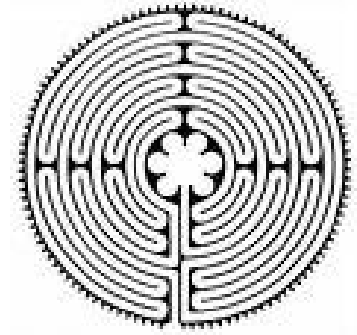


Walking the labyrinth for the Charter for Compassion
Saturday November 14th 2009, 9:30 am – 11:30 am
(Sponsored by the Rideau Park Circle unit of the UCW)

On November 12th a **Charter for Compassion** will be unveiled to encourage people around the world, of all faiths and non-religious as well, to remember the need for empathy and concern for every person.



The Charter is the inspiration of **Karen Armstrong**, a noted author of many books on religious subjects. Karen has studied the world's major religions and while doing research was struck by the fact that all the main religions have a principle of adherence to a "**Golden Rule**". (Please see examples of the Golden Rule at the end of this document). The *Golden Rule* requires that we use empathy when dealing with other people and act toward them as we would want them to act toward us. This feeling of compassion should be practiced all day and every day.

At Karen Armstrong's invitation, a group of multi-faith, multi-national thinkers and leaders came together to write the Charter. Using on-line submissions from thousands of people from around the world, as well as their own understanding of compassion, the group met and discussed the principle and drafted the Charter. The web site for the Charter for Compassion is <http://charterforcompassion.org/>

The authors of the Charter have suggested that to mark the unveiling of the Charter on November 12th, religious communities hold events and services to celebrate the occasion. At Rideau Park the Circle unit of the UCW is hosting a morning of meditation, informal discussion and reflection using our labyrinth.

This event will take place on **Saturday November 14th 2009. Drop in anytime between 9:30 am and 11:30 am in Beecroft Hall.** Walking the labyrinth takes approximately 20 minutes, at a moderate pace with a pause in the centre, so allow yourself time to complete the walk. We will also have juice, coffee, tea and muffins in the Parlour. There will be activities for children as well.

Why use the labyrinth to celebrate the launch of the Charter for Compassion?

The labyrinth is an ancient symbol of the spiritual journey. A labyrinth is not a maze. It follows the same path into the middle and back out to the entrance/exit. It can be used for prayer and discernment. In this case we encourage its use for prayerful contemplation of the meaning of compassion in our world today.

Compassion is found in all faiths and philosophies, for example:

Confucius (551 – 479 BCE) – Chinese sage whose teachings always came back to the importance of treating others with respect. He taught that we should never do to others what we would not like them to do to us and that we should practice this all day and every day.

Socrates – (5thC BCE) *Do not do to others that which would anger you if others did it to you.*

Plato – (4thC BCE) *May I do to others as I would that they should do unto me.*

Hinduism – *This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.* (Mahabharata 5:1517)

Buddhism – *a state that is not pleasing or delightful to me, how could I inflict that upon another?* (Samyutta Nikaya v. 353) and, *Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful* (Udana-Varga 5:18)

Taoism – *Regard your neighbour's gain as your own gain, and your neighbour's loss as your own loss.* (T'ai Shang Kan Yin P'ien 213 – 218)

Judaism – *thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* (Leviticus 19:18) and, *What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man. This is the law: all the rest is commentary* (Talmud, Shabbat 31a)

Christianity – *You shall love your neighbour as yourself* (Matthew 22: 39) and, *So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets* (Matthew 7:12) and, *Do to others as you would have them do to you.* (Luke 6:31)

Islam – *None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.* Number 13 of Imam Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadiths 5

Sikhism – *Compassion-mercy and religion are the support of the entire world* (Japji Sahib) and, *Don't create enmity with anyone as God is within everyone* (Guru Arjan Devji 259) and, *No one is my enemy, none a stranger and everyone is my friend.* (Guru Arjan Dev: AG 1299)

Native American Spirituality – *Respect for all life is the foundation.* (The Great Law of Peace) and, *All things are our relatives; what we do to everything, we do to ourselves. All is really One.* (Black Elk)