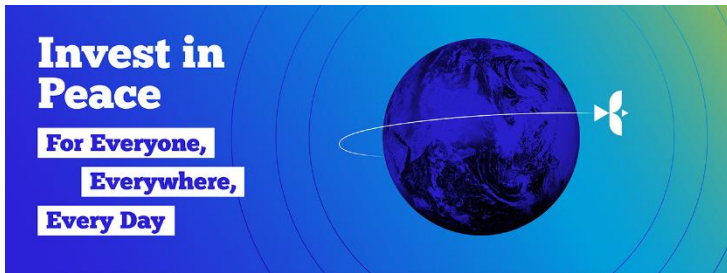


Peace Day, September 21st

Everyone has a role to play. We must speak up against violence, hate, discrimination, & inequality; practice respect; & embrace the diversity of our world.



The theme of the 2026 International Day of Peace "Invest in Peace - For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day" invites us all to do our part for peace.

"Peace is not just made at conference tables, but in classrooms, neighbourhoods, and everywhere people meet with open minds and open hearts. Together, day by day, we can build a more just world, with compassion, equality and dignity for all."
UN Secretary-General António Guterres

Actions For Peace Day

1. Spark conversations about urgent need for understanding, non-violence, & disarmament
2. Listen to voices different from your own
3. Take the time to verify facts before you post on social media
4. Challenge discriminatory language in your workplace
5. Speak up with your choices, opting to purchase items from socially conscious brands, or donating to organizations that promote sustainability & human rights
6. Report bullying both online & offline
7. Organize a peace walk or run
8. Hold a "Sports Day for Peace"
9. Host a peace-themed film night
10. Volunteer for a peace organization
11. Tend to a community garden for peace
12. Host a peace concert in your community
13. Organize an exhibit of art for peace
14. Spearhead an environmental clean-up effort
15. Write a poem for peace
16. Launch a digital awareness campaign for peace

Background

The International Day of Peace was established in 1981 by the United Nations General Assembly. The observance is to be a day of strengthening the ideals of peace & alleviating tensions & causes of conflict. Two decades later, in 2001, the General Assembly set the date as September 21 each year & unanimously voted to designate the Day as a period of non-violence & cease-fire.

All Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, regional & non-governmental organizations & individuals are invited to commemorate the Day in an appropriate manner, including education & public awareness, & to cooperate with the United Nations in establishing a global ceasefire. Part of the hope is that if combatants can agree to stop fighting for this one day, they can find ways to stop fighting permanently & make peace.

The idea for an International Day of Prayer for Peace was proposed in 2004 during a meeting between World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia & UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. It is the same day as the UN International Day of Peace. The Day of Prayer was one initiative of the WCC's Decade to Overcome Violence. In many places, it continues to be observed. The day offers an opportunity for church communities everywhere to pray & act together to nurture lasting peace in the hearts of people, their families, communities & societies.

Cultivating a Culture of Peace

(Definitions from the UN [Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace](#)) This resolution was passed in preparation for the year 2000 which was declared as the International Year for the Culture of Peace.

What does it mean to build a culture of peace? A culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions & modes of behavior, & ways of life based on:

- (a) Respect for life, ending of violence & promotion & practice of non-violence through education, dialogue & cooperation;
- (b) Full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity & political independence of States & non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations & international law;
- (c) Full respect for & promotion of all human rights & fundamental freedoms;
- (d) Commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts;
- (e) Efforts to meet the developmental & environmental needs of present & future generations;
- (f) Respect for & promotion of the right to development;
- (g) Respect for & promotion of equal rights & opportunities for women & men;
- (h) Respect for & promotion of the right of everyone to freedom of expression, opinion & information;
- (i) Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue & understanding at all levels of society & among nations; & fostered by an enabling national & international environment conducive to peace.

Sources: [International Day of Peace | United Nations](#)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 53/243. Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. Article 1.



Here are **2 ideas** for commemorating Peace Day, September 21st!

#1

Take part in The Pinwheels For Peace Project



In today's world, peace needs to be more than just a word.

Imagine... millions of pinwheels spinning in the wind – pinwheels in the United States, Great Britain, South America, Australia, the Middle East, Canada, Africa, Europe and Asia; pinwheels all over the world! – big pinwheels, small pinwheels; pinwheels of all shapes and sizes – colorful pinwheels, decorated with drawings, paintings, collages, photographs – pinwheels with words of peace and harmony written on them – fields of pinwheels, pinwheels along roadsides, in schoolyards, in parks, pinwheels EVERYWHERE!

graphs – pinwheels with words of peace and harmony written on them – fields of pinwheels, pinwheels along roadsides, in schoolyards, in parks, pinwheels EVERYWHERE!

This is the Pinwheels for Peace project!

Please join us EVERY year on International Day of Peace, September 21st, as we create a visual public statement about peace! Make pinwheels and display them in a public place for all to see. Include a banner, sign, or poster explaining what the pinwheels are about.

Go to www.pinwheelsforpeace.com for more ideas and information.

Everyday, we are bombarded with television images, video games, music, and magazine articles/newspapers that give importance to conflict and war. Violence has become commonplace and accepted as part of our society and, for some, it is a way of life. It is our hope that through the Pinwheels for Peace project, we can make a public visual statement about our feelings about war/ peace/ tolerance/ cooperation/ harmony/ unity and, in some way, maybe, awaken the public and let them know what we are thinking.

This is not political. Peace doesn't necessarily have to be associated with the conflict of war, it can be related to violence/intolerance in our daily lives, to peace of mind. To each of us, peace can take on a different meaning, but, in the end, it all comes down to a simple definition: a state of calm and serenity, with no anxiety, the absence of violence, freedom from conflict or disagreement among people or groups of people.

A pinwheel is a childhood symbol – it reminds us of a time when things were simple, joyful, peaceful. A pinwheel is easily made using just about any type of material, from copy paper, to thin plastic, to lightweight metal. The stick of the pinwheel can be as simple as a pencil or as intricate as a carved stick or metal rod. Pinwheels can be made as small as one inch in diameter or as large as desired – limited only by the creator's materials and motivation. Pinwheels can be minimal or very complex – imagination, creativity (and a mild breeze) are the only variables needed.

Everyone will create pinwheels, pinwheels of all shapes and sizes – as part of the creation process, write your thoughts about "war and peace / tolerance/ living in harmony with others" on one side. The writing can be poetry, prose, haiku, or essay-style – whatever writing form is appropriate as you express yourself. On the other side, draw, paint, collage, etc. to visually express your feelings. Assemble these pinwheels and on International Day of Peace, Sept. 21, "plant" your pinwheels outside (at the schools, museum, public places, etc.) as a public statement and art exhibit/installation. The spinning of the pinwheels in the wind will spread thoughts and feelings about peace throughout the country, the world!

Pinwheels for Peace is an art installation project started in 2005 by Ann Ayers and Ellen McMillan, who were art teachers at Monarch High School in Coconut Creek, Florida, as a way for their students to express their feelings about what's going on in the world and in their lives. The project was quickly embraced by their students and the entire school community and by millions of art teachers, teachers, parents, children and adults who desire peace in our world.

500,000 pinwheels were planted the first year on Sept. 21, 2005. By 2019, four million pinwheels were planted!



#2 The Church of the Brethren Gun Violence Prevention Team's pinwheel suggestion: Join in *Whirled Peace!*



The Team is Asking COB Congregations to Participate in observing the International Day of Peace, September 21st by make a visual public statement about the cost of gun violence and our promise to stand for peace by creating and placing pinwheels in a public place like your church lawn with a banner that describes your action. We are calling this COB event *Whirled Peace*.

Here are some resources:

- An explanation of the action with ideas for participation
- A prayer for peace & a Whirled peace litany
- Step-by-step instructions for creating pinwheels (pinwheels can also be purchased)
- Suggested Scriptures for reflection

Pinwheels

The pinwheels can be purchased or created during Sunday School or at a planned event prior to September 21st (see instructions included). The instructions give the option of including a name of someone lost to gun violence and/or a prayer or phrase that represents peace. These can be drawn on the pinwheel or attached with a sticker (see Avery sticker template included). Link to video for constructing Pinwheels: http://www.pinwheelsforpeace.com/Pinwheels_for_Peace/info_%26_ideas.html

Research

Research names of people lost to gun violence in your city, state, or the nation. Display a list of names on a bulletin, program, banner and/or print them on stickers to be added to the pinwheels. Up-to-date information can be found on this website: <https://gunmemorial.org/search>

Church Sign or Banner

Purchase or create a banner or design your church sign with a message about what your action represents. For example if your pinwheels are representing the number of people who have died in your community your sign or banner could read:

- 125 Deaths from Gun Violence
- Remembering the Cost
- Praying for Peace

Church Service and/or Vigil Service

You can include a litany, prayer, scriptures and songs in a worship service and/or a short service as you place the pinwheels in the public location. (See litany, prayer, scriptures included). This service could include reading the names of the gun violence victims as you place the pinwheel in the lawn. Think about a shape you might want to place the pinwheels in such as a heart, peace sign or in a line.

Promote your event before and after

To attract local support, promote your event using your local newspaper, television, radio, social media or with a banner or church sign. Contact other churches and your district leaders to invite them and encourage them to include the event in the district newsletter. After the event, be sure to post photos on social media and send a short report and pictures to the COB Gun Violence Action Team at :cob-gvp@onearthpeace.org

Helpful Hints for Planning:

As you plan your Whirled Peace action it helps to write down the elements of the event that you plan to include and then plan backwards. Here are some helpful hints to get started.

Step 1: Contact leadership involved to confirm event by early August

Step 2: Create Event team early August

Step 3: Create leaders for each task from your team

- a. Pastor or Worship team for morning worship and/or post worship ceremony
 - explain the event and provide the litany, prayer and scripture
- b. Leader for creating or purchasing pinwheels (Sunday School director or appropriate leader)
 - provide instructions for creating pinwheels, and stickers with materials needed
 - purchase material for pinwheels 1 week prior to creating pinwheels
 - research names and print stickers 1 week prior to the day creating the pinwheels
 - practice creating 1 pinwheel 1 week prior
- c. Leader for changing church sign or creating or purchasing a banner for day of event
 - provide message based on details of your event
- d. Outreach team (or equivalent) to promote to the community
 - provide event details (ceremony or other event details)
 - begin promoting 1 month prior
 - with office manager write a short paragraph report for media,
 - send short report and pictures to cob-gvp@onearthpeace.org
- e. Office Manager (or equivalent) to reach church members
 - provide information about the event details (ceremony or other event details)
 - begin promoting 1 month prior
 - with outreach leader, write a short paragraph report at conclusion of the event to print in news-letter



Make a Pinwheel

What you need:

Paper (24-36 pound paper)

Scissors

Straight pin*

Pencil with eraser **or** corks & skewers+

Colored pencils or markers to decorate

Glue

*A pushpin can be used if you are using a cork and skewer

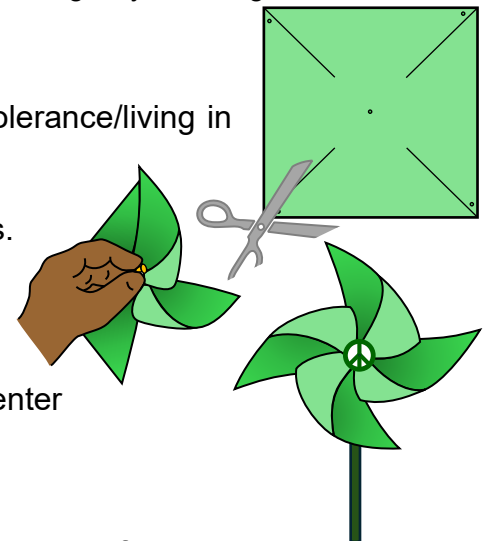
+A cork with a skewer pushed into it can be used for the stick. (Wine corks are available at some craft stores.) Cut these in half. Stick the skewer into the end and the pushpin with the pinwheel on it in the side of the cork. Make sure the push pin is loose enough for the pinwheel to spin. If you will be planting your pinwheels in the ground, the skewers give you a longer stick.

How to get started:

- Cut out a pinwheel square (see the pattern)
- On one side of the paper, write down your feelings about war/peace/tolerance/living in harmony.
- On the other side of the paper, use markers, colored pencils, paint or other art media to visually express your feelings.
- Cut along the black lines from all four corners, making sure to leave about 2 inches of the center of the square uncut.

To create the pinwheel:

- Gently bend (don't fold) one of the cut corners with a circle on it to the center point
- Skip the next cut corner & bend the next one with a circle on it.
- Skip & bend until all four points with a circle meet in the center.
- Stick a straight pin through the circle on all 4 points & the circle in the center of the pinwheel then into the eraser in a pencil. (Once the points are lined up so the pin will go through the circles, you can glue the points to the center) (You can cut out the peace sign on this page & stick the Pin through the center of it before sticking it through the pinwheel points so your pinwheel has a center.)

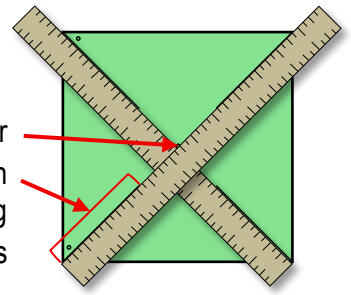


- Find some wind to test it out.
- Keep your pinwheel in a safe place until Sept. 21st (International Peace Day) then take it to a public place & plant it in the ground to send a message of world peace!

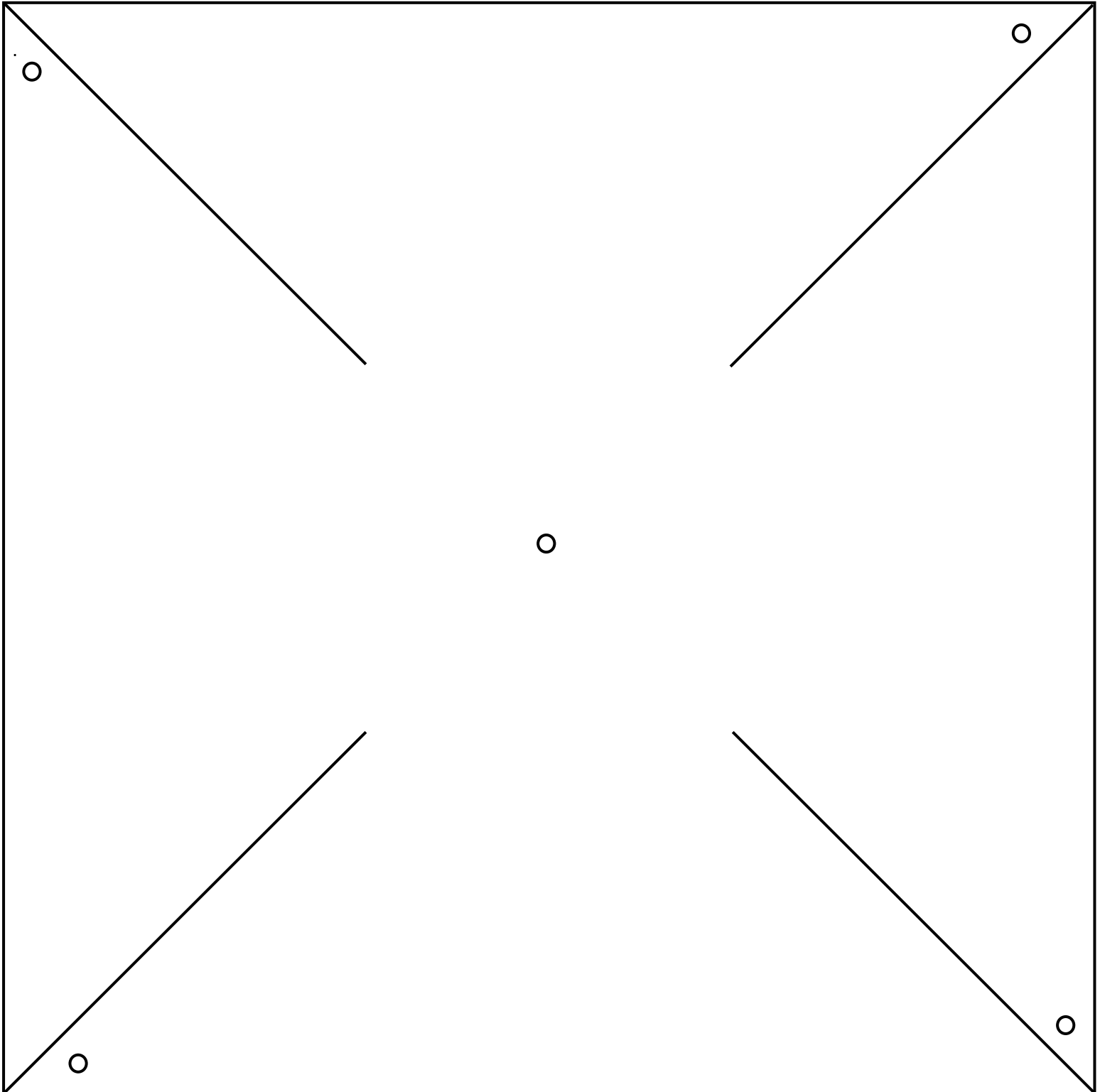
Other size squares can also be used. Cut a square of paper. Use a ruler to find the center of the square & mark the lines for cutting the points. Remember to allow about 2 inches of the center of the square uncut. (A pencil & pen may not work as the stick for pinwheels made from squares larger than those made from 8 ½ x 11 paper.)



Center
Draw a line on each
corner for cutting
points



Cut on the black lines. Put the pin through the 4 point circles then through the center circle



WHIRLING OF PEACE LITANY

by Rev. Sandi Evans Rogers

LEADER: Today the World around us seems to spin in Chaos

PEOPLE: As the world around us seems to be spinning out of control

ALL: We need a new direction.

LEADER: As violence in our world is spinning faster and faster

PEOPLE As violence in our world impacts the lives of all of us

ALL: We need a fresh wind to carry us.

LEADER: The violence around us is from hatred, misunderstanding, sin of the world

PEOPLE: The violence—be it political, personal, from guns, from anger—is life-changing

ALL: We need hope, compassion, grace, and transformation.

LEADER: The Peace of Peace can transform the wind

PEOPLE: The Holy Spirit is their Wind

ALL: We need the transformation of The Spirit of Peace.

LEADER: May the whirling Peace of Jesus allow us to remember

PEOPLE: May we remember those lost to violence, those who have survived violence

ALL May we recognize each one of us are secondary, generational, or community survivors.

LEADER: May the whirling of Jesus' Peace, redirect, carry us, transform us

PEOPLE: May the whirling of Jesus' Peace help us transform the world through us

ALL: May we be transformed with the gift of Peace and may our hearts be tendered as we remember...always

PRAYER FOR PEACE

by Rev. Sandi Evans Rogers

Jesus,

You are our Prince of Peace, and we are humbled and grateful that your Peace is ours, through your gifts, through your Spirit who lives within each one of us today.

We confess that living in your peace is a challenge in this culture and this season. We know violence comes in so many forms: political, verbal, domestic, guns, personal, communal, violence on ourselves, and so much more.

This gift of your peace, which you have left for us through the presence of your Spirit in our lives, truly can be transformational. The more we allow your Spirit to whirl in our hearts, our minds, and our souls, the more we can let go, release the anger and the hatred we often hold, and make room for the healing power of your peace. The more we allow your Spirit to whirl in our minds, our hearts, and our very souls, the more we can let go of fear and anxiety and breathe deeply your peace.

Today on this Whirled Peace Sunday, may we be reminded of the joy a twirling pinwheel can bring to a child of innocence, the energy and freedom they experience: a time when life seemed simple and oh so naturally free.

Pinwheels can remind us of the possibility of the Holy Spirit's presence blowing through our lives for transformation. For Chinese culture, pinwheels can symbolize turning bad luck into good fortunes. Pinwheels can be a symbol of a new beginning, allowing them to add to our healing after violence in our lives.

As we place these pinwheels for all to see, may they remind us of all those who have been lost, wounded, and survived [gun] violence in our neighborhoods, in the lives of those we call family, neighbor, strangers, and family of faith. As these pinwheels whirl, may we be reminded of the powerful transformational movement of the Holy Spirit to heal in ALL our lives.

We are humbled and grateful for your tender love and grace. We are grateful for your gift of Peace, always available in our lives.

In your name, our Prince of Peace, we pray. Amen

THE GIFT OF PEACE

Scriptures to reflect and ponder
the power and significance of peace
in our lives

Romans 12:18; 14:19

18 If possible, so far as it depends on you,
be at peace with all men.

19 So then we pursue the things which make for peace
and the building up of one another.

John 16:33

These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you
may have peace. In the world you have tribulation,
but take courage; I have overcome the world."

Isaiah 26:3

The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace,
Because he trusts in You.

Colossians 3:15

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

Romans 5:1

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God
through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Psalms 119:165

Those who love Your law have great peace, And nothing causes
them to stumble

Philippians 4:6-9

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer
and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be
made known to God. 7 And the peace of God,
which surpasses all comprehension,

will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is
honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute,
if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of
praise, dwell on these things.

9 The things you have learned and received and heard
and seen in me, practice these things,
and the God of peace will be with you.

Psalms 4:8

In peace I will both lie down and sleep,
For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.

2 Thessalonians 3:16

Now may the Lord of peace Himself
continually grant you peace in
every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!

Matthew 5:9

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called sons of God.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you;
not as the world gives do I give to you.
Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.