



WALKING THE LABYRINTH

by Jim Gordon,
President of ILM



Recently, I was at a meeting in San Francisco. During our discussions we talked about labyrinths. Then, later the same month, I attended a class in which labyrinths were discussed. I found this to be an interesting “coincidence,” and I have been thinking about what I know of labyrinths. My understanding and experiences of labyrinths come mostly from intuitive awareness, and from having once walked a labyrinth in Glastonbury, England.

When I was 18, I was making some major decisions in my life. I was unclear about what my next steps were to be. I tried many different things to find an answer but to no avail. I asked my parents, friends and a former teacher for their help. They shared with me what they could, but when I put all the pieces together I still did not have an answer that I could move with and feel in alignment with. Finally, I decided to pray for an understanding on how to decide and move forward. I did not ask for God to tell me what to do but rather I asked for guidance in making this decision.

After a few days of prayer I had a dream. In the dream I was walking and following a pattern on the ground. I was going round and round, following this pattern. The floor was all of stone and the pattern that I was following was a different colored stone. When I woke up and wrote this dream down I could not figure out what the symbols of this dream meant. The next night, and the next, I had much the same dream. The last time I had this dream there was a man standing near the pattern in the floor. He walked over and said, “I see you are walking the Answer Circle. Did you get the answer yet?” End of dream. Well, I had no idea what this dream meant. Could it be, I wondered, the guidance I had been asking for?

I decided to see if I could figure this dream out. I first tried to draw the pattern but could not, as I had

not seen it from above to have a true picture of what the design looked like. Finally, not having much success with this approach, I decided to try to re-walk the pattern. I went outside to our driveway and began walking round and round, retracing the pattern the best I could. While I was walking, a neighbor saw me and asked what I was doing. I did not tell him about the decisions I was wanting to make in my life, but I did share with him about the dream—how I was trying to walk out the pattern to get an idea of the true design and to also see if I could make more sense of the dream.

“I see you are walking the Answer Circle. Did you get the answer yet?”

“Labyrinth,” he said. “I believe it is called a labyrinth or maze. I saw one while I was stationed in Germany. They must have some religious significance because it was in the floor of this old church.” I thanked him and went inside to begin researching labyrinths and mazes to see if I could get a better understanding of what they were and what they had to do with me finding my answer.

In the dictionary I found ... “Labyrinth: 1. an intricate structure containing winding passages hard to follow without losing your way, a maze; 2. an intricate design laid out on the floor or ground, found in churches throughout Europe. People walk them while praying.”

So, I pondered, intrigued ... people walk them while praying. Now I had some direction. Next to the definition was a drawing of a spiral-like design, and underneath the drawing it said “labyrinth.” So now I had direction and the design. I tried to walk the design and pray, but, to my dismay, I found I got caught up in trying to follow the design. So, I decided to take a break and just go for a walk. As I began to walk I was still praying, and then found myself again trying to figure out what to do in my

life. I needed an answer. I began thinking about the situation and all the different ideas I had and what others had shared with me in response to my questions. I walked for some time until finally I felt I had nothing else to think about. I stopped and realized I still did not have an answer. Confused and upset, I turned and began to make my way back home. As I walked I found myself walking back the same way I had come. And, as I walked I found myself getting ideas about my question. Very clear ideas and understandings. By the time I had gotten home I knew exactly what I had to do and how I was going to accomplish it—I had the answer to my question.

That night I sat down to write in my diary about what had happened—and suddenly I realized that during the walk I asked my questions, and then when I **retraced** my steps back, all the answers had come forward. Since then I have used this technique often, and I have found that it works every time. I may not have the full solution at the end of my walk “out and then back,” but I do have the start of the solution and within a day or two I have the full answer. Was this what walking the labyrinth was about? Well, for me it was.

So here is what I do—here is how I “walk the labyrinth.” I write down what I am wanting to understand or find a solution to. I then pray, **giving**

thanks for the answer that will come forward at this time. Then I go for a walk, all the time putting forward all my questions, thoughts, beliefs, ideas and doubts. When I feel I have come to an end of the walk and have put forward all I know to say about the situation, I turn around and walk back exactly the same way I came. I walk in the energy I put forward as questions and in walking back through the energy I have put forth, I find I collect answers.

It doesn't seem to matter if you walk an actual labyrinth or if you walk the neighborhood around your home.

I have since tried this while walking an actual labyrinth in Glastonbury, England, beginning the walk on the outer edge and making my way in to the middle, then turning and walking the same way out—and I found it worked the same way for me.

So if you have an important question that needs an answer, try “walking the labyrinth.” It doesn't seem to matter if you walk an actual labyrinth or if you walk the neighborhood around your home. The important thing is your intention to not just stay “stuck in your problem,” but to move “out and back”—move the body, move the energy, and in this way move to an answer. ▲

ADVANCED!

LOVE AND LOVING

An ILM Weekend Retreat

with Jim Gordon, Laura Kesten and Steven McAfee

WHEN: Friday - Sunday, November 6-8, 1998

WHERE: at Seasons—A Center for Renewal, at the Fetzer Institute, Kalamazoo, MI

DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED; MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!





TEN MINUTES IN THE BATHROOM

by Steven McAfee,
ILM Midwest Coordinator

A few years ago (actually, it was about 20, but don't tell anybody), I taught a workshop on spiritual development at a large conference. At that time, I was single, living on my own, and making my living as a musician. After the program, one of the women invited several of us to her house for dinner with her and her husband. During the meal everyone had very enthusiastic comments about the workshop. Everyone except the husband. So, I asked him, "What did you think of it?" He replied, "Not much." I thought it must be because the material presented was beyond him; you know, a little too spiritual for his present level of consciousness. He probably had not grasped it. So I asked him, "What didn't you understand?" He responded, "You said all we have to do is spend two hours a day in meditation, an hour a day in spiritual study, an hour a day doing exercises, and some time doing community service." I answered, "That's right; so what was it you didn't understand?" To this day I can still hear him respond, "I didn't understand how that can be of any help to me. You see, I'm a husband, a father of two young children; I work a full time job, often with overtime hours. I don't have ten minutes to myself alone in the bathroom each day—how do you expect me to really do all those things?" In my mind I thought, "You poor guy, you're so materi-

alistic, you just don't get it. You missed the point."

Years later, I am now a husband and father of five, who works full time, as does my wife, to support our family. All our children have very active academic and social lives. And now *I get the point..* The challenge of trying to maintain my spiritual focus, practice my disciplines, and care for my family all at the same time is often overwhelming. I now realize why, in India, the yogis consider "householder saints" of a higher order than the ascetics! So, how do we fulfill both these roles in our real, everyday lives in the world? If I knew the answer to that one, I would probably be rich and famous. I certainly wouldn't be trying to write this article in between folding laundry, finishing the supper dishes, and completing the room list for ILM's upcoming retreat. However, through all these challenges, I am learning many things about myself.

I am learning how it is always easier to put something else before my commitment to the Lord—not in the big issues of life (how often do they come up anyway?), but in the moment-by-moment real activity of living a life. I find myself thinking that if I only get all these work and family projects done, then I can concentrate on being with the Lord. But it never happens. So, I am learning to approach time like I have money. Years ago, I thought tithing was a good idea. I had always planned to tithe with whatever was left over at the end of the month. But guess what? There was never was anything left. So, my wife and I started

ILM CLASSES & PROGRAMS:

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PRESENTED BY STEVEN MCAFEE: For additional information, call Steven at 219-485-2167

TUESDAY CLASSES

7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Unity Church
3232 Crescent Ave.
Ft. Wayne, IN

Classes include spiritual teaching, meditation, and group sharing.

SUNDAY MYSTICAL BIBLE STUDY SERIES

9:00 am-10:00 am
6228 Lombard Pl., Ft. Wayne, IN

Every Sunday (except on ILM retreat weekends). In these sessions, we explore the mystical experiences and teachings contained in the Bible and how to apply them in our lives. Each week we announce the text that we will be covering on the following week. Please call for current information.

SUNDAY SERVICES

Sunday, June 7 - 10:45 am:
Worship service at the Brigade of Light, YWCA Villa, Ft. Wayne

Sunday, July 5 - 10:45 am:
Worship service at the Brigade of Light, YWCA Villa, Ft. Wayne

Sunday, July 26 - 10:30 am:
Worship service and music at Unity Church, 3232 Crescent Ave., Ft. Wayne

Please call for additional programs scheduled after we went to press with this issue.

putting our tithe money aside first, into a separate account, one we use only for that purpose. Now we have money to tithe every month, and it makes us feel so wonderful. So now I am beginning to “tithe” with my time. The key seems to be to set it aside **first** (by the way, that is what the word “holy” means: “to be set apart”). I pick a time each day and dedicate it to the Lord and nothing else. It may be a time of prayer and meditation, or it may be a time of spiritual study and contemplation, or just a quiet time to be alone with God, to walk or to sit or just to be. This time feeds my soul. It nurtures and strengthens my spirit and draws me nearer to the Lord in my heart. On days when I do this, my priorities just seem to automatically line up, and everything seems to get done. On days when I

don’t, my priorities get confused, and I spend all day working frantically only to find, at the end of the day, that it seems like I have not accomplished anything.

What I learn, again and again, is that when the Lord is first in my life, then His love is foremost in my heart. Out of the abundance of that love, I can freely give love to my family and friends and students, love that is genuine, strong, and new. But if the Lord comes last in my life, so does his love come last into my heart, and all I find within me to give to those I love is weariness, frustration, and resentment. Maybe that is part of what Jesus meant when he said, “Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God ...and all these things shall be added unto you as well.” I still don’t exactly know how to fulfill all my spiritual and worldly callings, but I am learning that I will discover the secrets only as I make time for the Lord. ▲

ILM CLASSES & PROGRAMS: (PRESENTED BY STEVEN MCAFEE CONTINUED)

▽ WORKSHOPS ▽

THE MYSTICAL CHRIST
#1 - EXPERIENCING
THE PRESENCE

Sunday, May 31
10:00 am- 3:30 pm
Swedenborg Church
Urbana, OH
\$15

This program focuses on connecting with the loving Spirit of Christ within and sharing it together as a living presence within us and among us. There is a great deal of music, story-telling, guided meditation, and sharing in this program.

HARMONY OF
BODY-MIND-SPIRIT

Saturday, June 20
Vicksburg Community
Center Vicksburg, MI
\$15

This workshop will assist us in understanding the intimate connections between our body, mind, and spirit. We will share information and techniques on how to care for ourselves on each of these levels and how to bring them into greater harmony with one another. Mike Wunderlin, owner of Natural Health Center in Kalamazoo, will be our special guest speaker in the morning session.

THE MYSTICAL CHRIST #2 -
EMBRACING THE TEACHINGS

Sun, July 12, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Urbana, OH and...
Sat, Aug 8, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Seasons—Fetzer Institute,
Kalamazoo, MI
\$15

This program focuses on the mystical teachings presented in both the Old and New Testaments, highlighting specific concepts of key teachers such as Melchizedek, Moses, David, Isaiah, and Jesus. This program will present a multitude of Biblical reference texts, as well as many oral traditions. Areas of further study, contemplation, and practice will also be recommended for those wishing to pursue this in more depth on their own.

THE INNER QUIET

Friday -Sunday,
Sept. 4-6
GilChrist
Three Rivers, MI
\$100



This retreat will be limited to a small number of participants, each of whom will be housed in their own private, modern cabin in the woods. The focus will be on sharing a quiet, devotional atmosphere of deep study and contemplation. There will be a group prayer and meditation service each morning, solitude during the day, and an opportunity to join in group discussion Saturday evening. You are also welcome to browse GilChrist’s library, which has a wonderful assortment of contemplative spiritual literature from many traditions, including many wonderful works by Christian mystics.



Love You Forever

by Laura Kesten-Beaver, ILM Minister

This past Mother's Day, I went to the store to look for a card for my mother. Every card that Hallmark had to offer was either too religious, too mushy, or too impersonal, which made me then wonder what kind of card *would* truly express my feelings. And this thought lead me to the question: How exactly *do* I feel about my mother? I knew that I loved her but beyond that I really didn't know. During the past few years, we have both tried to rekindle a relationship gone astray, but at times it has been difficult for both of us. After leaving the store, I asked God to help me to focus on my loving for my mother, so that I could get more in touch with my feelings toward her.

When I got home, I put my card-shopping and my questions out of my mind and began busying myself with preparations for dinner, straightening our catch-all dining room table and putting away

laundry I had done the night before. I went into my daughter's room with a bundle of clean clothes—and on her dresser I spied the children's book by Robert Munsch called **Love You Forever**. I love this book. I smiled and thought to myself that I still could not read this book without crying.

I picked up the book, sat on the floor, and with the evening light caressing the pages, began to read the story once again. The story is about a little boy and his mother. Throughout the boy's life, his mother holds the little boy on her lap, rocks him back and forth in the rocking chair, and sings that she will love him forever. Years go by and the little boy becomes a man and moves away. His mother grows older and older. When he comes to visit one day, she can no longer sing him her song, so he takes her in *his* lap, rocks her back and forth, and sings her the song. When he goes back to his own

ILM CLASSES & PROGRAMS:

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PRESENTED BY LAURA KESTEN: For additional information, call Laura at 512-894-0992

THE WRITER WITHIN #1

Sunday, June 14
9:00 am - 5:00pm
Ft. Wayne, IN
\$15

Through special writing processes, this workshop offers a self-exploratory journey through the realm of our minds and hearts, teaching us more of who we are, and of how we think and feel about the collage of our lives—from the lint in the dryer to the desire to live in the Spirit of God.

THE WRITER WITHIN #2

Sunday, June 28
9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Kellogg Forest
Richland, MI
\$15

The Writer Within has been so popular that we designed a second one!

We offer you all-new writing processes to continue you on your journey. Writing and sharing in small groups is a very magical experience. Come and join us.

THE UNFOLDING CREATIVE SPIRIT

Saturday, June 20
10:00 am - 5:00 pm
Urbana, OH
\$35

An uplifting, experiential workshop designed to awaken and embrace the inner and outer creative self, offering a variety of experiences—painting, drawing, and clay-work—as a means to enhance the process of liberating our creativity. No experience necessary!

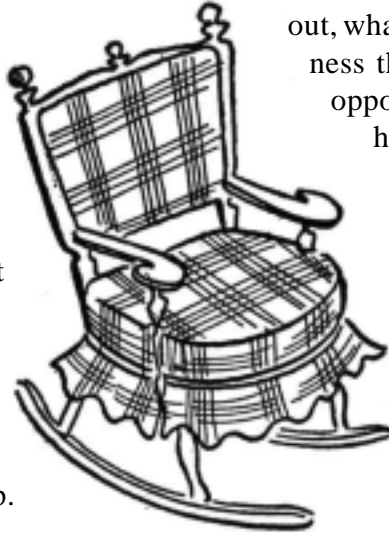
BOSOM BUDDIES

Friday - Saturday
July 17 - 18
Kalamazoo, MI
\$25 (+1/2 room cost)

Come with your bosom buddy and experience this workshop in retreat together. All processes are done with your buddy and are designed to create joy, laughter, and a delightful connection between your kindred spirits.

home that night, he quietly picks up his own baby daughter, cradles her in his arms and sings her his mother's song—he will love her forever.

As always, I found myself crying—but this time I was crying with the remembering of *my own* mother rocking me in our old creaky wooden rocking chair when I was about four years old. I remembered vividly that she held me tightly, kissed my head, and said, “Don’t ever grow up, Laurie. Don’t ever grow up.” And I remembered that through the years of my childhood, every once in a while my mother would just hold me close and tell me the story of me sitting in her lap as we rocked in the old creaky wooden rocking chair and her telling me not to ever grow up. And then she would kiss my head and



like they were washing away the cobwebs of time and separation, and I felt as if a lifetime of hurts and misunderstandings were lifting straight up to God, making way for me to remember what it felt like to be loved so much. After all the tears were out, what was left was peace—and gratefulness that God had given me yet another opportunity to surrender to His love and healing light.

Many of us probably didn’t get everything we needed as children from our parents. We may have felt that there was a lack of nurturing and understanding. And we may continue to feel this loss on into our adult years, causing stress and separation in our relationships with our parents.

For me, it has been so important to begin to remember the good memories of my childhood and to share these memories with my mother. I have, for the first time, begun to see her as a mortal human being, who somewhere along the way didn’t get what she needed either. And the more I continue to forgive and let go, the more my relationship with my mother continues to unfold and mature.

So for Mother’s Day, instead of a Hallmark card, I sent my mother Robert Munsch’s book with a picture of myself cradling my daughter when she was a baby. Inside the book cover, I wrote about the memory of her rocking me, telling me to never grow up and just how much that meant to me. *And* just how much she means to me now. ▲

... and I felt as if a lifetime of hurts and misunderstandings were lifting straight up to God, making way for me to remember what it felt like to be loved so much.

say, “But you did anyway.”

My tears of remembrance, at that moment, felt

ILM CLASSES & PROGRAMS: (PRESENTED BY LAURA KESTEN CONTINUED)

PeaceMaker

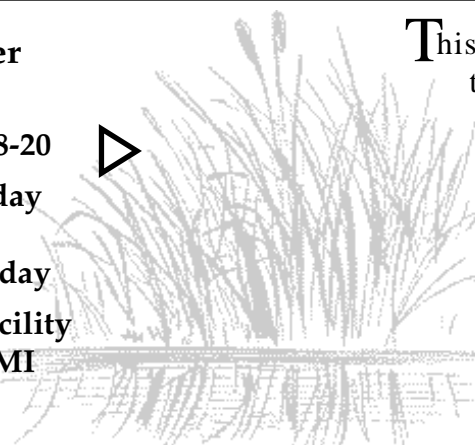
September 18-20

7:00 pm, Friday
until

1:00 pm, Sunday

Pretty Lake Facility
Mattawan, MI

\$100



This workshop offers an opportunity to journey through the rich Iroquois story of the PeaceMaker, reliving its teachings and participating in transformational processes, thus bringing us closer to the heart of our own PeaceMaker within. This is a very powerful workshop and will be a wonderful experience in retreat. The registration fee includes a copy of Jean Houston’s book, all supplies, two nights lodging, and food.

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES MATERIALS LIST

CASSETTES OF JIM GORDON

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Two titles together indicate different lectures on each side.

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- Lord, Make Me Worthy *and* The Master in Your Heart (1985)
- Inner Revelation *and* A Flower from Heaven (1986)
- Understanding Christ Consciousness (1987)
- The Path of Neutrality (1990)
- Songs of Praise to God *and* A New Understanding of Relationships (1990) (1991)
- Our Right Relationship with God (1991)
- The Levels to Soul and Beyond (1991)
- Communication through Dreams (1991)
- Meditative Techniques (1991)
- Moving into Soul Consciousness *and* Communion Ceremony (1991)
- You as a Communicator, You as a Creator *and* A Meditation (1992)
- Keys to Inner Communication (1992)
- Awakening to Your Inner Light *and* Calling in the Light (1994)
- Aura Cleansing Workshop (1994)
- Sending the Light (1994)



By JAMES R. GORDON (\$6 each)

- LOVE AND LOVING
- THE KNOWING OF GOD
- THE STAFF OF THE SHEPHERD

Excerpt:

Many of us have had a conscious awareness, or at least a suspicion, of the protective presence of the guardian angels, which is why these are among the most familiar angels to us. Children are especially open to the idea of their very own guardian angel—walking beside them and watching out for them. And yet the protecting presence of these messengers does not end with childhood; the opportunity for souls to experience life on earth is truly a great and much-respected blessing, and to assure our well-being while in the physical realm, God really does send His angels to watch over us—all of our lives.

- Jim Gordon
from THE STAFF OF THE SHEPHERD

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INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

ABOUT ILM

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES (ILM) is a nonprofit outreach organization founded in the fundamental principles of ancient esoteric Christianity. It is dedicated to the development and balancing of the fourfold nature of the individual. Towards this goal, it provides education and services concerned with the integration of the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical aspects of the self, and also provides publications and materials that aid in this process.

Among its fundamental tenets is that we really are "temples of the Holy Spirit." As we seek and express this presence within, we find the peace, love, power, and wisdom we all so earnestly desire. The many services of ILM are geared towards this path of individual unfoldment—such as meditation, study, and prayer on an individual and group basis.

Service to humanity and the planet is ILM's second major emphasis, and ILM encourages individual service, in any of a wide variety of possible forms, as a vital aspect of our daily experience. Please write or phone for more information.

ON ABUNDANCE

Whenever I get my paycheck, whenever I get money, I bless it before I deposit it. And when I take money out of the checking account to go buy things with, I bless it before I spend it. I say, "I give thanks for the abundance in me, and may the abundance expand through this action of spending this money. And may that expansion, that awareness of abundance, also go to whoever touches it."

— Jim Gordon

*This excerpt is from a soon to be released ILM audio tape, **Abundance I.***

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