

Green Team will be sharing the details of recycling specifics for our area in the next few newsletters. If you would like to read all of it at one time, it is available on the church app and on the website. Another option is to watch a one-hour Zoom meeting that was recorded with First Presbyterian's Green Team and Amanda Haffele, the Solid Waste Director for Portage County. She works at the site where our recycled goods go. If you have additional questions after reading our articles or watching the Zoom interview, you can reach her office at 715.345.5960. You can also check out their Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/PortageCountyRecycles

“Recycling the Right Way”

3 important things to keep in mind when recycling:

- **The familiar ‘chasing arrows’ symbol on a product does NOT necessarily mean the container can be recycled**



- **Do NOT put your recycling into a plastic bag! When workers see bags, they are often thrown into the trash, since they can't see the items inside. Even if you use a clear bag, that is a nuisance for the workers to deal with. Plastic bags usually completely void all your good recycling efforts.**
- **The information that you receive from Advanced Disposal, or that you see on their website, is standardized, generalized information that they publish for a large number of communities that they serve. The details they list are NOT all accurate for our area. What really matters is what our local recycling facility does, and ours is in Plover.**

The Green Team learned a lot through this recorded Zoom meeting. There are some products that we thought were recyclable, that actually are not; and happily, others that we didn't realize can be recycled.

It may be easy to become discouraged and think that our recycling efforts don't really make a difference. However, we can keep in mind that every item that is successfully recycled is one less thing that goes into a landfill! Also, at least here in central WI, our recycling goes to other

companies that use them for other products, and most of those companies are in the Midwest. Benches, utensils, toilet paper, and carpeting are just a few of the wide variety of products that are made from items that we recycle. So ... recycle on! Our grandchildren will thank us ...

Zoom interview with Amanda: Recycling Paper Products, Glass Bottles and Jars, Steel and Aluminum Cans, Plastics

Some of the details that Amanda mentioned:

- If you want to recycle a hardcover book, remove the covers first and throw them in the trash. Then the remainder can be recycled.
- It's OK to recycle envelopes that have a plastic window.
- Don't put paper cups or coffee cups in the recycling. Cardboard 'sleeves' are OK.
- Don't put tissue paper, wrapping paper, paper plates, napkins, or tissues in the recycling.
- If you are recycling shredded paper, put it into a paper bag, staple it shut, and label it 'shredded paper'.
- Newspapers can be thrown in loose, or put in to a paper bag (NOT a plastic bag.) They should NOT be tied up with string, twine, etc; those items wreak havoc with the recycling machinery, as do wires and hoses.
- For cardboard boxes: empty and flatten them. Remove any packaging. Styrofoam goes in the trash. Plastic bubble wrap or packs can be recycled with plastic bags at the entrance to Pick N Save, Festival Foods, or Target, among other locations.
- Greasy pizza boxes go in the trash. If the top is non-greasy, that can be recycled.

Glass Bottles and Jars

- Only glass bottles and jars can be recycled – NOT ceramics, pottery, glassware, baking dishes, storage containers, window glass, or mirrors.
- Corks should be removed and thrown in the trash.

Steel and Aluminum Cans

- No need to remove labels. But if the cans have stickers, those must be removed
- Nestle lids inside the cans. If they come off, put them inside the can and crimp the top shut; then the lid won't go loose in the system
- No aluminum foil or food tins
- No aerosol cans

- No loose bottle caps; they can also be placed inside a can with the top crimped shut. A small handful of metal caps (from beer bottles, etc.) can go inside a metal or steel can. Important to pinch (crimp) top shut.
- If you have glass jars from products such as spaghetti sauce or olives, you can recycle the glass jars, and put the metal lids inside a can, also.

Plastics

- Remove liquids and food (use a spatula if necessary to remove as much as possible with a few swipes). You don't need to hand wash or run through dishwasher.
- If container has a plastic cap, leave it on for recycling
- No plastic berry or salad containers [this one was a big surprise for the Green Team]
- If the container has a plastic label that is 'shrink-wrapped' onto the exterior, that label must be removed and thrown away
- No motor oil bottles
- No plastic cups, plates, utensils
- No plastic toys, laundry baskets, etc.
- NO plastic film or bags – these go in the plastic bag bins at Pick N Save, Festival, Target, etc.

Other items that go in those bag bins:

tortilla bags, bread bags, bubble wrap, plastic packs used in shipping, produce bags (the kind that you pull off the roll at the supermarket), newspaper bags, baggies, Ziploc bags, plastic liners from cereal boxes, cracker boxes, etc. Plastic envelopes are OK to put in, as long as the liners are also plastic (not fiber)

Put in the trash:

fresh flowers bags, frozen vegetable / fruit bags, pre-washed salad bags

If you have questions about other products that can be recycled this way, a great resource to check out is: plasticfilmrecycling.org

May NOT be recycled:

'Tetra' – type cartons such as soup, broth, half and half, milk. These go in the trash.

'Aseptic' packaging such as the paperboard that goes around packs of cans of water or pop; or frozen meal boxes. These are treated with some chemicals, and cannot be recycled. [also a big surprise for many of us]