

Pennsylvanian Unificationists rally for peace during the USA's election week

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Pennsylvania has long been a battleground state in American politics. It's also home to Unificationist peacemakers who recently rallied for peace during this tumultuous U.S. election week.

Grassroots "Rally for Peace" organizers, civic leaders, non-profit organizations, and a swell of locals gathered on October 31 in front of Germantown High School in Northwest Philadelphia calling for peace during a time of unrest in their city and other places nationwide.

"We're responding to the rise in street shootings and city violence," said Pastor Shota Iwasaki of Philadelphia Family Church. He was joined by several Unificationists including his daughter and budding youth activist, Soonmee.



"This Rally for Peace is very important," said Pastor Shota. "We're networking and recruiting volunteers, and connecting with more people to help address and prevent gun violence and other crimes happening on the streets."

Tensions flared in Philadelphia on October 26 after the [police shooting death](#) of an armed black man, setting off protests and calls to defund the police department.

Pennsylvania is also where both incumbent President Donald Trump and his Democratic opponent Joe Biden have made multiple stops during their campaigns -- a noted swing state with supporters of the two major political parties.

One of the original 13 colonies, the Quaker State has a rich political history where the United States Declaration of Independence and United States Constitution were both drafted, and where part of the American Civil War was fought at the Battle of Gettysburg.

"This state is very powerful in terms of its history and its influence," said 22-year-old Soonmee, who spoke at the rally. "Right now there is a lot of pain here and a lot of noise. But we all have to work together, and building a peaceful community begins with listening."

The rally brought together local faith leaders who gave inspirational speeches of hope and unity, including Unificationist ministers Eddy Kaady, Chris Bush, and Kevin and Sukhont Convery, among others.

"This rally is truly a moment for all of us to listen to each other," said Soonmee. "A moment to spark change, growth, and peace."

