

REFLECTIONS ON THE REPAIR OF THE LABYRINTH AT CEDAR MILL CHRIST UMC – JULY 2019  
BY TERRY STYNER

The labyrinth was originally built in 2015. My husband, Andy Miller, and I had built a labyrinth in our backyard the previous summer. The minister of Christ United Methodist Church had invited us to create something similar in the courtyard of the church. The initial project was completed with the support of approximately 12-14 volunteers from the church.

The site where we built the labyrinth was where a large evergreen tree had been removed over 20 years earlier. During the original construction, the crew took special care to dig down at least 3 feet to remove as much of what remained of the stump as possible. They then backfilled with sand and gravel to bring the space to grade and level. The goal was to reduce the chances of settling due to continued decay of the tree stump.

Unfortunately, despite the best efforts, over the years, a portion of the labyrinth buckled and settled.



In July 2019, over a four-day period, a small team of volunteers deconstructed the labyrinth to repair it. The team dug up the bricks in the affected area (about 1/3 of the labyrinth area). They carefully removed from each brick the polymorphic sand that had been used during the initial construction.

After carefully checking the condition of the gravel under the bricks, the team decided it would be sufficient to add additional gravel and sand, level it and smooth it, cover it with weed barrier cloth, and replace the bricks.

Filling in with additional polymorphic sand, the team put the finishing touches on the repair. By allowing the labyrinth to dry overnight, people were again able to walk this labyrinth without fear of losing balance or tripping because of uneven surface. We hope this repair will result in a longer period of time before additional maintenance is required.

The “after” picture shows: Almost like new!



Click Here to view video of labyrinth repairs:

[http://labyrinthnetworknorthwest.org/reflections/2019/CUMC\\_Labyrinth\\_Repair\\_2019.mp4](http://labyrinthnetworknorthwest.org/reflections/2019/CUMC_Labyrinth_Repair_2019.mp4)

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About the Authors:



Terry Styner and her husband, Andy Miller, live in Beaverton, Oregon with their cat, Harley. They built a smaller version of the Chartres labyrinth in their backyard before leading the construction of the labyrinth at Cedar Mill Christ United Methodist Church. While they think the days of building labyrinths are behind them, they've been told that God sometimes has a sense of humor when God hears, "I'll never do that again."