

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FEBRUARY 2019
NEWSLETTER**



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I am a huge fan of clever solutions to everyday problems. For instance, when my girls were young, they had wildly unruly hair that took so long to make presentable on school days, we risked being late. I learned that if I put a ponytail holder on the nozzle of the vacuum cleaner and turned the vacuum on, I could suck the girls' hair into the hose and easily slip on the ponytail holder and voila', instant fix. This saved precious minutes in the morning which allowed for a much more peaceful transition to school.

I know many of you have a deep and abiding love for our oceans. I have had many conversations with you where we share stories about our trips to the beach and the wonder that being in, on, or by the ocean has on us, that of a calming, almost healing effect on our bodies and souls. It's beauty and wonder are the subjects of stories, poems, pictures, and songs. Many of us feel closer to the Almighty when we are near our favorite bodies of water.

I was watching a special report on TV about the amount of plastics that end up in our oceans every year. Almost 8 million metric tons of plastic finds its way into our oceans, either by carelessness, accident, or just plain intentional dumping. While plastic is a universally needed substance and it is useful in many ways, it almost never decomposes. Exposed to sunlight it eventually breaks up into small pieces, but it doesn't decompose. Without some sort of intervention, the projected amounts of plastic dumped into the ocean is expected to increase 10-fold within 10 years. This plastic garbage is having a profound impact on our oceans. Many of us have seen the pictures of the deceased whale that had over 80 plastic bags in its stomach. When the plastic enters into the major ocean currents, it gets carried into specific areas of the world and creates what are called "garbage patches." There is one in the Pacific Ocean that is more than double the size of the state of Texas.

In Bali, Indonesia, there exists some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Surfers from around the world view the beaches in Bali as the Mecca of surfing. Unfortunately, Bali is also one of those places in our world where the currents take such huge amounts of plastic, the sand is almost completely covered in a matter of hours. Workers clean it up and before you know it, it's covered again. This plastic has also wreaked havoc on the fishing industry in Indonesia of which they depend not only as a way of life, but as a major food source. Sea-life simply cannot exist among all this waste.

Enter - two of my newest heroes, Alex Shultz and Andrew Cooper. These are two guys who didn't listen to the naysayers who came up with all sorts of reasons why something can't be done. They came up with an absolutely brilliant plan to at least do **something!** They pooled resources to create a foundation dedicated to not

only help clean up the oceans, but employ those now struggling Indonesian fishermen. Since they cannot catch fish anymore, this organization called 4oceans, employs these fishermen to go out and catch plastic. The fishermen get paid as much for a pound of plastic as they did for a pound of fish. So, not only does huge amounts of plastic get pulled out of the ocean and recycled, the solution has become a source of steady income. The plastic is then used to create items that can be later sold such as sunglasses and water bottles. Again, I love clever solutions to everyday problems.

God has given us a perfect place to call home. Human activity and carelessness are making this perfect place toxic in so many ways. In giving us dominion over all creation, God called us to be responsible stewards of this planet. We are seeing the devastating and deadly results of not doing anything. We all can't go to Indonesia to fish plastic out of the oceans, but we can do things at home to help address the problem. Recycling is one solution, another is getting over our dependency on plastic bags...those things are the worst invention in the world, and if we do use them, save them and return them to the store for recycling. Buying products made from the recovered plastic is another way we can be part of the solution. Supporting the economic rewards of good earth stewardship pays off in so many beneficial ways.

Stewardship of the planet is a spiritual consideration of which we all need to be a part. God is counting on us.

Blessings and peace,

Love, Kurt



There will be no Lunch Time Bible Study during Lent, the week of March 7 through the week of April 18. Please plan to attend the Lenten Service each week, as you are able.



Each year, Presbyterian congregations are assessed an amount to be paid for the operation of the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly of the church. This assessment is based on the number of members we reported last January. First Presbyterian of Greenville is asked to contribute \$42.00 per member in 2019. If you are able, you are encouraged to make an extra contribution at the beginning of the year to help meet this obligation.



Church Members Moved

Wayne & Joyce Ennen have moved. Their new address is:

605 S. Dewey
The Glenwood, Apt. 53
Greenville, IL 62246



Joan Wilson has moved. Her new address and telephone number are:

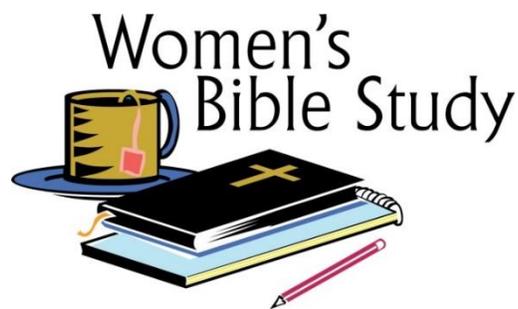
Box 213
Tremont Ridge
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Hillsboro, IL 62049
618-322-4363

Please be sure to stay in touch. They would enjoy hearing from you!

Food Pantry



This year's Food Pantry months for Greenville First Presbyterian are April and November. Be sure to check closer to those months for sign-up sheets and more information.



Women's Bible Study

There is no Women's Bible Study in February. They will resume meeting Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. Please be sure to mark the date on your calendar and plan to attend!



Souper Bowl of Caring

Sunday, February 3, donations of food items and/or monetary donations will be received to benefit the Bond County Food Pantry. Ushers will be posted at each door to take your donations. Thank you for your generosity!

A NOTE OF



Church Family,

Thank you for all the support over the last 3.5 years. Though I wasn't always able to be present in the pews, I knew I was being prayed for and loved. By being such a welcoming family, you really made the college adjustment easier.

Thank you for the Worship, practice, study, and devotional space.

With peace,

Stefan Woods