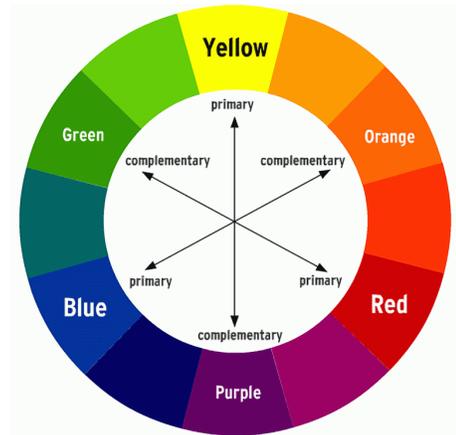


The Color Wheel

A Meditation on the Ninth Sunday After Pentecost

Colors crashing
Colors splashing, flashing
Dancing, prancing
Spinning together in wild abandon.
The more in one fabric
The more in one garden
The more on one canvas
The better.



When I was a child, there were strict rules about color. The rules dictated that you could wear, plant or paint with colors that are complementary, meaning across the color wheel, but not colors that are adjacent on that same wheel.

Yellow and purple? Perfect. Blue and orange? Great. Red and green? Of course - Christmas itself shows their complementarity. Yet in those decades past, all you had to do was try putting together colors that are closer on the color wheel and watch the scoffing begin. Maybe you remember the poem from the 1990s that begins, "When I am an old woman I shall wear purple with a red hat that doesn't go . . ." ⁱⁱⁱ Who said it didn't go? Those old color rules! I, for one, am glad those rules have mostly changed, and glad to wear the crashing purples and reds that make up my daily bishop attire. More than anything, I am glad beyond measure that I am not color blind but can, instead, see and delight in the rich abundance and diversity of brilliant, crashing color in God's amazing creation. All of the color. No holds barred.

Just as I rejoice in the immense diversity of colors on the color wheel and in the wilds of nature, I rejoice in the rich diversity of the colors of humanity. From deeps that are as blue as a clear winter midnight to pinks that are paler than a new moon. Sienna and umber. Henna, amber, beige and bronze. Words cannot begin to reflect the myriad colors and textures of skin and eyes and hair. I am glad beyond measure that I am not color blind but, instead, can notice and delight in the diversity, see the palette of the Artist every day, at every turn, and give thanks for such a diversity of beauty and creativity.

I never want to be color blind. Instead, I ask God to teach me more and more each day how to see without judging, how to notice without excluding, how to recognize my very own brother and sister and sibling in hope and deep trust. I ask God to give me bigger sight and bigger insight to honor our human differences and to see, in pure compassion and joy, the image of God in each person.

Color rules have always been overrated. God, show me how to break them wisely and lovingly for the sake of this wild, wonderful humanity you created.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Warning" by Jenny Joseph