

November Laity Minute

I'm seeing orange. Lots of it. Not only do we have a few holidays this time of year where orange is prevalent, but you can't turn on the news or read social media without seeing more orange than you can imagine. We have been seeing it for months with football and it will continue with basketball. My basement has orange walls. Even my car's license plate has a Big Orange T on it. In marketing, studies have shown that orange denotes a feeling of lower pricing by consumers. That's why Big Lots uses it. Don't get me wrong. I love the color. (Good thing, right?) But, unquestionably, there's no escaping the power and presence of the orange.

But this color actually has a much more powerful message than just the orange smiley face arrow on the Amazon box that just arrived at your house.

Orange is the signature color of a more powerful movement. The "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence" campaign uses this color as its signature shade. You see, every year from November 25 – December 10 is a time when the women's entity of the United Nations formally recognizes violence against women globally. "It is a time to galvanize action to end violence against women and girls around the world." They also state, "For far too long, impunity, silence, and stigma have allowed violence against women to escalate to pandemic proportions – one in three women worldwide experience gender-based violence." (UN Women website).

Within these 16 days, several significant dates occur. Some of these are International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, International Women's Human Rights Defenders Day, World AIDS Day, and International Human Rights Day. It recognizes all types of violence toward women and girls in all locations and contexts.

The United Methodist Women recognize this movement since it falls under a few of our Mission Focus Issues which include Domestic Violence and Gender Justice. In addition, the United Methodist Men have partnered with the UMW to launch a domestic violence initiative to raise awareness of this issue. The UMW and the UMM state, "domestic violence is not just a women's issue. It is an issue of faith." (UMW web site.)

Orange is a super fun color. It also evokes feelings of enthusiasm, success, and change. So, cheer on your big orange all season long. Carve the pumpkins and enjoy the colorful leaves. But, also remember that this color is one that can change the world.