

Faithfully Uncomfortable: A 21-Day Journey Toward Racial Equity

Listening for the Heartbeat of God: Self Guided Prayer Walk

Take a walk in your neighborhood, the woods, or possibly walk meditatively through downtown Greensboro. Pause periodically and use the following reflections to enhance your time of meditation.

Pause and see all that is around you:

*"Clear our heart, O God, that we may see you.
Clear our heart, O God, that we may truly see ourselves.
Clear our heart, O God, that we may know
the sacredness of this moment and in every moment
seek you, serve you, strengthen you
as the Living Presence in every presence.
Clear our heart, O God, that we may see."*

"Prayer for Clarity" from *Praying with the Earth: A Prayerbook for Peace* by John Philip Newell

And please God, help me to see places in myself where I dismiss black voices.

Pause and look at the sky above:

*"You are above us, O God, you are within.
You are in all things yet contained by no thing.
Teach us to seek you in all that has life
that we may see you as the Light of life.
Teach us to search for you in our own depths
that we may find you in every living soul."*

"You Are in All Things" from *Sounds of the Eternal: A Celtic Psalter* by John Philip Newell

And please God, may Your light grow in me, and may I seek You in every person.

Pause and listen to the sounds around you:

*"On this day the blessings of heaven.
On this day the blessings of earth.
On this day the blessings of sea and of sky.
To open us to life, to ground us in life
to fill us with life and with wonder.
On those we love this day and on every human family
the blessings of heaven
the blessings of earth
the blessings of sea and of sky."*

"Blessings on this Day" from *Praying with the Earth: A Prayerbook for Peace* by John Philip Newell

And please God, make me aware when I am not loving all black and brown families; make me aware of the indifference, apathy and violence I hold within.

Pause and feel the temperature of the air on your skin:

"That you have made us in the image of your own mystery

thanks be to you, O God.

*That in the soul of every human being there are depths beyond naming
and heights greater than knowing, thanks be to you.*

Grant us the grace of inner sight this day that we may see you as the Self within all selves.

Grant us the grace of love this day that amidst the pain and disfigurement of life

We may find the treasure that is unlocked by love,

that amidst the pain and disfigurement of our own lives

I may know the richness that lies buried in the human soul."

"Treasure Unlocked by Love" from *Sounds of the Eternal: A Celtic Psalter* by John Philip Newell

And please God, make sure Your love shines deeply within me and brings light to the ways I have contributed to maintaining a system of current day racism.

Pause and touch a living plant:

"Glory be to you, O God, for the gift of life unfolding through those who have gone before me.

Glory be to you, O God, for your life planted within my soul and in every soul coming into the world.

Glory be to you, O God, for the grace of new beginnings placed before me in every moment and encounter of life. Glory, glory, glory for the grace of new beginnings in every moment of life."

From *Celtic Benediction* by John Philip Newell

And please God, may my touch extend your gift of life, and not harm or bring death to others who are not like me.

Pause and feel the touch of the wind:

*"Glory be to you Great Creating Spirit
who shines in distant stars beyond numbering.*

And on earth peace.

*Glory be to you Great Creating Spirit
who sings and wings in birds on high.*

And on earth peace.

*Glory be to you Great Creating Spirit
whose thunder shakes the shining firmament.*

And on earth peace.

Glory, glory, glory, and on earth peace.

"Glory Prayer" from *Praying with the Earth: A Prayerbook for Peace* by John Philip Newell

And please God, shake me awake so I can give attention to actions I need to take.

Pause and take in the landscape near or far away:

"What is it we have forgotten about ourselves and one another? In the Celtic tradition, the Garden of Eden is not a place in space and time from which we are separated. It is the deepest dimension of our being from which we live in a type of exile. It is our place of origin or genesis in God. Eden is our home, but we live far removed from it. And yet in the Genesis account, the Garden is not destroyed. Rather Adam and Eve become fugitives from the place of their deepest identity. It is a picture of humanity living in exile."

From *Christ of the Celts* by John Philip Newell

And please God, help me be aware of those I have forgotten; those I have neglected and not cared about.

Pause and breathe in the smells of the earth:

"For the freshness of this new day, thanks be to you, O God.
For morning's gift of clarity, its light like the first day's dawn, thanks be to you.
In this newborn light let us see afresh.
In this gateway onto what has never been before, let our soul breathe hope
for the earth
for the creatures
for the human family.
Let our soul breathe hope."

"Let Our Soul Breathe Hope" from *Praying with the Earth: A Prayerbook for Peace* by John Philip Newell

And please God, help me see the gateway - help me continue to be open to being uncomfortable as I question my part in racism today.

Pause and listen for the sound of running water:

"The ageless mountains are full of your glory, the vast seas swell with your might,
the shining skies expand beyond our imagining
so we pause to praise, we wait in wonder, we listen to learn
of the mountain glory within us, of the sea force in our veins, of love's shining infinity.
Grant us the grace, O God, to serve this inner universe of soul among us.

"A Prayer for Grace" from *Praying with the Earth: A Prayerbook for Peace* by John Philip Newell

And please God, help me listen as you bring to my attention things I can do to bring Your love to all those around me.

Pause and be still before God, listening for the Divine deep inside you:

"In the Christian tradition, our key is the cross, or what Jung calls "the Christian totality symbol." It opens for us the way of love, the truth of love, and the life of love. It connects for us what has been considered opposite - heaven and earth, the divine and the human, the one and the many, God and all things. It is the key of love. It is the key to transformation."

From *A New Harmony* by John Philip Newell

And please God, help me be connected to You and to others in my community. Help me be alive now to this work, to what is yet to be, as transformation happens in me and around me.