

**The Quest for Peace**  
**Sunday, October 5, 2025**

**Introduction:**

Good morning, please join me in a moment of silent prayer.....

Amen.

So you might be asking this morning,

**A. Why this special service? What is “Peace Quest?”**

1. **PeaceQuest** is a community-wide celebration in the Greater Lansing area held between September 21 and October 24 to celebrate the **United Nations International Day of Peace (September 21)** and the **United Nations Day (October 24)**,  
  
and it is coordinated by GLUNA, the **Greater Lansing United Nations Association**.
2. **International Day of Peace** was declared by the UN General Assembly with a **resolution** passed unanimously in 1981.
- 3.
4. **United Nations Day** marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter.
5. **PeaceQuest here in the greater Lansing area works to** bring people together for fun and interesting activities with friends, family, and community while focusing on ways we can promote peace, resolve conflicts, learn about other faiths and cultures, and encourage mutual understanding.
- 6.

**B. More Whys**

1. Current times are certainly such that “Peace” is something we seem to have very little of. “Peace is something most everyone I know and speak to as well as people around the world seem to be seeking. Last Sunday as we left church and headed home, we heard the news of the shooting at the church of Latter Day Saints in Grand Blanc County, making for anything but a peaceful afternoon.
2. A number of Committees and small groups here at PCO are involved in “Peace” activities and efforts with PCO members and the larger community.

3. So, let's address the concept of "Peace."

C. **First some Acknowledgements:** Over the past couple of weeks I have asked for and received thoughts and ideas from various groups and others in the church and elsewhere...

1. **Men's Group**

2. **Conversation and Contemplation**

3. **Mission Committee** to name a few.

D. **So what is "Peace"**

1. According to AI: the definition of peace can vary depending on context and perspective, it is broadly understood as a state of tranquility, harmony, and freedom from disturbance or conflict. The concept can apply to individuals, communities, and nations.

2. **Peace for individuals**

On a personal level, peace is often referred to as "inner peace" and is characterized by a state of calmness and serenity in one's mind and emotions. It involves the absence of anxiety, worry, and inner conflict and can be achieved through mindfulness, reflection, or meditation.

3. **"Shalom" is often the word for Peace in the Bible.**

E. **So what is "Peace" in the Bible?**

1. **Peace is mentioned some 429 times in the Bible**, more or less depending on your resource.

2. In our 1<sup>st</sup> scripture readings, Jim read five times when "Peace" is referred to in the Book of Psalms.

**Let me repeat one of them: Psalm 34:14**

**<sup>14</sup> Turn away from evil and do good;**

**seek peace and pursue it.**

3. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> scripture reading, actually 2 of them.

The 1<sup>st</sup> one from Philippians.....

The 2<sup>nd</sup> from the Gospel of John....

(READ THEM from other sheet)

**F. So, “How in the World of 2025 do we ‘Seek Peace?’**

**How do we ‘pursue peace?’**

- 1. A little earlier in our service, we “passed the Peace.”** That is one way we do it here in our church family. We “pass” the “peace” to one another. But what does that mean?

This ancient tradition, rooted in the holy greetings recommended by [Paul](#), signifies reconciliation and unity among believers, reminding them of their shared identity as forgiven children of God, ready to extend and receive grace and forgiveness to one another.

One thing we all might consider doing, is continuing to “Pass the Peace” after the service has ended. This morning we would invite you to extend your passing of the peace into the fellowship time, pass the peace to those who were not sitting around you in the sanctuary, to members of the choir who were way over there, to the tech team in the back corner, to Marlen on the organ, and others.

And later today, and throughout the week perhaps, remember those you greeted in your prayers, and pray for those mentioned on our “prayer list.”

*In one of the devotions I read a while back, the author talks about a family that has their little 5 or 6 year son saying the prayer at their Sunday noontime dinner,*

*after the typical prayer a 5 or 6 year old might say, he adds*

*“and see you next week God”*

***Let’s not wait till next week to see God again, and remember and pray for each other.***

- 2. So now let’s move beyond our Sunday morning church service, how do we “seek Peace, pursue Peace beyond the church?**

**Our youth show us one way each summer, during their ‘mission week.’ Which can also be intergenerational. You heard a little about this this morning from Becca.**

Helping out at Edgewood Village,

at the Okemos Food Pantry,

and helping build the Prayer Path here at PCO.

Yesterday a group from PCO spent the day working at CASS Community Social Services in Detroit.

Personal need items that you have dropped off in the coat room are being delivered this week to EVE and Edgewood Village

Another basket of Items in the Food Cart will soon be delivered to one of the local Food Banks

Next week many of you will be participating, or supporting the walkers in CROP

**In all of these efforts to share “Peace”, there are at least 3 ways to help; active participation, financial or material support, and PRAYERS!**

**Any one of these is appreciated and you can even do all three if you want.**

**3. And these opportunities to seek and pursue Peace go beyond our local community and state of Michigan**

A couple of years ago our youth traveled to Cuba.

Recently you heard about those who went to The Simbolie Academy in Kenya.

Many years ago, a group of us traveled to Nicaragua.

And many of our special offerings support projects around the world.

Personally, I have had the opportunity to travel all over the country and internationally through MSU and Habitat for Humanity sharing the “Peace.” With college students, as have many of you with various partners and organizations.

**4. And what about the earth itself, this planet God has created for us to live on and share with each other and all living things?**

Here is where the work of our Green Team comes in, recycling, earth care and all that goes with that.

Thank You Green Team!

\*\*\*\*\*

**OK, so this is kind of a footnote now, something I really don't know how to address, war and violence in our local community and around the world.**

**How do we seek peace, pursue peace?**

1. Locally, we give to Mikey 23, an organization that works with youthful offender to rehabilitate them so they do not return to the system.
2. On one of the Spring Break trips I did with MSU students we stayed at a Minimum-Security facility where young offenders were completing the GEDs and being trained by Habitat for Humanity in construction skills, they were building the wall sections that were being used to build homes. Yes, there are such programs that can work.
3. As you know, one of the results of war around the world, are refugees, fleeing the horrors of war.
- 4.

We here at PCO, have a long history of working with refugees; the Moong community back in the 60s/70s, helping launch GIL, the Global Institute of Lansing, and Refugee Services to help these children of God resettle into productive safe lives when they come to our community.

\*\*\*\*\*

**5. A final category if you will. We looked at PCO, our MI community, and the world.**

**What about Ourselves, our hearts, Our Inner Peace.**

**Perhaps the one of the most important categories to consider!**

- a. Faith! That's the BIG one, faith that in the end God rules, and will set things right, not always easy for sure.
- b. Prayer is certainly a big part of our faith
- c. Breath Prayers
- d. Reading the Bible, PCO Bible Study on Thursdays
- e. The Prayer Path, which I hope you will walk during today fellowship time.
- f. Forms of "mindfulness" Contemplation, meditation, alone time with yourself, with God
- g. Nature, take a walk-in nature, hug a tree, watch the birds....
- h. Gratitude,
- i. Helping others, Mission Opportunities abound...
- j. Find a support group,
- k. Be kind to yourself

**Conversation & Contemplation Group on Wednesdays**

- G. Let me close by returning to one of our scripture readings:  
I will read 3 different translations and pause between each to give you some time to process each version. A little Lectio Divina if you will.

**<sup>6</sup> do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

**<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. <sup>9</sup> What you have learned<sup>[a]</sup> and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.**

### The Message

**<sup>6-7</sup>** Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.

**<sup>8-9</sup>** Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies.

And from the First Nations Version: