

**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
1326 South 26 Street  
Omaha, NE 68105-2380

**Return Service Requested**  
**Dated Material**

**Email:** [graceluth@graceluth.com](mailto:graceluth@graceluth.com)  
**Web Site:** [www.graceluth.com](http://www.graceluth.com)

**REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS**

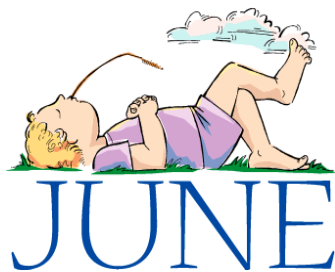
**9:00 A.M. Christian Education**

**10:30 A.M. Worship Service**

**Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker**  
**Editor/Church Secretary – Benhi !Khabebe**  
**Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr**  
**Organist - Lynda Laird**  
**Sexton - Brian Sutej**  
**Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill**

**Non-Profit Org.**  
**U.S. Postage**  
**PAID**  
**Omaha NE**  
**Permit No. 39**

**Inspired By Christ, it is our mission  
to share God's Word and Love in  
care and in service to all.**



2010

# **THE GRACE MESSENGER**

## 2010 Council Members

Greg Hula	Gloria Moore	Vicky Cox
Andrew Edwards	David Nange	Ernest Olson
Arlone Farber	Vicky Cox	Samantha Trejo
	Pastor Laaker	

Officers Serving the Congregation but not on Council:

Financial Secretary: Janet Hula Treasurer: Margie Sutej



The regular meeting of the Council was held on May 11. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: We pray for Sandy Fitzgerald, who is battling brain cancer; we pray for Mickey Andersen, who is struggling with health concerns; we pray for Amy Johnson as she struggles with an infection along with brain cancer; we pray for Kent Cattlett as he continues his treatments for lung cancer; we pray for Kevin Courtney, as he is receiving treatments for colon cancer; we pray for Barbara Nelson, as she recovers from her stroke; we pray for Jerry Goodrich, as he continues to heal from his stroke with mounting financial concerns because of his illness; we pray for the family of Chris Nielsen, as mourn her death; we pray for our Grace shut-ins; we pray for Gwen Grady as she has recently been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer; we pray for Dede Wirt, who has cancer tumors of the lung; we pray for the family of Rose Anne Rexroat, who passed away from cancer; we pray for Ole Olson, as he struggles with Parkinson's Disease; we pray for the people affected by the severe tornado's in Oklahoma; we pray for the "recovery" of the oil spill disaster as it has presented many hazardous problems; we pray for the people of Guatemala and surrounding Central American countries that have political instability and economic depression; and we pray for the new elected leaders of Britain as well as leaders of all countries.

Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker reading the selected verses of Isaiah 50:4 and Luke 8:10 from the "Daily Texts." These verses remind us to spread the news of Jesus. God gives us the strength to see that there is hope in the midst of difficulties.

Visions for Ministry: The Council had a conversation with Elyse Johnson, who works for OTOC. Elyse would like to have dialog with residents and leaders of South Omaha, as well as other community groups to discuss leadership and issues that are obstacles in so many lives. On Sunday, June 27, Grace will be hosting small group discussions for approximately one hour during our fellowship time after our regular church service. This is for our congregation and we would like to hear your concerns.

Reports were received from the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer. Please continue to give generously.

Christian Education: Faith Qwest will be wrapping up for the summer. Vacation Bible School will be June 21-25. Janet Hula is in charge and needs volunteers and donations. If you can help in anyway, contact Janet.

Evangelism/Outreach: The "Kids at Work" program, headed by Brenda Spahr, will have a "meet and greet" on Monday, May 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm, with a light dinner.

Finance: No new report.

Property: The stained glass work is completed.

Service/Social Ministry: Pastor Laaker and Pastor Webb from St. Luke's have completed an application for a "Lutheran Volunteer" position. This will be a timely process with hopes of filling the position by mid August.

Support/Stewardship: No new report.

Worship: No new report.

Unfinished Business: Pastor Laaker and David Hufford will be attending the Synod Assembly in Grand Island on June 4-5, along with two other individuals from the congregation.

New Business: None.

Announcements: Vicki Cox will bring treats and lead prayer for our June Council meeting. There will be a Prayer Service on Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at Grace.



I have shared with you in a variety of ways the ongoing discussion in which our leaders and I have been engaged. Our discussions over the past year have been centered on the way in which we welcome others in this shared ministry. One of the gaps that we have identified and struggle to solve is the lack of relationship with our Latino neighbors. We have prayed about the ways that God might lead us in new directions, new opportunities and new connections.

We asked questions of one another. We reflected on the questions and the provocative writing of Stephanie Spellers in *Radical Welcome*. What are the possibilities? How can we engage the community with the structure and staff we currently have? It became apparent that we would need to do something different if we wanted a different outcome. We would need to have someone that was capable of communication with our Latino neighbors beyond the formal greeting. How would this be possible? Where might we look?

You may recall that some time ago (more than a year) we were engaged in conversation with our sister congregational leaders at St. Luke and Cristo Rey. Those conversations stalled and so we wondered, as leaders, if anything might ever come of those efforts. God has surprised us with an offer of partnership in a specific ministry effort.

God's surprise was that St. Luke was also interested in connecting in a new way with its immediate community. Our exploration of possibilities led us to consider a Lutheran Volunteer placement. Neither one of us, Grace or St. Luke, felt we could cover the monthly stipend by ourselves but splitting the cost made the idea workable. So, in April, our leaders on the Council authorized me to sit down with Pr. Patti Webb at St. Luke and fill out the application for Lutheran Volunteer Corps.

Lutheran Service Corps, an affiliate of Lutheran Volunteer Corps, is a partner in a national volunteer service program. It is for people who want to work for social justice, live in an intentional community, engage simple and sustainable living, and explore spirituality. We were approached by Lutheran Service Corps inquiring if we would be interested in the placement of a volunteer for a year of service. (This is not the first time we have been asked.) There are some small monthly costs associated with a volunteer. Volunteers receive a stipend that covers their basic living expenses (food, rent, transportation, health insurance, and a small personal spending allowance). This translates into a monthly cost of approximately \$800, to be divided equally between the two congregations.

We have submitted our application for a volunteer to fill a position of "Community Outreach Associate." We have requested that the volunteer be bilingual with English/Spanish proficiency. The duties of this position will be: 1) Community Assessment and Relationship Building, 2) Work with existing education and service programs to connect Latino participants, 3) Seek to link the community and the congregation in becoming ministry partners.

We are hopeful that God has a person already chosen for this placement. We will be interviewing potential volunteers in June, if our application sparks the interest of one or more individuals. If we are blessed, a volunteer will be placed with this partnership in August. The first day of work for the new volunteer will be August 24. The placement is for one year.

I would ask that you join me and your elected leaders in praying that God will connect us to the right person for whom this ministry effort is a match. I invite your continued generous support of our shared ministry with your regular gifts. I am hopeful that God will work God's amazing grace on this ministry effort.

*Pastor Laaker*



Virginia McGill,  
Director (402) 660-6689  
Gema Wolde, Assistant  
(402) 616-4721  
Se habla español .

### Interfaith Health Service Receives Micro-Business Small Grant

At Interfaith Health Service, we are pleased to share that we were awarded a small grant from the Omaha Community Foundation this month! Thanks to a generous donation of 12 designer wedding dresses from Jane, a Vice President at Wells Fargo bank, Interfaith's Latinas in Action participants were able re-bead and repair the dresses and have them available for women in the South Omaha community seeking affordable wedding dresses. Thus far, four of our re-worked dresses have been sold or donated to local women.

The Omaha Community Foundation grant will help us take this project to the next level. In the months ahead, we will be soliciting donations of clean, gently used wedding and bridesmaid or prom dresses (that can be used for quincenera celebrations). Our participants, together with congregation members from St. Francis Church, one of our many partners, will alter the dresses or rework them to recycle in the community. This will be a great opportunity for our group members to learn more about running a micro-business and will also fill a need within the community. I hope to post a few photos to our website as the project expands. (Who am I kidding, I am not technically advanced, I am hoping Pastor Laaker will post the photos!)

Thanks for your prayers and support during our grant writing season. I am grateful that we are blessed to begin a new venture with our participants.

Virginia McGill

Interfaith Health Service

Dear Neighbors, Families and Friends:

Join everyone at BAOBAB BLAST!

Please mark your calendar for June 21<sup>st</sup>  
through June  
25<sup>th</sup>. God's Great Get-together won't be the same  
without YOU! Vacation Bible School is coming to  
Grace Lutheran Church.



All kids ages 4 through grade 6 are welcome. Older kids can join in the fun too, as assistant leaders.

Naturally, adult leaders and helpers are always welcome.

## **TRUST LOVE FOLLOW CARE SHARE**

The great baobab tree in the expansive African savannah is the setting for this year's VBS. This exciting get-together has something for everyone in the community to LOVE. Kids will be creating, running, jumping and FOLLOWing with action-packed games; singing amazing new songs; and SHARE-ing the good news with everyone they meet.

TRUST us, this is the VBS you don't want to miss! It's all about being a part of a community, CARE-ing for others, learning about the Bible, and having fun, of course!

Sign up today! Registration forms are available at the church on the Baobab Blast table in the upper fellowship hall. Take an extra form and bring a friend.

For more information, contact the church office at 341-7730.

In Christ,  
Janet Hula  
Baobab Blast Director



## Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends



- ♦ Andrew Edwards - Doing dialysis a couple times a week until a kidney can be found. (member)
- ♦ Mae Lane - Ongoing health issues. (member)
- ♦ Grace Traynor - Ongoing health issues. (daughter of Norma Olson)
- ♦ Ken Hilmer - As he struggles with health issues. (member)
- ♦ La Vonne Moss -Ongoing health issues. (member)
- ♦ Fern Matson - Ongoing health issues. (member)
- ♦ Kristine (Nelson) Mauler- Treatment for her cancer. (daughter of Barbara Nelson))
- ♦ Wendy Henexson- Ongoing recovery from receiving a transplant. (daughter of Pastor Liz Conner)
- ♦ Lado family - as they grieve the past of their father and husband.
- ♦ Dennis Olson - as he recovers from surgery. (brother of Don Olson)
- ♦ Barbara Nelson - as she recovers from a stroke. (member)

### **Pray for our Shut - ins and Nursing Home residents:**

Mae Lane - St Joe Villa.

Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn.

Thelma Harrahill - (In Kansas with her children)

### **Pray for wisdom for your Church Council here at Grace Church.**

Pray for the Council Members. Ask God to bless their ministry among us.

Pray for strength and spiritual wisdom for the leaders in the local church and the Nebraska Synod:

Pastor Laaker

Bishop David deFreese, Nebraska Synod

Bishop Mark Hanson, ELCA Bishop, United States

- ♦ Pray for the Sudanese community in general. Titus Duli, David Nange and Charles Tuw are the elders for the Sudanese Worshiping Community.

Let's encourage each other as we see God's hand in answering our prayers.



Next Prayer Service  
Wednesday June 16, 2010  
7:00 p.m.  
Candle light Prayer Service for Confession,  
Meditation, and Healing  
at Grace Lutheran Church.

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Let's Build Something!  
Neighbors South Coalition  
Habitat For Humanity House  
2100 Poppleton Street



Beginning on June 18th, Grace Lutheran Church will participate in the Neighbors South Coalition once again to build a home for a well-deserving family.

Volunteers are needed to help in all areas of construction, food preparation and service, and cleanup most Fridays and Saturdays during the summer. The goal is to complete the home in late August.

Whether you are a skilled construction worker, a handy man type or just willing to learn, there is a job for you. On site volunteer coordinators are also needed to over see check-in, lunch and snack set up, cleanup or just being a "go fer." A schedule of construction goals by date is posted on the bulletin board.

If you are interested in being a part of this wonderful and satisfying project, forms are available through the church office or at the back table in the sanctuary. Contact Pastor Laaker with questions.



## The Summer Issue of Davey and Goliath's Devotions Magazine is here!

These fun-filled activity books are available at the table in back of the sanctuary. These are free to the first 10 families!

Each week has four pages of fun-filled Bible based activities. Set aside 10 minutes at the beginning of the week to read the Bible story and say the prayer on the first page. Some weeks that may be all you can do! If you have more time, try the rest of the faith-filled activities during the week.

Page 1 - Everything starts with a Bible story retelling, a prayer and questions from Goliath.

Page 3 - Sharing 24-7 is full of ideas for sharing faith with others.

Page 2 - Bring the story to life with a Bible Activity and puzzles, games and mazes.

Page 4 - Everybody Praising and Blessings on the Go offer prayers and blessings for families on the go!

[www.augsburgfortress.org](http://www.augsburgfortress.org)

# News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church



Congratulations to the following Grads!  
Joshua Graig Adams( KAW -Alum)  
Jazmyn Rose Burbine  
BreAnna Marie LaMere (KAW- Alum)  
Keni Mceck  
Dillon R Mendoza (KAW- Alum)  
Camell Rusa Stewart  
Samantha Trejo

## Happening in the Grace Lutheran Library!

### New in the Library

15 new books have been added to our library shelves thanks to our success in fund raising during our Lent book sale.

Most of the titles are located in the young adult fiction section of the church library. Eight titles have been added to the adult fiction center.

The church library is filled with great books! Everyone is invited to participate in the summer reading club!

*The congregation council met with Elyse Johnson, a project organizer with Omaha Together One Community, OTOC. We are working toward a fall house meeting project in our neighborhood. In order to help us know what this would be like, we will be hosting a house meeting for our congregation on Sunday, June 27th with OTOC following the worship service. This gathering will allow our congregation to openly discuss issues that are affecting our parish, our neighborhood, and our community. All are welcome and encouraged to participate.*

*The format is to meet right after worship in the fellowship hall. We will break into small groups of approximately 10 persons. Please plan to stay and participate. We will be done in one hour.*

## First Annual Omaha Charity Jam Session Banding Together to Benefit ONE WORLD OMAHA

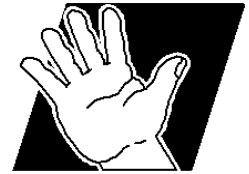
Every Baby Matters on Sunday ,June 13, at 5:00 p.m at Arthur's 4 Seasons Lounge 1147 Davenport. For more info please call 402)345 5423 or e-mail westministeromaha@msn.com





# **“Helping Hands”**

*Hope for the hungry and hopeless.*



## **Project Hope**

The Theme for June is

Personal Care Items such as Shampoo, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste.

Project Hope always needs boxes of zip lock bags in quart or gallon size, soup, peanut butter, macaroni, rice, diapers, bathroom tissue & feminine, hygiene items.



## **Start Collecting School Supplies Now**

Each July and August, Project Hope and First Lutheran Church help needy children get a good start on the school year by providing backpacks and school supplies.

As you shop this summer, consider purchasing some school supplies to help with the enormous demand. Place your donations on the pantry shelf in the Upper Hall.

**Thanks for your help!**



## **WORLD REFUGEE DAY**

**Saturday, June 19, 2010**

**10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Benson High School**

**5120 Maple Street**

**Omaha, Nebraska**

Our community of Omaha is the home to thousands of refugees from all over the world. The Refugee Task Force of Omaha is planning the 2010 celebration of World Refugee Day. This day has been set aside to educate the community about our newest neighbors and the contributions they bring to Omaha.

The day will include an educational program on refugee issues, musical and dance performances by the different refugee groups, lunch, vendors with hand-made items, job fair, medical screenings, fashion show, awards ceremony, children's carnival and sporting events such as volleyball and soccer. Last year, over 500 individuals took part in the World Refugee Day event. This year the Planning Committee is anticipating 1,000 participants.

Volunteers will be needed to provide support at the various events through out the day. To obtain more information or to volunteer at World Refugee Day, please contact Susan Mayberger at 402-557-2431.

## Vacation Bible School Registration

One form per student please.

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Last grade completed \_\_\_\_\_

Known allergies or medical concerns \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number(s) to reach parent during VBS

\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact other than above

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Health care telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Brothers and Sisters (names and ages)

\_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

### For office use only:

VBS 2010 attendance record

Group \_\_\_\_\_ Leader \_\_\_\_\_ - -

Days attended      M      T      W      TH      F

## God's Great Get-Together!

Join us for

**Vacation Bible School**

**June 21 – 25, 2010 ♦ 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm**

Grace Lutheran Church

1326 So. 26 St. Omaha NE 68105

402-341-7730

Ages 4 years through 6<sup>th</sup> grade

All ages are welcome! Come as a family!

Preschool children should be accompanied by an adult.

If possible, please drop off the completed registration form to the church office *before* our VBS event.

Otherwise, bring it with you on June 21<sup>st</sup>.



# Kids At Work 2010



The Kids At Work Welcome Dinner was held on Monday, May 24, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. The dinner gave an opportunity for both the Grace Lutheran Church Council and the youth and their families who have signed up to participate in the program this summer to dine and visit with one another.



From left to right; Pam, Gary, Brianna and Bradley enjoying a family night out during the Kids At Work Dinner.



Andrea, Sonia, Sharif, Telly and Danaka all re-connecting with one another for the summer work program!



Estrella, Brisa, Gabriel and Victor enjoyed visiting with Council members and with Janet!

If you have a project idea that you think the Kids At Work could do for the church or for someone in the area, give me a call at church, 341-7730 or at home, 551-4347.

# Community News

**Neighborhood Association  
Membership dues  
\$5.00 a year per household!**

Send your money to  
CPNA care of Grace Lutheran Church  
1326 S 26 Street  
Omaha, NE 68105  
Call 341-7730 for more information.

Columbus Park



**Next Meeting: June 17, 7:00 p.m.  
at Grace Lutheran Church**

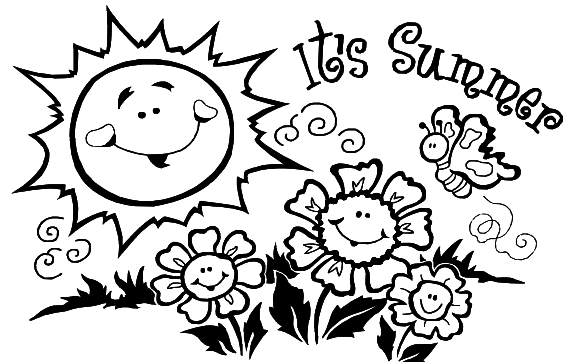


**Need Some Help with Your Life?**

**Free Counseling is available  
through the Community Counseling Program**

Victor Schuerman, CMSW, LMHP is available to offer confidential counseling to everyone regardless of their ability to pay. His office is at St Luke's Lutheran Church, 2315 I Street. His hours at St. Luke are Tuesdays and Thursdays for 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Call 733-0172 to set up an appointment.

**What's Happening at  
Grace Lutheran Church  
this Summer?**

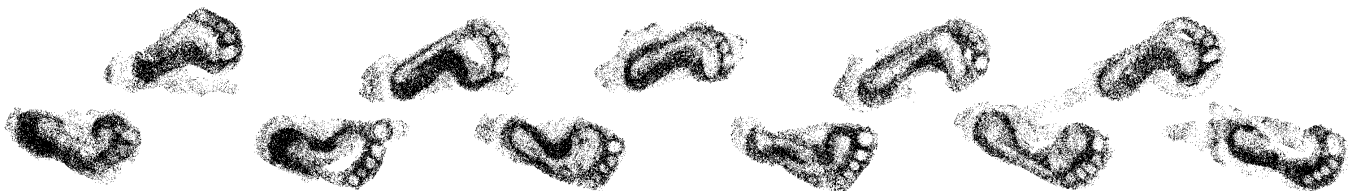


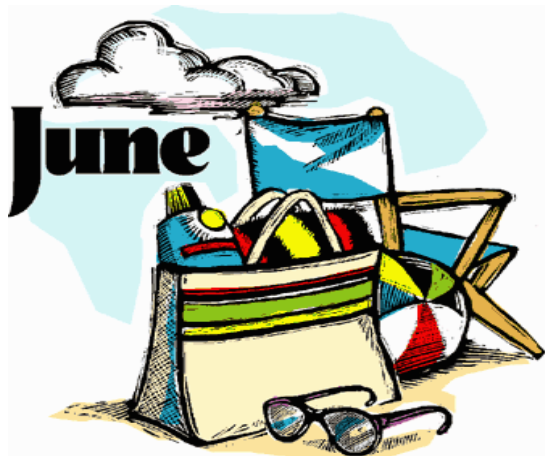
- ☺ Kids At Work Kick Off on Sunday June 6th. The Program completes on August 8, 2010
- ☺ Vacation Bible School June 21 - 25. More details in this newsletter.
- ☺ 6th Annual Grace Lutheran Summer Reading Club begins in June.
- ☺ All Church Potluck Picnic in August. Details to be announced.
- ☺ Opportunity to work on the Neighbors South Habitat for Humanity House. Details in this newsletter

*These Programs  
Will Resume in the Fall.*

**Have a great Summer!**

- ☼ Women of the ELCA Board and Circle Meetings.
- ☼ Quilting for Lutheran World Relief.
- ☼ Afterschool Program for Neighborhood youth.





## June Trivia

- Probably named for the Roman Goddess Juno, patroness of women, marriage and the home.
- Has 30 Days.
- Birthstone - Pearl or Moonstone.  
(Meaning - Wisdom and Faithfulness)
- Flower - Rose or Honeysuckle.  
(Meaning - Love)

### Top Ten Things You'll Never Hear a Dad Say

10. Well, how 'bout that?... I'm lost! Looks like we'll have to stop and ask for directions.

9. You know Pumpkin, now that you're thirteen, you'll be ready for unchaperoned car dates. Won't that be fun?

8. I noticed that all your friends have a certain "up yours" attitude ... I like that.

7. Here's a credit card and the keys to my new car -- GO CRAZY.

6. What do you mean you wanna play football? Figure skating not good enough for you, son?

5. Your Mother and I are going away for the weekend ... you might want to consider throwing a party.

4. Well, I don't know what's wrong with your car. Probably one of those doo-hickey thingies -- you know -- that makes it run or something. Just have it towed to a mechanic and pay whatever he asks.

3. No son of mine is going to live under this roof without an earring -- now quit your belly-aching, and let's go to the mall.

2. Whaddya wanna go and get a job for? I make plenty of money for you to spend.

1. Father's Day? ahhh -- don't worry about that -- it's no big deal.

[www.aha.com](http://www.aha.com)

### Special Days in June at Grace Lutheran Church

Be sure to greet our Kids At Work Kids and their families who will be worshipping with us every Sunday through August 8th.

**Every Tuesday and Wednesday  
beginning June 8th 10:00 - Noon**  
Kids at Work Program.

- 1 - VBS Planning Meeting.
- 6 - Kids At Work Kids and Families in Worship.
- 6 Church Library Summer Reading Contest begins.
- 8 - Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.
- 16- Prayer Service 7:00 p.m.
- 18- Habitat House Build Begins
- 20 - Happy Fathers Day!
- 20 - World Refugee Day
- 21-25 - VBS Baobab Blast
- 27 - OTOC House Meeting



## Matthew, Chapter 9

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W	C	O	M	U	T	E	V	R	S	U	S	E	J	I
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asleep

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awe

blaspheme

bleeding

blind

boat

booth

bridegroom

crossed

dinner

disciples

doctor

edge

entertain

evil

fast

few

flute

forgiven

garment

good

harassed

helpless

home

Jesus

knelt

law

mat

mercy

mute

news

old

paralytic

patch

plentiful

preserved

region

ruined

sacrifice

sew

sick

sins

skin

son

talk

tax

town

two

walk

wineskin

yes

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