

LENT | FEBRUARY 22, 2012

Lenten labyrinth drive to benefit Skagit Valley Neighbors in Need



Myra Smith

Seattle Christian Spirituality Examiner



<http://www.examiner.com/christian-spirituality-in-seattle/len-poster-photo>

Salem Lutheran Church Lent Poster

Credits:

Myra Smith/The Laughing Flower Labyrinth & Landscape Co.



<http://www.examiner.com/christian-spirituality-in-seattle/food-drive-labyrinths-picture>

Slideshow: Food Drive Labyrinths
<http://www.examiner.com/christian-spirituality-in-seattle/food-drive-labyrinths-picture>



Salem Lutheran Church ELCA (<http://www.slcmv.com>) of Mt.

Vernon, WA is planning a labyrinth installation and food drive to raise hunger awareness and to collect food for Skagit Valley Neighbors in Need. The labyrinth will be designed by church member and

Laughing Flower Labyrinth Co.

(<http://www.laughingflowerlabyrinth.com>) owner Myra Smith, and installed using purple duct tape by Salem's high school youth on Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2012. After the tape is laid down, nonperishable foods and donated supplies will be placed on the tape to create the labyrinth during Lent from February 22-March 28, 2012.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Skagit Valley Neighbors in Need distributes food to over 1,000 individuals per week from their south Mt. Vernon food bank location. Nearly 50% of their clients are under the age of 18. The nonprofit also conducts a special outreach "Backpack Program" with local elementary schools in which selected children receive a filling backpack of easily prepared foods to carry them through the weekend.

Church members and the public are invited to bring donations of food to help stock the shelves of Neighbors in Need of Mt. Vernon. Basic nonperishable canned and boxed foods are welcome. Pantry staples are especially appreciated: sugar, cream of chicken and mushroom soups, canned chili and beef stew, tomato sauce, vegetable soups, tuna, peanut butter, and baked beans. Monetary donations for Neighbors in Need may also be given in the church office in lieu of food.

A labyrinth is used a walking meditation or path of prayer. Although labyrinths are often confused with mazes, labyrinths are actually the opposite of mazes; instead of a puzzle with multiple dead ends and



(<http://www.bing.com/map>)

Location: 2529 North Laventure Road Mount Vernon, WA 98273

branches, labyrinths have only one path winding from the beginning to center, and back again. Labyrinths have ancient origins, and have been used for at least 4,000 years by cultures and religions across the globe. Christian use of the labyrinth dates back to as early as 324 AD. The Laughing Flower Labyrinth based Salem's design is based on the oldest surviving medieval Christian labyrinth, the 800+ year old Chartres labyrinth from Chartres Cathedral in France.

Holy One,

To those who hunger, give bread.

And to those who have bread,

give the hunger for justice.

– Latin American prayer

Everyone is encouraged to walk the labyrinth to pray about hunger in the community. Donors and walkers may place their donations anywhere on or around the labyrinth, which will be located in the narthex of the church. Prayer starters and information about labyrinths and labyrinth walking will also be located near the labyrinth for those who visit the church to walk.

The Lenten Food Drive will culminate in a "Stations of the Cross" labyrinth walk in the sanctuary on Wednesday, March 28, 2012 at 7:00pm. Combining two ancient pilgrimages in one, participants will follow the scriptural footsteps of Jesus to the cross as they walk an almost exact replica of the Chartres Cathedral labyrinth. For more information, call or email Myra Smith at 360.927.8803 or

myra@laughingflowerlabyrinth.com

[\(mailto:myra@laughingflowerlabyrinth.com?](mailto:myra@laughingflowerlabyrinth.com?subject=Lenten%20Food%20Drive)

[subject=Lenten%20Food%20Drive\)](mailto:myra@laughingflowerlabyrinth.com?subject=Lenten%20Food%20Drive).



By Myra Smith

Seattle Christian Spirituality Examiner

Myra Smith is a labyrinth artist and owner of The Laughing Flower Labyrinth Company. Myra is a certified labyrinth facilitator with a lifelong...