

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Attached to this letter are a few photos that I took while visiting Houston, Minnesota. As I was driving down the street that runs parallel to Hwy 16, I saw a beautiful playground in the city park! It was so nice, that I stopped to take a few photos to pass along to you, and other people I know, who have children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Photos #1 and #2 show the section of the playground especially for younger children. It includes a tractor (made of plastic), swings, a teeter totter (made of plastic), a climbing structure with a slide (also made of plastic), and more. The entire area is fenced in for safety (See photo #2), and there are several benches for parents, grandparents, babysitters, children exhausted from playing, etc..., to sit on too.

Photo #3 shows the entrance to the playground. It is a red barn and silo.

Photo #4 is what I especially want to highlight for you, today. It is a sign on the silo that really caught my eye. The playground was made out of recycled plastic milk jugs--643,170 milk jugs! What a wonderful way to use something for a greater good! Had the milk jugs not been recycled, they would have been thrown away, taking up room in landfills or perhaps ending up in rivers, lakes and streams.

I imagine that most of us do a good job of putting our recycling in the blue bins for pickup, or dropping it off at our designated recycling location. But, perhaps some of you did not realize that recycled plastic can be used to create many different types of usable products. Now we all have a better idea of what recycling can do! This playground is an excellent example of what can happen when people work together to care for God's creation.

Beyond this, in Photo #2, you will see that each individual fence picket has the name of a donor who contributed to this community project. It was wonderful to think that all of these individuals, families, groups and organizations worked together to create something for children to enjoy.

As we think about our own recycling habits, let us be mindful of ways in which we can care for God's earth. Reducing, reusing and recycling are ways in which we can help cut down on green house gas emissions, reduce energy consumption, and help with climate change efforts. Doing these things also provides a way for us to be better stewards of God's creation. Thanks be to God!

Peace,

Pastor Cathy