

## **The Labyrinth at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis**

The labyrinth on the UUCD grounds was created in April 2013 to honor the lives of Claudia Maupin and Chip Northup, longtime church members who died together, and were beloved by all. The artist, Anna Joy Thigpen Hunt, was one of Claudia's many 'best friends'. The two had shared a unique relationship dating back to Anna Joy's childhood. In addition to meeting often for tea or lunch, they got together every year on their birthdays, which were exactly 6 months (plus 44 years) apart.

The labyrinth held special meaning for Claudia and Anna Joy as a symbol of their friendship and as a metaphor for one's process and progress through life. The two had also always intended to build a labyrinth together, but when Claudia and Chip passed, its construction and use was a helpful tool in moving through grief and loss.

Anna Joy enlisted help with construction materials and labor - and a pizza or two - from several friends. Her wish for the labyrinth was that it be used by anyone as a place for comfort or reflection, and for honoring all who have died. Anna Joy specifically did not want any plaques identifying those people, preferring it to be inclusive of everyone.

The labyrinth was initially allowed as a temporary installation, but it is now embedded in the hearts of many people, some of whom have discovered it quite by surprise.

The design is the same as the oldest labyrinth ever found, on the Greek isle of Knossos. It opens toward the North, as the original does. It was intentionally made more rustic and freeform in order to fit amongst the pine trees. The space at the center of the labyrinth was enlarged so that the visitor might lie on the ground and linger, contemplating the patterns of the pines and sky above.

Labyrinths, unlike mazes, are not about getting lost, but about discovery.