

## 9-Day Retreat Check-In

June 11, 2025

***The Great Search, Turning to Earth and Soul in the Quest for Healing and Home,***  
**John Philip Newell**

### Welcome

Welcome to this first check in during our shared 9-day retreat. We journey together as individuals and a faith community, led by John Philip Newell's nine reflections in his book, *The Great Search*.

As a reminder, here is the cadence you might follow for the nine days. As always, it is your path so you might have read the whole book and return to each author for a day, you might be tending to the chapter on the day assigned, or other options.

Monday, June 9: Seeking Vision - Thomas Berry  
Tuesday, June 10: Seeking Earth - Nan Shepherd  
Wednesday, June 11: Seeking Presence - Martin Buber  
(Check-in class #1 at 6:00 pm at church or on Zoom)

Thursday, June 12: Seeking Awareness - Carl Jung  
Friday, June 13: Seeking Wellness - Julian of Norwich  
Saturday, June 14: Seeking Love - Jalaluddin Rumi  
Sunday, June 15: Shared worship, no assigned chapter  
(Check in class #2 at 9:30 am at church or on Zoom)

Monday, June 16: Seeking Wisdom - Rabindranath Tagore  
Tuesday, June 17: Seeking Meaning - Etty Hillesum  
Wednesday, June 18: Seeking Faith - Edwin Muir and Conclusion - John Philip Newell  
(Check in class #3 at 6:00 pm at church or on Zoom)

We will gather at church, in person or on zoom. If you need the zoom link here it is for you: **Great Search Classes: 6/11 (6 pm), 6/15 (9:30 am), and 6/18 (6 pm)**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89491074480>

**Meeting ID: 894 9107 4480**

### Christ Care Prayers

We will begin with the prayers we bring, the celebrations and deep concerns.

### Tonight: Part One – Seeking Vision, Earth and Presence

We will pause for the reflection for each chapter, so dividing our conversation into three parts. We begin with some questions that are possible for all nine authors.



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### **Questions to ponder:**

1. What did you hear in this chapter's reflection that opened you to God?
2. What did you hear in this chapter's reflection that opened you to the creation?
3. What did you hear in this chapter's reflection that opened you to others?

### **Thomas Berry Quotes to note:**

"Holiness for him was about wholeness, living a life that reflects the holy interrelatedness of all things." Page 15

Threefold path:

- "Spirituality of alienation to a spirituality of intimacy with the natural world."
- "Spirituality of revelation through scripture to revelation through Earth"
- "Spirituality of justice for human beings to justice for every life-form." (page 16)

"Reorientation toward immanence" (Page 19)

Three texts:

- Cosmic text of the universe
- Written text of scripture
- Interior text of the human soul (page 24)

### **Nan Shepherd Quotes to note:**

"Living in the present tense or practicing the grammar of now" (page 35)

"A pilgrimage into the soul." (page 40)

"The Word... spoken anew from within the human soul in ways that will awaken us again to wonder and reverence for Earth and all its life-forms. This, in so many ways, is exactly what Shepherd's *The Living Mountain* does. It opens our eyes to what she calls 'pristine amazement' at life." (page 47)

### **Martin Buber Quotes to note:**

"It is the desire to ground spiritual wisdom in experience rather than in statements of faith." (page 51) And, "I-Thou" vs "I-It" (pages 52-53)

"A belief in the Thou-instinct at the heart of the child, and thus deep within every human being, is very different from the doctrine of original sin that has dominated so much of Western Christian thought over the centuries." (page 56-57)

"We cannot produce I-Thou encounters, but we can prepare ourselves spiritually, through meditation, silence, and prayer, to be more open and ready to receive these encounters when they are given." (page 63)

"The Thou-urge in us can never be erased, he said, and no matter how far things have gone awry, 'the buried relational power' in us can rise again. Redemption, or what he also called 'the restoration of betweenness,' is about returning to true relationship." (page 65)