

May 2023
Oberlin, Ohio

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

Peace, Pax, Shalom, Salām, Sānti, Heiwa, Zhi-bde, Dohiyi, Iríni, Mir, Santipap, Solh, Pyonghwa, Sipala, Tsumukikiatu, K'é, Hozo, Tinçlik, Héping, Hoà bình.

As one who taught an Introduction to World Religion class at Lorain County Community College for many years, I value the concept of peace and its importance in all major world faith communities.

With that understanding, I am writing to you to invite you and the members of the congregations you serve, to participate in the Lorain County events for “Wear Orange Weekend” which is June 2nd - 4th.

I am sure that you are aware that there have been more mass shootings relating in deaths and injuries in the U.S.A. than the days so far in this 2023 calendar year. It is an epidemic every bit as dangerous, devastating, and unnecessary as the COVID-19 pandemic which we have endured. And yet preventative measures have allowed us to bring that disease under control.

And, as of yet we do not have the preventative measures to eradicate gun violence which is the number one killer of teens and children in these United States.

We can, across our theological and religious differences, work together to end the epidemic of gun violence in our country. Wear Orange Weekend, June 2nd - 4th is an outward and visible sign to promote gun violence awareness and remember those who have died from gun violence.

The color orange was chosen because hunters wear orange to announce themselves to other hunters when out in the woods, and because orange is a color that symbolized the value of human life.

The events around “Wear Orange Weekend, June 2nd - 4th are sponsored by the local chapter of Moms Demand Action. Here is a list of gatherings for that weekend.

June 2, 5:00 p.m. Veteran’s Park, Lorain, Ohio
June 3, 12:00 p.m. NW corner of College and Main Streets, Oberlin, Ohio.
June 4, 10:30 a.m. UCC Church, 900 State St., Vermilion, Ohio.
June 4, 4:00 p.m. Ely Square in Elyria.

Memorial Trees will be planted at each location. If you have a name or names which you would like to add to the memorial list of gun violence victims please text 214-415-4761 with the names.

Thank you for helping to spread the word about our 2023 Wear Orange Weekend events in your faith communities. Please help us get out the word and the invitation to participate. All are welcome.

With gratitude,

Brian K. Wilbert

The Rev. Dr. Brian K. Wilbert
Oberlin, OH