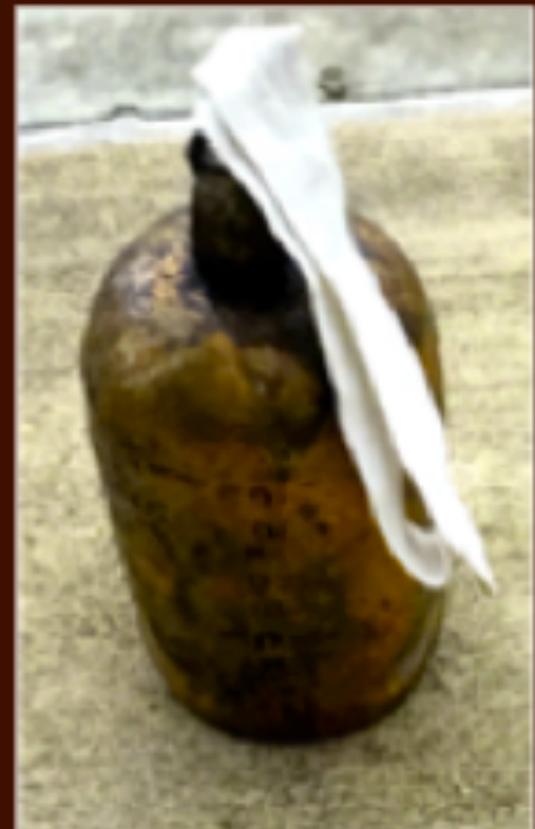
“We researched the history of the labyrinth and discussed it's many purposes and interpretations. We used the literal walking of the labyrinth to get our own sense of what it means to each of us personally. Sue worked with us on developing a score of movement based on our individual interpretations, feelings, and emotions. We then created structured improvisations based on the score. We wanted to keep the overarching theme of ‘Release, Receive, Return’ as the base of our score so that was always a constant as we worked. We would run the score, discuss what was working, what needed tweaking, would rewrite the score based on those changes, and perform it again. We did this a lot. In doing this, we came upon the idea of utilizing the four elements as another layer to play with inside the improvisation.”

What did the four elements bring to the labyrinth?

“The four elements, for me, brought a sense of worldliness. It's an idea, a theme, that unifies human beings living on this earth. We wouldn't exist without such elements, so it seemed only appropriate to give homage to them.”

What impact has the labyrinth had on your life?

“I had had opportunities to walk labyrinths prior to this project, but have never delved so deeply into its meanings and purposes until we began creating this performance project. I think since having given it (the labyrinth) more attention, I've been recharged in this idea of meditation, sacred geometry, and how the world can be changed even with the smallest of actions. It also continues to remind me of the value of patience. Giving things time to exist is very refreshing.” - Rose Shields Core Performance Company







Debi & Marty Kermeen Present Interactive Art ~ Vibrational Field



Marty and Debi Kermeen have birthed and nurtured hundreds of labyrinths that helped to rebuild, renew, and connect communities, changing them for the better. Since the installation of their first permanent labyrinth at River Front Park in Naperville, Illinois, in 1998, the Kermeens have been commissioned to create public and private works of art for museums, hospitals, spas, cathedrals, public parks, universities, corporations, individual clients, and avid art collectors in the USA and abroad.

Marty is recognized as an award-winning internationally renowned artist and stone sculptor. His labyrinths have been praised as some of the most beautiful and longest lasting labyrinths that are available in the world today. His work has been featured worldwide in numerous publications, magazines, books, and TV, including HGTV, Time Magazine, and the cover of Jeff Saward's book, *Labyrinths and Mazes*.

Debi is a business administrator, trained Labyrinth Facilitator, and presenter. She leads women's retreats and is a practitioner of energy and sound healing. She is also a dancer and lover of movement. Marty and Debi are founding members of The Labyrinth Society. For More go to: <http://labyrinthsinstone.com>



TAP arrow for links to YouTube to watch excerpts from Debi and Marty's Keynote Address.





At the 2016 Gathering Marketplace, vendors provided a unique diversity of offerings, ceramics, fabrics, carved wood finger labyrinths, art, and jewelry. Additionally, a silent auction offered items for sale to generate funds to help members attend the next year's Gathering.



“A labyrinth is a pattern with a purpose, an ancient tool that speaks to a long forgotten part of us. Lying dormant for centuries, labyrinths are undergoing a revival of use and interest. They offer a chance to take "time out" from our busy lives, to leave schedules and stress behind. Walking a labyrinth is a gift we give to ourselves that leads us past our intellect to a deeper place within. Among the results some people have reported from walking labyrinths are insight and creative ideas, relaxation and stress release, happiness (sometimes tears), connectedness, balance, and well-being.”

- Robert Ferré, Founding Member and Master Labyrinth Maker

Chapter Three ~ Day Two



Events on Day two included workshops, poster presentations, and activities. The location for the 2017 Gathering was announced (see final chapter), the Marketplace was open, and attendees enjoyed Gentle Yoga, Crystal Bowls, Tai Chi, and chai tea.

The Annual Meeting of the organization saw the election of new board members and bylaws were changed.

Jay Stailey introduced his friend and colleague Reginald Adams, who shared insights and vivid storytelling in a presentation entitled: *Place Making and the Path*. The dinner session included general announcements, Volunteer recognition, and the presentation of new TLS Board Members.

The evening featured a Veterans Day Candlelit Labyrinth Walk Hosted by TLS.



“I came to the labyrinth as a preparation tool for retirement and continue to walk the walk eight years later. I'm excited to serve a Project Leader for Sacred Sites Quest (SSQ) and I look forward to seeing how this project will positively impact our students as they embark upon these trips of a lifetime.”

Jay Stailey - retired public educator, author, storyteller, educational consultant, adjunct professor, liminal coach, and certified labyrinth facilitator.

“This project is a brainchild of mine that was inspired by my love for people, travel, art culture, science, technology, engineering and math. I've traveled around to more than 28 countries to experience the art and culture of societies across the globe. These travels have fed my passion as an artist. My philosophy is to dream big, plan your work, work your plan, make history and have fun!”

Reginald C. Adams - Creative/Artistic Director for Sacred Sites Quest SSQ.

For more go to: <https://www.ssqie.com>



Jay Stailey introduces Reginald C. Adams.

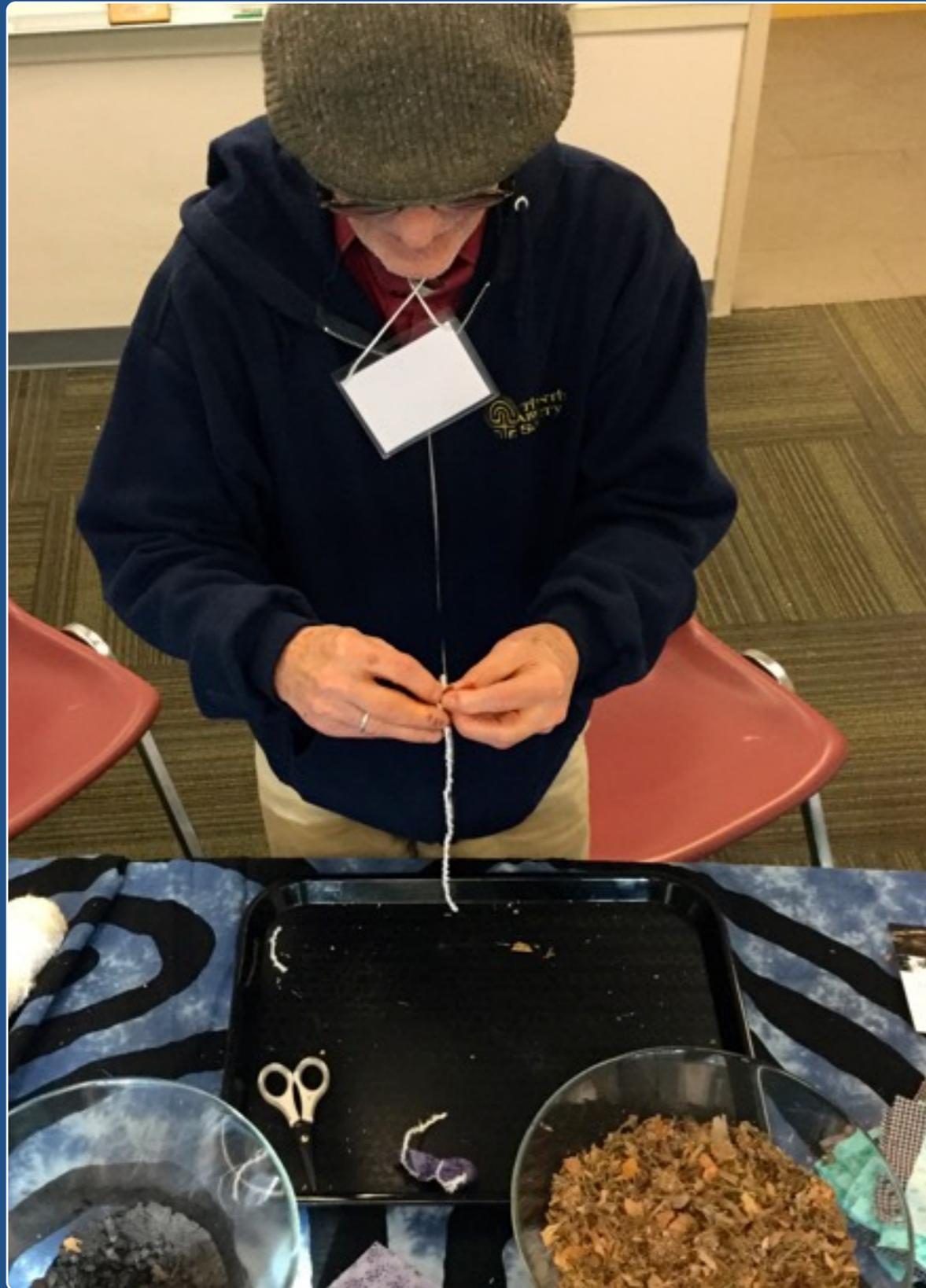


Reginald Charles Adams presented Place Making and the Path, a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design, and co-creation of labyrinths within public spaces and the urban environment. Reginald shared photos of several community-based labyrinths that are designed and co-created by community members and local youth with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. These labyrinths are transforming urban communities into cultural and artistic destinations.



TAP arrow for links to YouTube to watch excerpts from Reggie Adams Address.

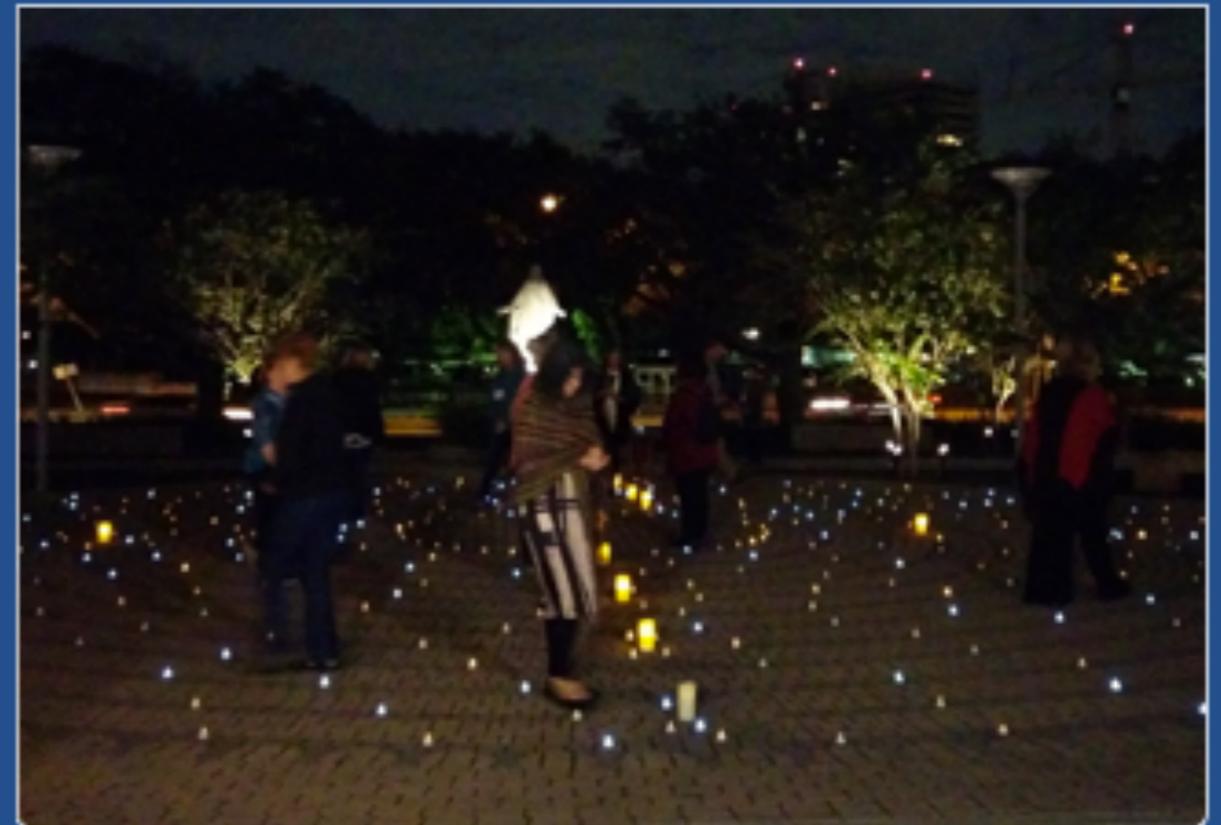
Participants prepare their Journey Bundles for closing ceremonies.





Our belief is this bundle represents not only a physical, but also a spiritual connection to the sacred Fires that have burned for thousands and thousands of years. We believe these bundles represent the collective consciousness of all the participants who have ever gathered. It is our hope you will carry this Fire coal bundle with a sense of purpose, and an understanding that our thoughts, intentions, and actions, at this moment, do influence the next seven generations. These coal bundles have been shared around the world for the last twenty-one years. - www.neiupeacefire.weebly.com

Friday, November 11, marked a celebration of Veterans Day with a public candlelight walk sponsored by The Labyrinth Society.



A world map in shades of blue and white, serving as a background for the text. The map shows the continents of North America, South America, Europe, and Africa.

Like a pebble in a pond, the labyrinth sends out many ripples to each of us, to our communities and the planet! A symbol of hope and renewal, the labyrinth is an interactive tool for experiencing transformation, inner peace, unity, healing, celebration, ritual, recovery, and connecting with the Divine. But how does this happen? We will share stories and experiences that show how labyrinths vibrate and send out waves of healing energy, creating common ground and a transformative matrix for people of all walks of life and paths of faith. -Debi Kermeen

Chapter Four ~ Day Three

The final (regular) day of the 2016 Gathering featured a final round of workshops, and a student Panel Discussion in which members of Sacred Sites Quest described their work building labyrinths in Houston, France, and Ecuador. The Closing Ceremony, sponsored by the Energy Keepers, featured a labyrinth walk, a Journey Bundle ceremony, and the traditional singing of “Dear Friends.”





Sacred Sites Quest members Eliza Pillsbury, Harold Owens, and Maya Nicole White traveled to Lyon France, and Quito, Equator. They are joined via video link by Francesca Farris.

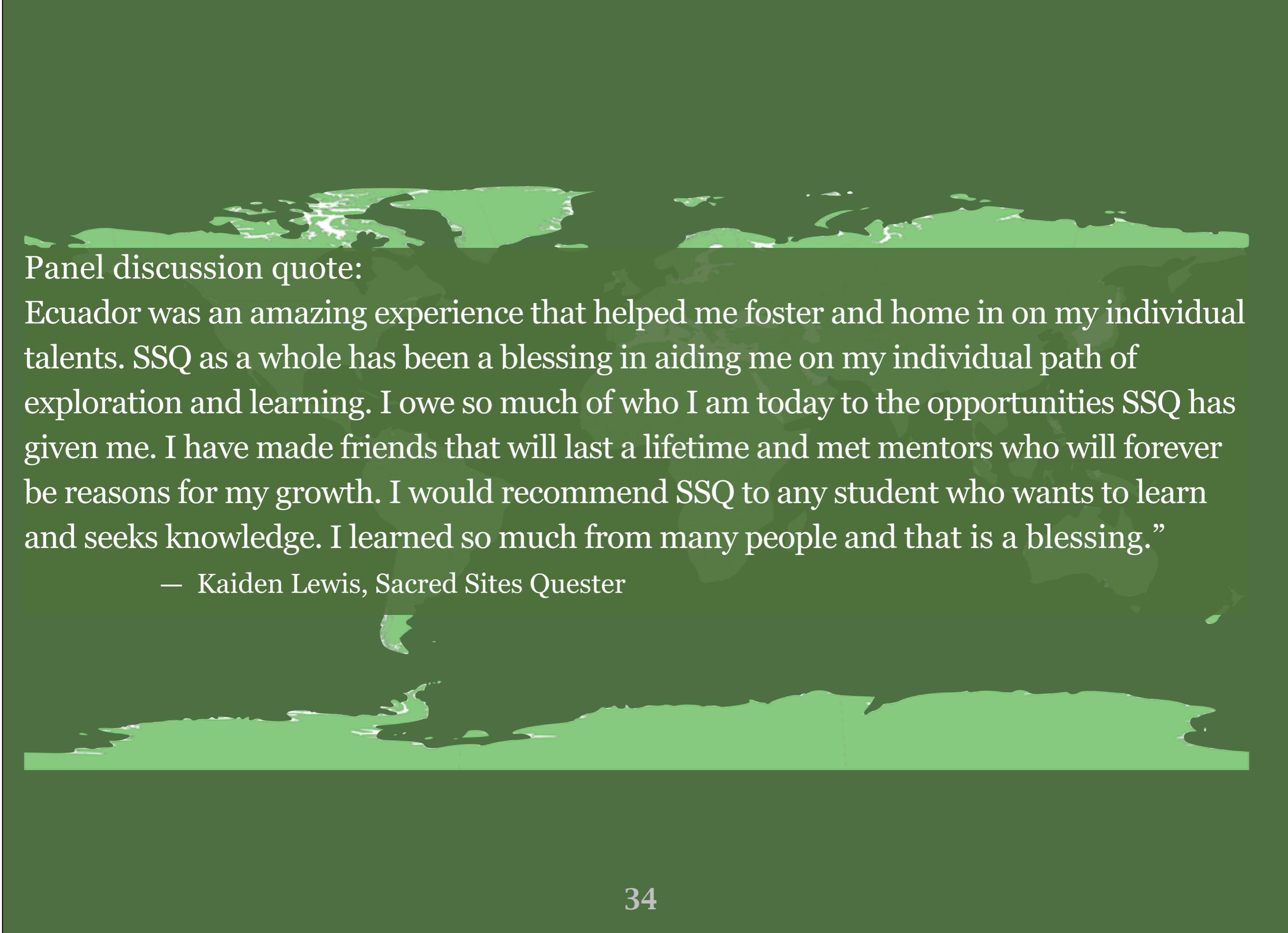


Host Jay Stailey



TAP arrows for links to YouTube to watch excerpts from the SSQ Panel Discussion and a **Tedx** Talk.





Panel discussion quote:

Ecuador was an amazing experience that helped me foster and home in on my individual talents. SSQ as a whole has been a blessing in aiding me on my individual path of exploration and learning. I owe so much of who I am today to the opportunities SSQ has given me. I have made friends that will last a lifetime and met mentors who will forever be reasons for my growth. I would recommend SSQ to any student who wants to learn and seeks knowledge. I learned so much from many people and that is a blessing.”

— Kaiden Lewis, Sacred Sites Quester

The Closing Day Labyrinth Walk and Journey Bundle Ceremony were conducted by Debi Kermeen and Sandra Walden.









These photos are from Post-Gathering events including a workshop, Houston Labyrinth Tour led by Sarah Gish and Betty Cartmell, and a pilgrimage to Galveston Texas.





Core Performance Company share the four elements earth, wind, fire and water for a walk during the Post-Gathering Houston Labyrinth Tour.



Photos are from the Post-Gathering Labyrinth Pilgrimage to Galveston Texas, led by Kay Sandor.





The President's Message:



“Our vision is to become a global information hub weaving together local and worldwide labyrinth communities.”

- Kay Whipple TLS President

Chapter Five ~ Credits & Links

Thanks to everyone who joined us in Houston and helped make the 2016 Gathering a success. Special thanks to those who shared media for this edition.



TLS Board of Directors 2016

Special Thanks to:

Karen Kelly and Reginald Adams,
2016 Local Host & Committee Co-chairs
Judy Breckbill, volunteer; Betty Cartmell,
publicity and volunteer; Charles Crumb
volunteer; Carol DeVore, maintainer of tea
lights; Jennifer Egenolf, publicity; Sarah
Gish, publicity; Karen Hahn, wisdom sharer;
Margaret Harle, labyrinth site research;
Karen Kelly, co-chair; Kay Kemp, Creation
Station designer and creator; Amy Malkan,
publicity and representative of the younger
generation; Carolyn Mead, tea light sorter
and all around volunteer; Kay Sandor,
Galveston publicity; Jay Stailey, publicity;
St Paul's Greeters, greetings; Handicap
Accessible door staffing; Margaret Strader,
volunteer; Sat Siri Sumler, yoga instructor;
Pay Taylor-Glass, volunteer; Clay Thurmond,
learning opportunities coordinator; Bryan
York, Tai Chi leader.



TLS Board Members:

Kay Whipple, President
David Gallagher, Executive Director
Diane Rudebock, Resource VP & Research
Christiana Brinton, Communications VP & PR
Kay Sandor, Secretary
Katja Marquart, Treasurer
Nancy Bandiera, Publications
Lars Howlett, Web/World Labyrinth Day
Debi Kermeen, Energy Keepers
Beth Langley, Nominating Committee
Janice Lewis, Membership
Jodi Lorimer, Education Outreach
Carol Maurer, Projects/Special Projects

Special Thanks to:

Wisdom Circle

The elders in Native American and other indigenous tribes were revered because they had seen and experienced more of life than most of the others. This experience translated into wisdom and they were sought after for advice and counsel. The Wisdom Circle of The Labyrinth Society serves in much the same capacity.

The Wisdom Circle is comprised of former members of the board of directors — many of whom were founding members. The purpose for designating such a group was to create a body of people who have the early knowledge of the organization who could be called upon when knotty issues arise.

This Digital Publication was made possible with the support and direction of TLS Education Outreach Chair Jodi Lorimer.

Thanks to Lars Howlett for his generous sharing of photos and media. <http://discoverlabyrinths.com>

Publications

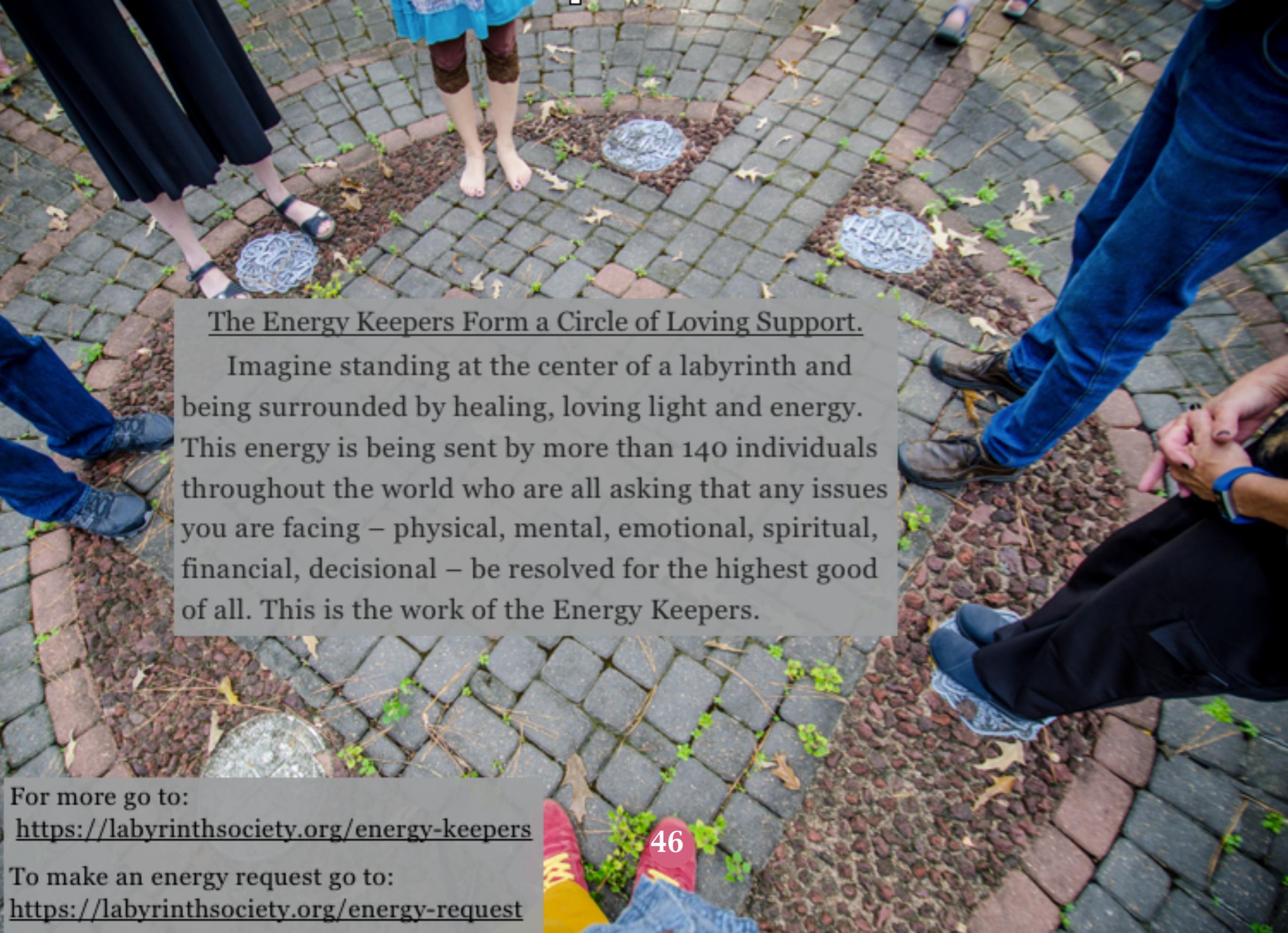
The Labyrinth Society produces a variety of publications throughout the year for its membership. These publications enable TLS to communicate vital information to members regarding various updates, events, and general membership information. In addition, they provide an opportunity for our membership to share their labyrinth-related work with a variety of audiences. Publications include the Labyrinth Society eNews, the Labyrinth Pathways journal, and Caedroia: The Journal of Mazes and Labyrinths, published by Labyrinthos. For more:

www.labyrinthsociety.org/media

Opening Night Dance Performance by
Core Performance Company

Photos, video, and post-production editing
by Mike Jager Captain of Digital Projects
@ New Media Concepts LLC. TAP icon for more





The Energy Keepers Form a Circle of Loving Support.

Imagine standing at the center of a labyrinth and being surrounded by healing, loving light and energy. This energy is being sent by more than 140 individuals throughout the world who are all asking that any issues you are facing – physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, financial, decisional – be resolved for the highest good of all. This is the work of the Energy Keepers.

For more go to:

<https://labyrinthsociety.org/energy-keepers>

To make an energy request go to:

<https://labyrinthsociety.org/energy-request>



Very special thanks to the staff and family at St. Paul's.



Candid moments at Gathering 2016



TAP icon to register for The Labyrinth Society's 19th Annual Gathering (below)

DATES: October 27-29, 2017

LOCATION: Islandwood, a 255- acre outdoor learning center on Bainbridge Island, Washington

FEATURED PRESENTERS:

Jeffrey Bale, Mosaic artist and landscape designer, creator of labyrinths including one on Bainbridge Island

Denny Dyke, Circles in the Sand, beach labyrinth artist extraordinaire

Gathering participants can attend a wide variety of workshops, lectures, mini-sessions, and poster presentations. Don't miss this unique island retreat at the outdoor learning center of Islandwood!

To visit TAP www.islandwood.org



A Labyrinth on Bainbridge
Island by Jeffrey Bale

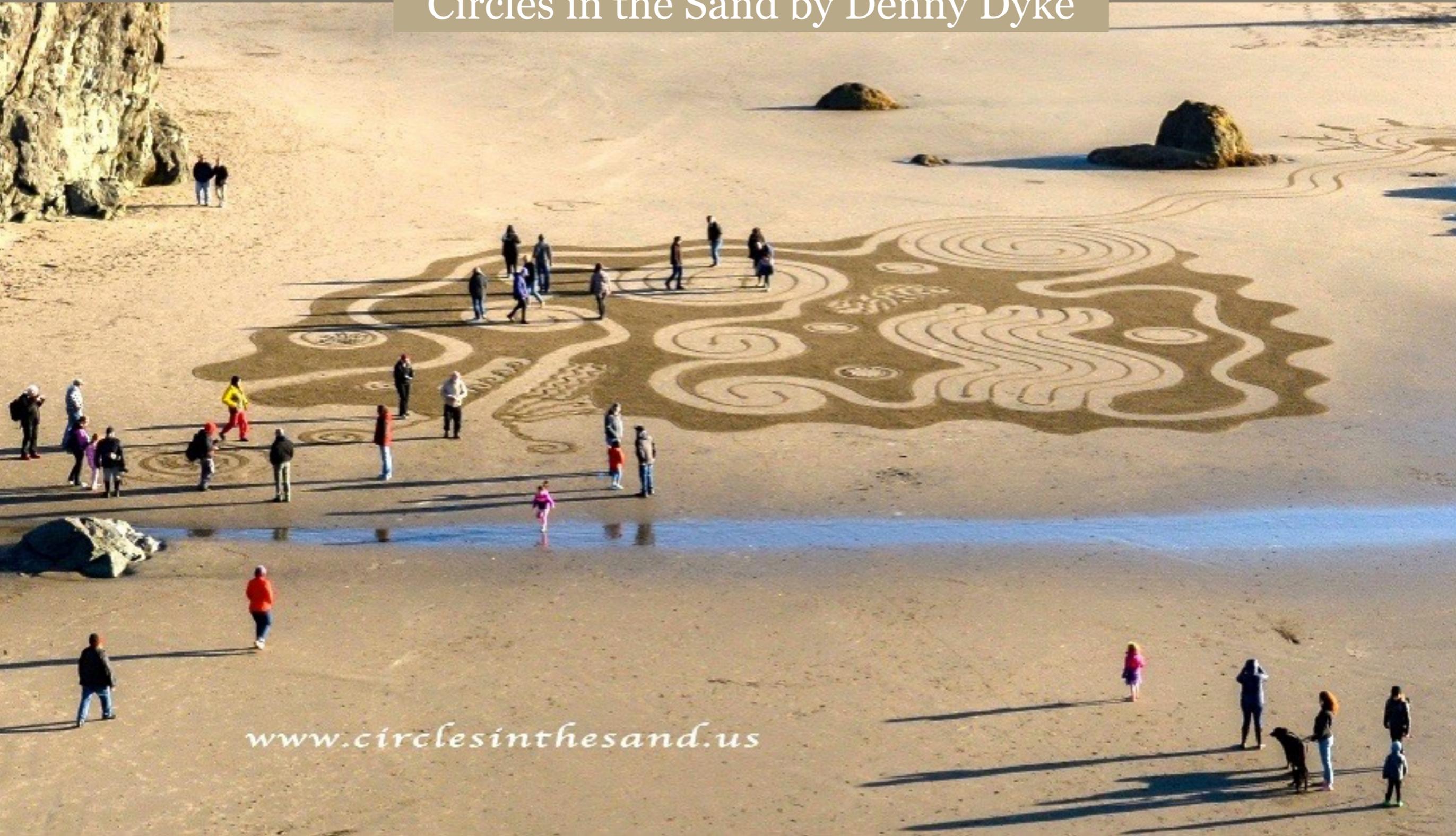


For More:

<http://jeffreygardens.blogspot.com>

<https://vimeo.com/161208550>

Circles in the Sand by Denny Dyke

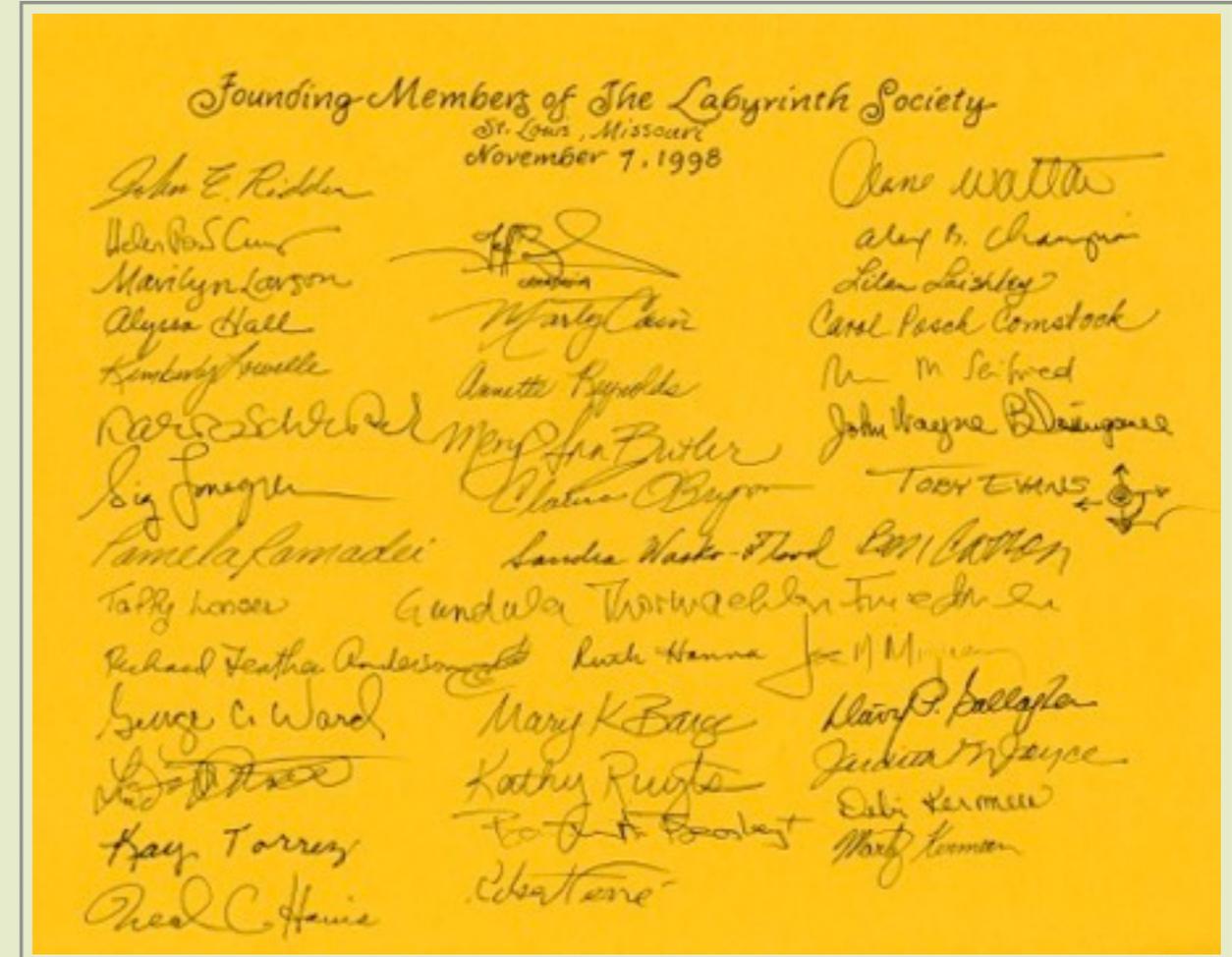


www.circlesinthesand.us



On the TLS website, David Gallagher recalls details of our first meeting: As reflected in the minutes of The Labyrinth Network Conference '97 (as it was called), the 24 individuals who attended agreed: "To look into creating a national nonprofit organization that could be called the Labyrinth Society with the intent to provide spiritual and other support to its members."

Much more in The Labyrinth Society 20th Anniversary Digital Edition coming summer 2018.



Off to Bainbridge Island for Gathering 2017. See you there!

