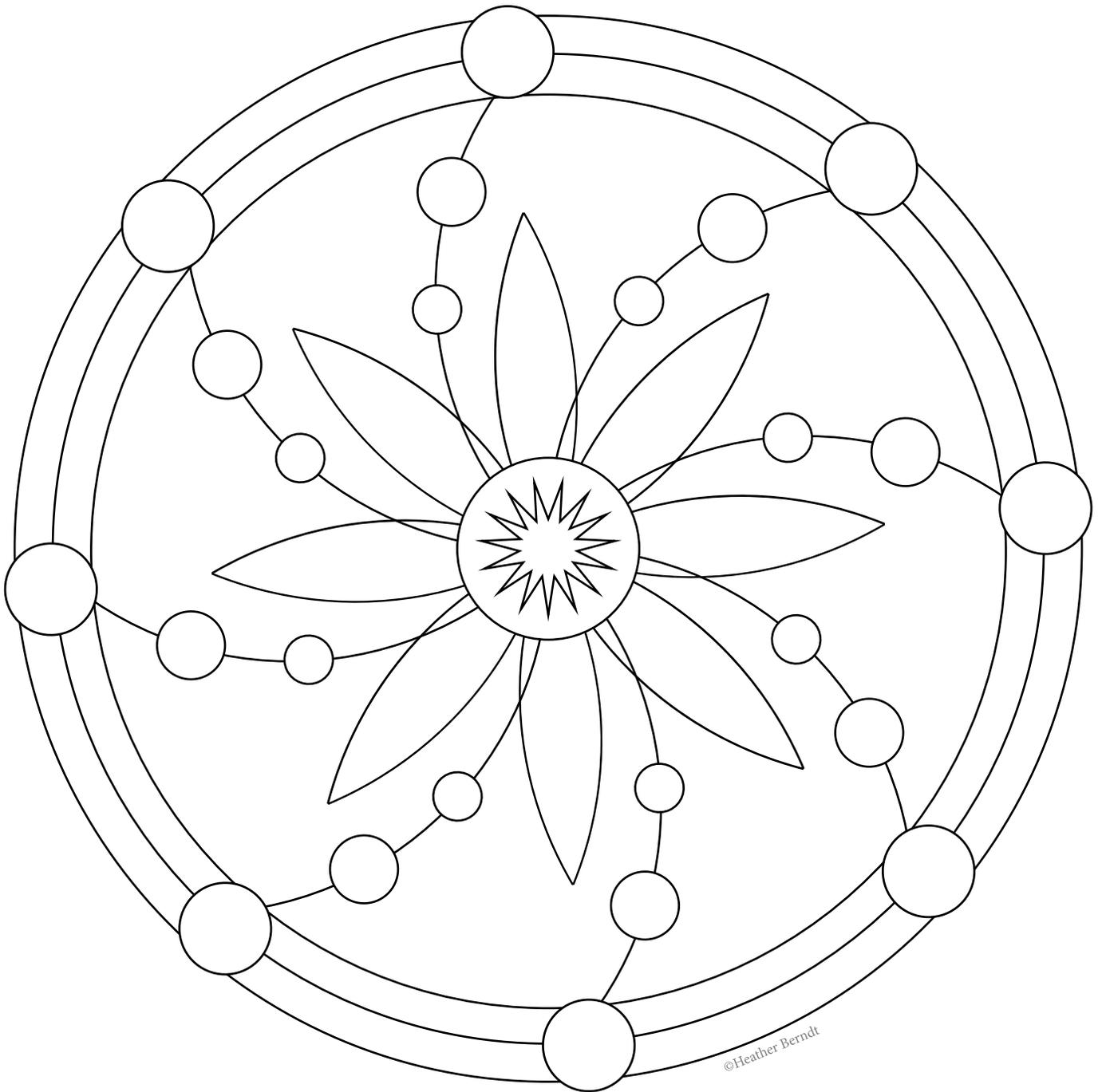


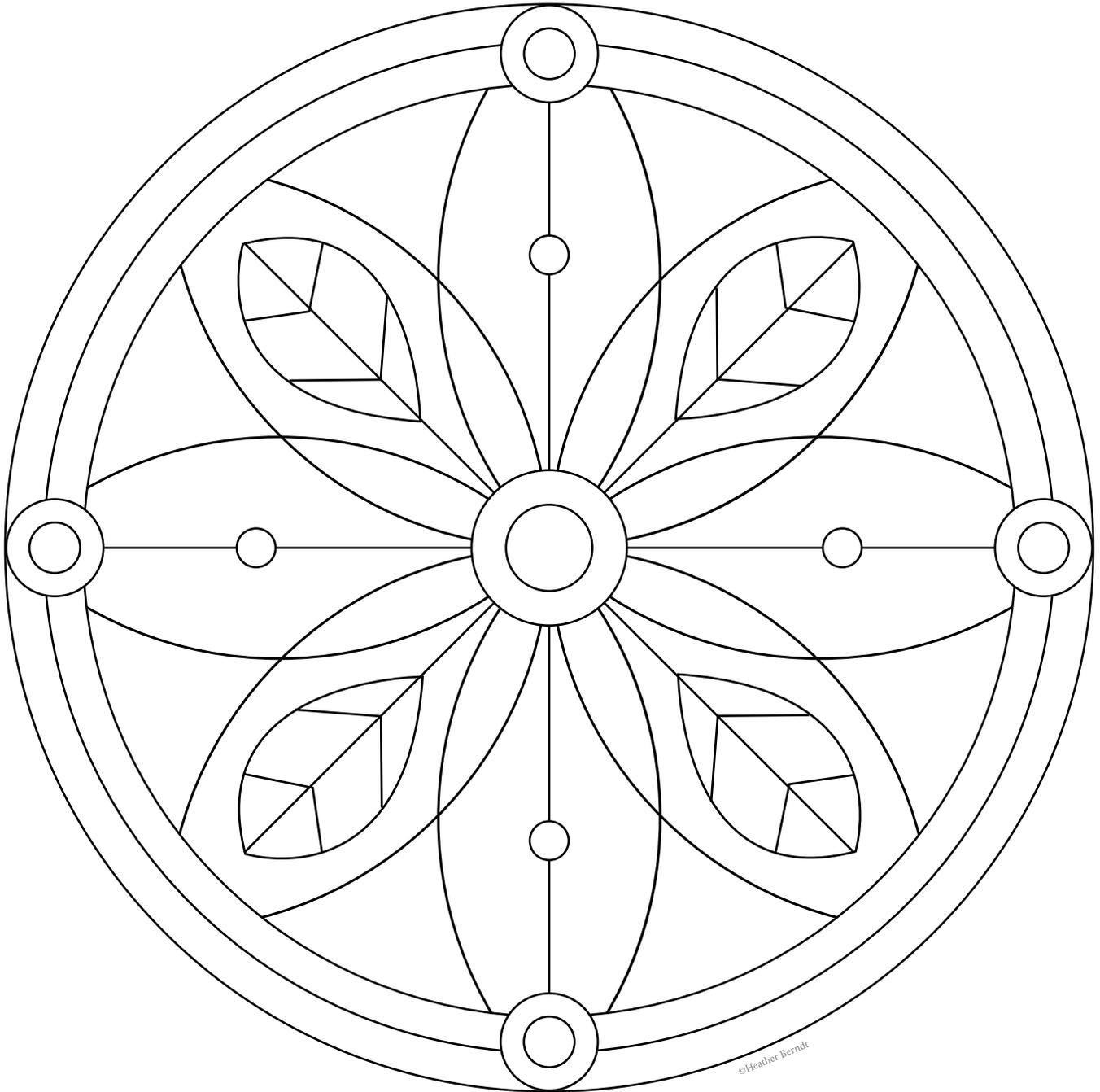
Pray with a Mandala – Lectio Divina



*Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.
Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
your justice like the great deep.*

Psalm 36:5-6

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*The Lord is God, and he has made his light shine upon us.
With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.
You are my God, and I will give you thanks; You are my God, and I will exalt you.
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.*

Psalm 118:27-29

Praying with a Mandala – Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina (Latin for “divine reading”) is a contemplative way to experience scripture or other sacred writing. In *lectio divina* you savor a small selection of text rather than feast on a longer reading. The practice invites you to slow down, savor the words, and seek their meaning. *Lectio Divina* is an essential part of monastic life, in addition to daily liturgy and work.

There are 4 stages of *lectio divina*: read, savor, speak and listen. These movements are designed to lead you into a deeper understanding of a holy text as it pertains to your life today. The mandala (pronounced mund-duh-luh) adds another layer of focus by inviting you into the words as you practice “contemplative coloring.”

How to pray with your mandala using the 4 stages of lectio divina:

1. **Read** (*lectio*) - Read the scripture aloud slowly. Listen for a word or short phrase that shimmers or speaks to your heart. Let this word or phrase be the focus of your prayer time.
2. **Savor** (*meditatio*) - Read the scripture aloud a second time. Meditate on the word or phrase you have chosen. Take your time and allow the word or phrase to nourish you.
3. **Speak** (*oratio*) - Read the scripture aloud a third time. Speak with God as you would an old friend. Together, explore the word or phrase you have chosen. What might it mean for you today?
4. **Listen** (*contemplatio*) - Read the scripture aloud a fourth time. Then sit in silence and listen. You may not receive a “burning bush” moment of clarity, but you may hear God speaking to you through a new insight or awareness.

Create a sacred space

When you are ready to pray with your mandala, find a quiet place where you won't be distracted for at least 30 minutes. Have your supplies ready, including a printed mandala, a set of colored pencils, crayons, or other medium of your choice, and your journal. You may also want to light a candle and center with some deep breaths. When coloring with *lectio divina*, you might consider the following 3 techniques. These are only suggestions, so follow where the spirit leads you.

- **Quadrants** - The mandala can be divided into 4 quadrants. Color one quadrant at a time as you move through the 4 stages of *lectio divina*.
- **Layers** - Start on the outer rings and move toward the center, selecting a layer for each of the 4 stages.
- **Free Form** - Color however you choose, remembering to focus on your word or phrase. You might even try writing the word or phrase around the rings or inside the shapes.

Important to note: No color is off limits and staying within the lines is optional! See what emerges as you practice freedom of creative expression. Also, there is no need to “finish” coloring your mandala. Blank spaces may even become integral parts of your prayerful creation. When you are done, spend some time journaling about your experience.