# A Reflection on Our Stewardship and Plastics

At Second Baptist Church, we believe that all life is from God and that all life – human and other-than-human – is sacred. "For God so loved the cosmos," writes the author of the Gospel of John. God loves all life and calls human beings to love what God loves. As one unique expression of God's creation, human beings have a unique vocation: to be faithful stewards or care-takers of God's. Because we take this vocation to heart, the congregation of Second Baptist is moving to engage in practical ways to live out our sacred calling. One of those ways is to reduce our use of plastics.

Each year, eight million metric tons of plastic enter the oceans on top of the estimated 150 million metric tons that currently circulate in marine environments. Plastics have been found in more than 60% of all sea birds and in 100% of sea turtles who easily mistake plastic for food. At current rates in two decades or sooner, there will be more plastic, by weight, than fish in the oceans. Plastics in water break down into smaller and smaller particles called micro-plastics which are ingested by both animals and humans. 40% of all plastics, world-wide, are used only once before being thrown away. Not only are plastics found in the enormous "Garbage Patches" in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans but in streams and shorelines and scattered over the land around the world.

We have a very serious problem, one of our own making. But we can make a difference. The first and most important way is to become aware of all the ways plastics are used in nearly every aspect of modern life. From packaging food items bought in stores, to plastic bags used at grocery and other stores, to household containers we use every day, to the plastic cups, lids and straws we so often use – once – we are so dependent today on plastics. Becoming aware of this and beginning to see plastics "everywhere" in our lives, is the first step in reducing our use of plastics. Give up using straws. When you go to a restaurant, tell the server you don't want a straw with your drink. Take reusable bags to the grocery store – or any store where your purchase will require a bag. Don't use bottled water! (an issue that needs its own write up!) Carry your own bottle to refill with tap water.

There are two links below that offer very helpful information on ways you can learn more about this serious threat to the health of God's creation and ways to make a different in the ongoing world-wide effort to reduce the amount of plastic in the eco-systems of Earth.

As you work to become a more faithful steward of God's creation, know that you are not alone in your efforts. There are thousands of others working to actively "love what God loves." We welcome you to join with us – and we with you! – as you care for this precious, sacred planet.

https://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/ocean-plastic/

https://4ocean.com/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIpLPU-9uq4AIVl6DsCh2pZQykEAAYASAAEgKk4PD_BwE