

## Synagogue hosts Joan Lunden as guest speaker

Joan Lunden, former Good Morning America hostess and author of books on healthy living, will be guest speaker at the annual CHOICES event scheduled for 11 a.m., Wednesday, March 4, at Adat Shalom Synagogue, 29901 Middlebelt, Farmington Hills.

CHOICES is the annual Allied Jewish Campaign community outreach event and fund-raising luncheon sponsored by the Jewish Federation Women's Campaign and Education Department.

For nearly 20 years, Lunden hosted Good Morning America in addition to many prime-time TV specials called "Behind Closed Doors With Joan Lunden." Her specials toured the CIA headquarters, Betty Ford Clinic and the Pentagon, among others. She has hosted programs on parenting and appeared in parenting videos. She is the single mother of three daughters.

Among the honors and awards she has received are: Yeshiva University Spirit of Achievement Award, YWCA Outstanding Woman's Award, New Jersey Division on Civil Rights Award and Baylor University Outstanding Woman of the Year.

The National Mother's Day Committee selected her as the Outstanding Mother of the Year in 1982-1983 for her dedication to motherhood.

She has written three books: "Good Morning I'm Joan Lunden," "Joan Lunden's Healthy Living" and "Joan Lunden's Healthy Cooking."

CHOICES chairwoman is Susie Pappas. Susie Leuninger is associate chairman and Hannah Moss, adviser.

Admission fee is \$25, with a required minimum \$150 pledge to the Women's Campaign.

Complimentary baby-sitting will be available for children age 2 1/2 and older by reservation before Feb. 15. Kosher luncheon will be served.

Bingham Farms-based Unique Restaurant Corp. is a sponsor. Tappan's Diamonds and Fine Jewelry of West Bloomfield and Weight Watchers of Farmington Hills will provide the favors.

Reservation deadline is Feb. 10, unless the program sells out earlier. Checks should be made payable to the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit and mailed to CHOICES, P.O. Box 2030 Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-2030.

All reservations must be accompanied by a check. For information, call Esther Weitzman at (248) 642-4260, ext. 181.

## BELIEFS & Values

# Ancient labyrinth helps in contemplation

BY RENA FULKA  
SPECIAL WRITER

In a hushed ambience conducive to contemplation, Kathy Erickson inched her way along the winding path of the canvas labyrinth stretched out across the sanctuary at West Bloomfield's Church of Our Saviour.

Further ahead, her daughters, Ellen and Leah Rutt, assumed quicker paces as they individually followed the coiled pattern of purple lines leading them on meditative journeys of their own.

"I entered it with an issue on my mind and it let me feel it, take it to the center for contemplation and go out with confidence," said the West Bloomfield homemaker. "When my children walked it they were very calm. Something changed."

Erickson walks the labyrinth, she said, because "it's important to me to develop the discipline of contemplation. Most of us don't have that discipline in our lives."

Other ritualized walkers have admitted to experiencing a sense relaxation, therapy, problem-solving, renewed vision or change of heart during the 20-minute indoor pilgrimage.

"You experience a real sense of communion with God on it as you move back and forth," said the Rev. Murray Blackadar, pastor of Church of Our Saviour. "It's like the twists and turns of your life. It has that kind of rhythm to it."

The labyrinth, which dates back to pre-Christianity, is an ancient archetype that is linked to a variety of religious traditions around the world. For many, the walking ritual has replaced less accessible pilgrimages to the Holy Land and the great cathedrals of Europe.

"People have seen this movement in a circle and the twisting and turning as a holy thing to do," said Blackadar. "This became a device in which people could walk and meditate and pray in a formalized way."

Unlike a maze that dead-ends and requires brainpower to exit, the labyrinth is a simple path with only one way in and one way out.

With their shoes removed, walkers begin the first stage of the pilgrimage called, "shedding" or "purification," by clearing their minds of the details of life as they follow the center. "Illumination" occurs in the center, where meditating pilgrims linger on the six-petal pattern representing the days of creation. The journey back out again, known as "union," affords time for a deeper



Twister: The Rev. Murray Blackadar, pastor of Church of Our Saviour in West Bloomfield, walks the canvas labyrinth that has helped congregations members find a center for contemplation and relaxation.

connection with God. After reading about the recent resurgence of the mini-pilgrimage, Blackadar borrowed a labyrinth twice last year and introduced it to his 165-member congregation.

"This congregation is open to growing and exploring their own religious dimensions," said the Farmington Hills minister, who has walked the labyrinth 20 times in the last year. "I look at it as a tool of ministry. It helps people to get in touch with their spiritual selves and with their own relationship with God."

Once exposed to the ancient prayer form, the congregation was quick to allocate \$1,500 from the church budget to create a portable, 30-foot canvas labyrinth of its own.

Jerry Scheel of Bloomfield Township became involved in the project as the church building and grounds manager. Though the concept was new to him, the retired General Motors engineer volunteered to sketch the Classic 11 Circuit design,

which is based on the 13th Century labyrinth inlaid in brick and stone on the floor of the Chartux Cathedral in France.

"I think it will be a useful tool to have for people to find a centering in themselves and to find a spiritual aspect in their own Christianity," said Scheel, a member of Church of Our Saviour for three decades. "It's an outreach tool. As people become exposed to it, they'll become exposed to our church and might want to find out who we are."

Completing the project was a handful of volunteers, who spent 125 man-hours painting the purple pattern on the three sections of canvas joined together by Velcro.

The labyrinth makes its debut at the church at 6655 Middlebelt Road this weekend, and will continue to be available on the fourth Saturday of every month. Guidelines are few and simple. The canvas comfortably accommodates up to a half dozen pilgrims at a time.

The 40-year old Presbyterian con-

gregation is also planning to construct an outdoor labyrinth at the Oakland County church for easier accessibility year round.

"The reason we're doing this is to give the people in this congregation a chance to grow in their spirituality," added Blackadar. "We also invite people from the community to use it and walk it whether they have a religion or not. The belief system is your own. The only dogma you run into is what you bring with it."

The indoor labyrinth is available to the public for ritual walking from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 23, and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 24, at Church of Our Saviour, 6655 Middlebelt, between 14 and 15 Mile Roads, in West Bloomfield. It will continue to be available from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the fourth Saturday of each month throughout the year. For more information, call (248) 626-7606.

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