# Unit 7: Do we find goodness in peace?

## Overview

The question this week seems obvious. Of course we seek peace! Of course it is part of living a good life! The prompts this week will invite you to think about the meaning of peace, different kinds of peace, its place in experiencing goodness, and the role of conflict as well. In this unit, you will also have the opportunity to inquire through aesthetic ways of knowing, specifically music and sculpture.

## Prompts

Unit 7 will look at two kinds of prompts:

1: The music of Beethoven, Schiller, and Messiaen

2: Global peace statues

## Learning Outcomes

Through practicing inquiry in this unit, you will:

* Examine and evaluate the nature of the relationship between peace, conflict, and goodness.
* Interpret and respond to the messages expressed through music and sculpture
* Analyze and synthesize various perspectives (from our class prompts and from classmates)
* Compare different meanings of peace as they relate to personal and global flourishing

## Activity Checklist

Here is a checklist of learning activities you will benefit from in completing this unit. You may find it useful for planning your work.

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| 🗹 | **Activities** |
|  | Activity 7.1: Listen to “It is well with my soul,” performed by [Audrey Assad](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zY5o9mP22V0). Journal your response. |
|  | Activity 7.2: Review the background information on Beethoven. |
|  | Activity 7.3: Listen to Symphony No. 9, IV, “Presto” (Opening). Reflect in your learning journal. |
|  | Activity 7.4: Read the background and poetry by Schiller: “Ode to Joy.” |
|  | Activity 7.5: Search online for a performance of “Ode to Joy” and spend time listening. Take some time to consider your responses to “Ode to Joy” and to look for connections to our question, “Do we find goodness in peace?” |
|  | Activity 7.6: Read the background on Messiaen and the context of his composition, “Quartet for the End of Time.” |
|  | Activity 7.7: Listen to the 2nd movement of the music, as [performed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYpBHc8px_U&feature=youtu.be&t=187) for St. Thomas University, Houston. Take some time to respond in your learning journal. |
|  | Activity 7.8: Do an online search of “peace statues” or “peace memorials.” Choose three to research in more depth. Present your discoveries to your group members and compare and contrast what each person found. As a group, complete the “Template for Group Discussion of Statues” and post it. |

**Assessment**

Here is the assessment for Unit 7.

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| **Group discussion**: Do we find goodness in peace? | 2% |
| **Inquiry Blog #3:** Power/Peace image | 2% |

## Prompt 1: The music of Beethoven, Schiller, and Messiaen

Two of the outcomes of this course are to break down inquiry from many different prompts and to interpret meaning-making in all kinds of genres. In other words, we can discover meaning everywhere if we practice looking for it. As you listen to and/or view performances of Symphony No.9, Ode to Joy, and Quartet for the End of Time, I invite you to discover more about the nature of peace and conflict, harmony and discord.

### Learning Activities

#### Activity 7.1: Listen and Reflect

To warm up and prepare to think more deeply about today’s topic, listen to “It is well with my soul,” performed by [Audrey Assad](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zY5o9mP22V0). You can look up the lyrics if you would like to read as well.

Next, take approximately 5 minutes to journal your thoughts. See the following questions to get you thinking.

* + What does peace mean to you?
  + How is peace achieved?
  + How can we communicate **the meaning and value** of peace?

#### Activity 7.2: All About Beethoven

In order to interpret the meaning-making of music, it is essential to understand the context in which the composer wrote and performed. Review the background information below about Beethoven. This information should help you to understand what Beethoven was experiencing and help you interpret messages related to peace.

**Historical/Biographical context**

Beethoven (1770-1827) was a German composer. He was baptized in the Catholic tradition but was not a regular attender. However, he described God as a universal father and the creator, and he wrote two masses, including *Missa Solemnis* *(Op. 123),* which is considered to be his greatest work. During his life, two major world events occurred: The American War of Independence (1775-1783) and the French Revolution (1789-1799). These inevitably influenced his concepts of peace and conflict. In addition, he faced a personal challenge. In 1802, he grew despondent over his increasing hearing loss. He wrote a Heiligenstadt Testament, which is a document similar to a last will. It was discovered in his apartment after his death 25 years later. Some believe that it was a kind of suicide note, a reaction to his personal grief. By 1818, he was no longer able to hear and relied on “conversation books” to communication.

**About the premier performance:**

At the first performance, Beethoven was on stage “helping” the conductor with tempi through theatrical gesticulations. He was not able to hear the music, nor the audience’s response. Mezzo-soprano, Caroline Unger, had to turn him around to make him aware of the applause at the end.

**Responses by Beethoven’s contemporaries**

“… so monstrous and tasteless and, in its grasp of Schiller's 'Ode,' so trivial that I cannot understand how a genius like Beethoven could have written it.” (composer Ludwig Spohr [1784-1859])

“… indescribably great and magnificent, jubilant applause from full hearts was enthusiastically given the master, whose inexhaustible genius revealed a new world to us…” (reported by Vienna correspondent to the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung)*

#### Activity 7.3: Listen and Reflect

Listen to Symphony No. 9, IV, “Presto” (Opening) by Otto Klemperer, conducting Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. The link is embedded in the PowerPoint. **[****link to Beethoven pwpt, or find similar sound clip to embed in Wordpress]**

Next, use the following questions to guide your response in your learning journal. Feel free to share your thoughts with your group at your weekly discussion as you make connections to this week’s theme of peace.

* + Identify your physical / emotional / mental responses to what you hear.
  + Include possible reasons for your responses.
  + You may want to note the time stamp of the recording for your responses.
  + Some example structures for your responses:
    - * When I hear this music,
      * … it makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
      * … I associate it with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
      * … it reminds me of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
      * … I want to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
      * … my body experiences \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

#### Activity 7.4: Schiller’s Poetry

Read the background information and poetry by Schiller: “Ode to Joy.” Again, the background is to provide you with the historical and situational context to inform your interpretation.

**Schiller’s “Ode to Joy” – source of the text in the final movement of Beethoven’s 9th Symphony**

Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), also German, was a contemporary of Beethoven’s. He wrote during the time of the American and French Revolutions, so he was likely influenced by these considerations of peace and war. Schiller was a rationalist, with religious leanings but a distrust of organized religion. He composed the poem, “Ode to Joy,” in 1785. During his lifetime, there were 40 different musical settings of this poem, and over time, many more have been added.

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| **Schiller’s “Ode to Joy” (Beethoven)**  **– excerpt, translated (Repa, 2017)**  O friends, not these sounds!  But leave us with some more pleasurable  and more joyful.  Joy! Joy!    O, beautiful spark of the gods,  Daughter from Elysium,  We enter, drunk with fire,  Heavenly One, thy sanctuary!  Your magic binds again  What convention strictly divides;  All people become brothers,  Where your gentle wing abides. |

#### Activity 7.5: Listen and Reflect

Search online for a performance of “Ode to Joy” and spend time listening. (I always enjoy the flash mob performances of this piece, and the videos might contribute another layer to your interpretation). Take some time to consider your responses to “Ode to Joy” and to look for connections to our question, “Do we find goodness in peace?” See below for some guiding questions, and record your thoughts in your personal learning journal.

* How do you respond to the poetry and music? (Consider emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual responses). When you share, try to provide evidence for why you respond in such a way.
* What words, allusions, images, and symbols stand out to you? What do you think they might mean?
* What does this poem say about peace?
* What does this poem say about the good life?

#### Activity 7.6: Messiaen Background

Read the following background information on Messiaen and the context of his composition, “Quartet for the End of Time.”

**Historical/Biographical context**

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) was a French composer with strong devotion to his Catholic faith. His faith informs many of his compositions as he explores the meeting of the human and the divine. He lived through two world wars, and in 1940, he was called to military service. He became a prisoner of war in Stallag VIII-A and composed *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (Quartet for the End of Time) while a prisoner there. Thus, the context of this piece is prison in a time of savage war. The premier performance included Messiaen on piano and three fellow prisoners on violin, cello, and clarinet.

* + “… a bitter cold evening, when Messiaen and his three companions, dressed in mis- matched uniforms and wooden clogs and playing an old upright piano with loose keys and a three-stringed cello, mesmerized an audience of five thousand fellow prisoners, German officers, and guard.” (Sprout, 2004)
  + "Never have I been listened to with so much attention and understanding.“ (Words of Messiaen, translated.)

#### Activity 7.7: Listen and Reflect

Listen to the 2nd movement of the music, as [performed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYpBHc8px_U&feature=youtu.be&t=187) for St. Thomas University, Houston.

* + 2nd Movement “Vocalise” – Listen from the 3 minute mark to the 10 minute mark.
  + Performers: Richard Nunemaker (clarinet) with Trio Oriens ; Johnny Chang (violin), Olive Chen (cello) and I-Ling Chen (piano).

Take some time to reflect on “Quartet for the End of Time” in your learning journal. See below for some guiding questions.

* + Identify your physical / emotional / mental responses to what you hear.
  + Include possible reasons for your responses.
  + You may want to note the time stamp of the recording for your responses
* Some example structures for your responses:
  + - * When I hear this music,
      * … it makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
      * … I associate it with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
      * … it reminds me of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
      * … I want to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
      * … my body experiences \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

As you meet with your group this week, you may want to share your thoughts with your group.

* + What kind(s) of peace (such as inner, spiritual, interpersonal, or global) did you reflect on from today’s musical prompts?
  + What does this prompt say to you about peace and/or its opposite?
  + (How) Can aesthetic practices be used to communicate thoughts and values?

*Note that as with all of the first lesson prompts, you will* ***not be graded*** *on these discussions. This prompt will help you explore the topics and will be instrumental in completing the final project.*

## Prompt 2: Global Peace Statues

Humans seem to have a universal need to memorialize important people and events. For example, in the Bible, we can read of multiple times when the Hebrew people set up stones to commemorate God’s rescue and salvation. Now, all over the world, we can learn from statues and memorials which reveal something about the event that occurred, the values of the culture, and the perspective on the human pursuit of peace. This is exactly what we are going to explore in this unit.

### Learning Activities

#### Activity 7.8: Searching for Peace

Do an online search of “peace statues” or “peace memorials.” Choose three to research in more depth. More specifically, find out the name of the statue/memorial, where it is located, the historical context (such as when it was made and what it memorializes), and important symbolic representation in the statue. Present your discoveries to your group members and compare and contrast what each person found. Record the research and your group’s discoveries on the “Template for Group Discussion of Statues.” Post this completed template.

## Assessment

### Group Discussion: Do we find goodness in peace?

After completing this unit, including the learning activities, post the link to your Google Doc (“Template for Group Discussion of Statues”) as a record of your group’s discussion of Prompt 2.

### Inquiry Blog #3:

To add to our conversation about power and peace and our exploration of aesthetic expressions, contribute to your blog by presenting one of the following:

-a work of art or photograph that says something about power and/or peace

-a song or poem that examines something related to power and/or peace

-an object or symbolic representation of power and/or peace

Post the image itself (if applicable) or a link to it. Explain what this tells you about the definitions of power and/or peace and the relationships between these ideas and the good life.

## Unit 7 Summary

We tend to admire people who can say, “It is well with my soul,” even though they are experiencing pain, suffering, and trials of all kinds. Inner peace is always beautiful. However, in this unit, we have left it open for you to consider other kinds of peace and to explore these meanings through aesthetic inquiry. Learning from sensory information can draw out messages that we might miss through words alone. Feel free to add to your journal as you process what you explored in this unit.

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