

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Omaha, NE 68105-2380

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REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS

9:00 A.M. Christian Education

10:30 A.M. Worship Service

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker

Vicar/Intern—Angela Khabeb

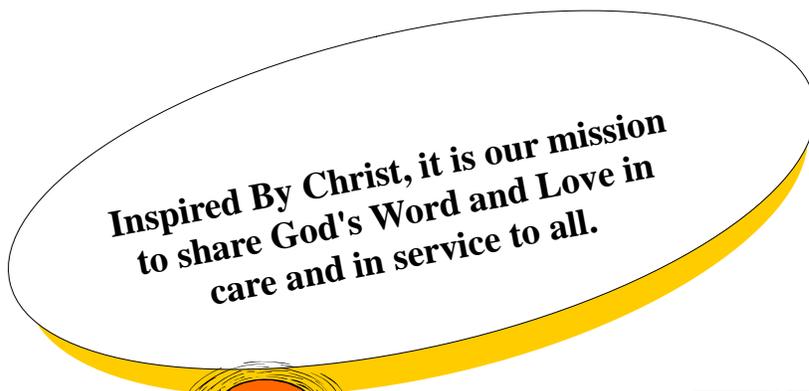
Editor/Church Secretary – Benhi Khabeb

Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr

Organist - Lynda Laird

Sexton - Brian Sutej

Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill



August
2010

THE
GRACE
MESSENGER



2010 Council Members

Greg Hula Gloria Moore Vicky Cox
Andrew Edwards David Nange Ernest Olson
Arlone Farber Vicki 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 July 13. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: We pray for Gloria Moore's daughter, Sandy Fitzgerald, who is dealing with brain cancer; Gloria's daughter and fellow Grace member, Mickey Andersen, who is struggling with health concerns; we pray for Amy Johnson, Gloria's niece, as she is battling an infection along with her brain cancer; we pray for Arlone Farber's friend, Kent Cattlett, as he continues his fight with lung cancer and brain lesions; we pray for Arlone's brother, Kevin Courtney, as he receives treatments for colon cancer; we pray for our fellow Council member, Carolyn Matson, as she is presently hospitalized and will be having some tests done; we pray for Carolyn Matson's niece, Brooke Anderson, as she is struggling with health concerns; we rejoice in much happiness for Angela and Benhi as they welcome their new baby boy; we pray for friends of Vicki Cox, the Walsworth family, in the loss of their son; we pray for Vicki Cox's daughter-in-law, Kelly Wilson Cox, as her grandmother passed away; we pray for Barbara Whitney, friend of Gloria Moore, as she battles cancer; we pray for the Phillips family of Oregon, as Mrs. Phillips was LaVonne Moss's (member) sister and aunt to Janet and Greg Hula, has passed away; we pray for friend of Greg Hula's, Kristine Mobley, who has an enlarged heart; we pray for spiritual and physical healing for Chris Black, cousin of Ernie Olson, as he recovers from Bell's Palsy; we pray in hope that the oil cap will work the way it should and stop the harmful flow that has caused so much damage to the environment; we pray for the Blair, Nebraska area, which has "lost" Dana College, and hope that the leaders and students will have a peaceful transition; and we pray for the unrest in Uganda as well as all unrest areas of the world, praying for the safety of all and hoping that the leaders of these places are making decisions for the "good."

Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker reading the selected verses of Psalm 65:11 and Acts 14:17 from the "Daily Texts." These verses remind us that we have a Gracious God, who provides abundance for all of God's creation.

Visions for Ministry: The Council continued their conversation around "Radical Welcome." Reflections were shared about the OTOC House Meeting held on June 27.

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

Christian Education: The council expressed its sincere thanks to Janet Hula for the excellent coordination of Vacation Bible School.

Evangelism/Outreach: A mid-program report showed twenty two young people participating in Kids At Work. A special Celebration Picnic will be held on Sunday, August 8, following worship.

Finance: The Lutheran Volunteer position has been filled. This position will be shared with St. Luke's and finances will be shared accordingly.

Property: The rainstorms have caused some leaks. Work to secure those leaks is underway. The fire alarm panel has been serviced.

Service/Social Ministry: The Neighbors South Habitat Coalition build is well underway.

Support/Stewardship: The fall stewardship drive material will be entitled, "Faithful Stewards of God's Infinite Grace." We will continue to use the monthly materials prepared by Effective Stewardship.

Worship: No new report.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: None.

Announcements: Ernie Olson will bring treats and lead prayer for our July Council meeting. Pastor Laaker will be taking a few days of vacation in August.



Each month I am faced with the same dilemma. What shall I reflect on this time? There are many issues worthy of reflection. Which should I choose? I wish I had a clear, precise means of making that choice but I don't.

I continue to struggle with decisions that have been made in our communities and states that claim to address issues of immigration reform. I am having a hard time seeing the actions taken by our communities and states as reform. Reform suggests to me that changes are being made to improve the circumstances and issues' surrounding whatever is in need of reform.

Clearly, our broken immigration system is in need of reform. We have two signs on our borders. "No Trespassing" and "Help Wanted." Our current system provides for 5,000 visas per year for unskilled workers. However, we have the need for 150,000 unskilled workers.

Something needs to be reformed in this mixed message.

If you are a US citizen and wish to have a family member (spouse, unmarried child under 21 or a parent) allowed to join you in this country, you have a morass of legal work and a seven year wait. I can't imagine the toll this takes on an individual let alone the composite stress on a family. Reform is clearly needed.

If you have overstayed your visa and are subject to deportation and are deported, you cannot apply to return for ten years, no exceptions. How does that work for mothers separated from children, for example? Reform is clearly needed. A fix is needed so that we do not continue to break people.

Our Hebrew and Christian scriptures clearly indicate that "all are made in the image of God." If my brother or sister, with a different skin color, is made in the image of God, how should I be treating them? How should I be talking about them? The language that has become the basis of discussion is language that seems to demean or even demonize the other. How is this honoring of God's creation? Reform is clearly needed.

I am not suggesting that we simply turn a blind eye toward this issue but there are some things that I believe ought to be at the basis of our efforts toward reform. Jesus was always trying to shape the inclinations of the people's heart. How might we be involved in shaping the inclinations of people's hearts in this matter?

Last month I suggested some principles that make sense to me:

- A call for enforcement initiatives that is consistent with humanitarian values.

- Advocating for reform in our family-based immigration system that reduces waiting times for separated families.

- The establishment of a process for all immigrant workers and their families already in the US to earn citizenship upon satisfaction of specific criteria.

- Expansion of the legal avenues for workers and families to enter the country and work in a safe and legal manner with their rights and due process fully protected.

- A call for solutions to address the root causes of migration, such as economic disparities between sending and receiving nations.

Paul says in Philippians 4:6, "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God." I pray that the anxiety and fear that is felt within our communities and country might give way to reasoned thinking and a reshaping of our hearts in order that our laws are in keeping with our moral and ethical values.

I also pray that we will advocate for these types of principles and that we will use language that respects the dignity and image of all in the sight of God.

Pastor Laaker



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

Many of Interfaith's Latinas in Action participants, staff and entire families made the trek to Tekamah to take part in a very special celebration last month for Tsehaynesh, Gema's oldest daughter. It was such a lovely celebration, and by all accounts, one that will be remembered for a very long time. Rather than trying to capture it in my words, I asked Tsehaynesh, the guest of honor herself, to summarize just a few of the day's highlights.

At Interfaith, we look forward to marking many more milestones with our participants and families in the months ahead and we are truly blessed to celebrate these important events together.

Virginia McGill, IHS

Mi Quinceanera

Turning 15 in the United States isn't as big of deal as it is in Latin America. Here you have a party with a couple of friends and eat cake. But in Latin America you get a Quinceañera! You get the beautiful dress, touching ceremony, delicious food, the waltz, friends and family from all over and of course the big party.

My Quinceañera wasn't like most of the traditional parties. One of my relatives asked me, "is it going to be just a regular Quinceañera or is it going to be unique?" and, of course, I answered "unique" and it was! I had three different nationalities of people at my party, American, Latino-American, and Ethiopian. We added delicious food from all three nationalities. We also danced to three languages of music! Some of the ladies from the Latinas en Accion helped my family and friends learn how to dance to the Shakira song, "Waka waka".

I also chose to have games at my party: water games! Everyone got wet, except the ones who ran away from people with sponges and buckets! It was so much fun and everything turned out perfect. Except the humidity that day. Well at least it wasn't raining!

Tsehaynesh C Wolde

Kids At Work 2010



Kids At Work youth accomplished several job tasks in the month of July:

Kountze Community Garden: Working in the garden on Tuesdays provides great assistance to Kountze. The workers help pull weeds, pick produce and help with litter control in the area. The fresh produce is then taken to Kountze where it is processed for distribution on Wednesdays as part of their food pantry.

Cristo Rey: The youth stock the food pantry, clean the sanctuary and any rooms needed, the youth have helped Pastor Liz Conner in her flower garden with weed patrol. The youth also provided additional help with bringing in items from a shed into the basement for a Rummage Sale that was held on Saturday, July 10, 2010.

Lutheran Home: The youth interact with residents, such as passing out magazines, watering plants in residents rooms as well as outdoor plants, filling bird feeders, folding laundry, decorating placemats for the 4th of July and painting finger nails!

Precious Memories: The youth help with the younger kids whether providing a special friend for the morning, playing, coloring or reading with a group of kids, putting away donated food supplies and helping with lunch time meal preparations.

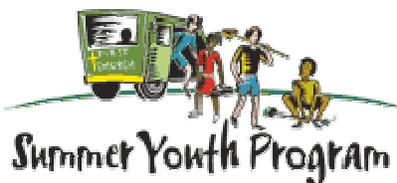
Salvation Army: A one-time special project this summer is assisting the Salvation Army with packing book bags to be passed out to youth in need of back to school supply assistance. This special project will be held during the week of July 26th.

Grace Lutheran: The youth will be helping out with special projects such as Newsletter Assembly, and continuing in discovering little corners in the building that need special attention.

A new job discovery for July included learning about a different machine that could split wood into smaller pieces making it easier to stack wood. This job was enjoyable not only for the youth but the adults involved with this project.

The youth have continued their favorite job task, which is to pick up litter in the neighborhood, always hoping to find money like that lucky first day!

*Brenda Spahr
Kids At Work, Director*



Check out the bulletin board in the fellowship hall with pictures of recent activities with the Kids At Work Summer Program.



Stewardship Minute

*Monthly reflections on our role
as managers of God's blessing.*

When he was president of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Gordon MacDonald said, "One of the greatest teachings missing in the American church today is the reminder to men and women that nothing we have belongs to us."

We own nothing. We have been given material means to use, not to own. All that we have belongs to God. He is our Source according to Psalm 62:5. We are only managers and stewards of what He has entrusted to us.

Because all that we have belongs to God, and because He gives us the ability to obtain wealth, every spending decision is in reality a spiritual decision. According to 1 Corinthians 10:31, our constant goal must be to glorify God in all of life, including how we use His resources.

Stephen Olford wrote this: "...man's chief end is 'to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.' We are to glorify God by our worshipful praise (Psalm 50:23). We are to glorify Him by our consistent fruitbearing (John 15:8). We are to glorify Him by our spiritual unity (Rom 15:6). We are to glorify Him by our entire dedication (1Cor 6:20). And we are to glorify Him by our good works (Matt 5:16). In this last category is included the matter of giving. Only in this way can we provide for 'honest things in the sight of the Lord.' The glory of God should motivate us to give and to give our best."

If our goals and ambitions are truly set on spiritual things, if our emphasis in life is to glorify God, we will use the funds He has "loaned" to us on a temporary basis to glorify Him. We will put His money and possessions to good use by giving to His work and by storing up "treasures in heaven" (Matt. 6:19-21)

There are two key questions to be asked concerning money and possessions: First, are you glorifying God in how you are using the money and possessions He has entrusted to you? And, second, are you viewing these things as yours or as His?

"Effective Stewardship" by Kenneth L. Williams.

August 2010 Stewardship Principle

Empowered by God — Responding by Grace

"Now as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you — so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking" (2 Cor. 8:7).

Each month a new Stewardship Principle and Bible verse will be printed in the church bulletin. Try memorizing the stewardship verse each month. Cut out the principle and put it on your fridge or mirror so that you can meditate on it each day as you go about your daily routine.



News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church

*Got an item to share?
Let the church office know about it!*

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who extended birthday and sympathy cards. A special thanks to the family here at Grace Church. God Bless you!

LaVonne Moss

Welcome Back

Fall Start-Up
W/ELCA Board/Circle Meeting
September 14, 2010

1:00 p.m.
Hostess and Bible Study Leader:
LaVonne Moss



*Women of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*



Welcome Back!

Quilting will resume
on Monday,
September 7th
9:00 a.m.
*Coffee and Jokes at
10:00 a.m.*



Save the Date!
Sunday, August 08

Worship at 10:30 a.m.
Last Sunday of Kids at Work

Attendance, Participation and Super Saver Awards given

All Church Picnic at 12:00 p.m.

The church will provide hot dogs, hamburgers, drinks and the paper products.

Please bring salads, chips and desserts to complete the meal.

If you are willing to provide buns or condiments, a sign up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board.



Ask and it will be given you...

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 Don & Norma Olson)
- ◆ Ken Hilmer - As he struggles with health issues. (member)
- ◆ La Vonne Moss -Ongoing health issues. (member)
- ◆ Ferne 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)
- ◆ Dennis Olson - as he recovers from surgery. (brother of Don Olson)
- ◆ Barbara Nelson - as she recovers from a stroke. (member)
- ◆ Barbara Narducci - as she continues her physical therapy. (member)
- ◆ Martina Botho - As she recovers from burns and skin grafting surgery.(member)
- ◆ Carolyn Matson - Ongoing health issues. 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)

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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 Worshipping Community.

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



"Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service

Pantry Needs

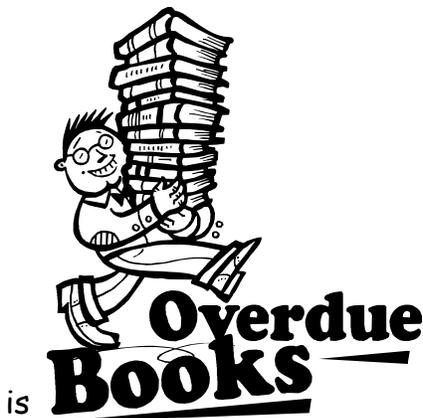
Project Hope
4205 Boyd St
Omaha, NE 68111

Project Hope
The Theme for August is
Personal Care Items

Shampoo, Deodorant, Tooth Paste, Toothbrushes, Hand Soap and Body Wash, Brushes, Combs, Nail Clippers, Hand Lotion, etc.

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

Place your donations on the pantry shelf in the Upper Fellowship Hall at the church.



Please...

Please...

Pretty Please!

If you have an overdue library book,
Won't you bring it back so that
others may enjoy it?

If you aren't sure if you have a book out that the librarian
waiting for , check with Eva Martin. Thanks!



Back to School

Please gather items for the backpacks First Lutheran will be giving. They are asking for backpacks, notebooks, pens, crayons, folders, colored pencils, washable markers, glue, glue sticks, rulers, pencil boxes, and one subject spiral notebooks.



You can bring these items to Grace Lutheran Church whenever you catch a good bargain !

First Lutheran Church

542 South 31 Street

Annual Back to School Carnival

Saturday, August 7 from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Free games, free food and, while supplies last, free backpacks and school supplies.



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

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.

Restore Collection Day for the Neighbors South Habitat Coalition Hanscom Park United Methodist Church at 4444 Frances Street, Omaha has offered to use their parking lot for a collection day.

August 14th from 9.am until 1p.m.

Spread the word you may drop off good quality used building materials and help Neighbors South Coalition secure a building grant for its build at 2100 Poppleton Ave.



Habitat for Humanity of Omaha Friends
Presents
Second Annual Micro Brew Ha Ha

Bring your friends to sample delicious beer and food from local microbreweries and restaurants.

Thursday, September 09 2010

5:00 - 9:00 pm at

Lewis and Clark Landing
on the Riverfront

\$30.00 in advance per person
(\$35.00 day of event)

All proceeds to benefit Habitat for Humanity

For more information or ticket information contact Kathy Wells at
kwells@habitatomaha.org

Must be 21 year of age or older to participate.

Community News



Marriage or
Family Problems?
Depressed?
Unable to Cope with life?

Free Counseling is Available.

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.

Columbus Park Neighborhood Association

*Next Meeting
August 21, 2010
7:00 p.m.
Here at Grace Church.*



Prayer Meeting

3rd Wednesday Night of Each month
Next Prayer Service
August 18, 2010
7:00 p.m.



Candle light Prayer Service for Confession,
Meditation, and Healing
at Grace Lutheran Church.



DISASTER DRILL VOLUNTEERS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED!!!

Offutt Air Force Base is having a disaster Exercise on August 14. Therefore they are seeking volunteers to play victims and family members of victims. To register please go to <http://volunteersolution.org/omaha>, the deadline is August 05, 2010 or call 402 522 7933..



Welcome Anna Ernst

Anna is a Lutheran Volunteer Corps Volunteer. She has been placed with Grace and St. Lukes Churches as our Community Outreach Associate. She will be working half time with each church from mid-August 2010 through July of 2011.

Anna brings a passion for Direct Service work and Community Organizing.

We are excited to welcome Anna to our ministry outreach. She will begin work the week of August 22nd.



Help LWR Fill the **WELL**

More than one in six people around the world lack access to safe drinking water. In the US, many of us are fortunate to have it only a faucet away. This week, let's all bundle our impact and focus on our awesome gift of clean, local water sources. Join us in committing to drinking only tap water for the rest of the week. No bottles off the grocery store shelf, just grab your own refillable water bottle!

Some facts about freshwater:

How the world uses freshwater:

- about 70 percent for irrigation
- about 22 percent for industry
- about 8 percent for domestic use

2. The average distance walked by women in Africa in search of water is 3.7 miles per day

3. The daily drinking water requirement per person is 2-4 litres, but it takes 2,000 to 5,000 litres of water to produce one person's daily food.

4. Freshwater lakes and rivers contain an estimated 105,000 km³ or around 0.3 percent of the world's freshwater.

5. The total usable freshwater supply for ecosystems and humans is about 200,000 km³ of water - less than 1 percent of all freshwater resources.

#1,3,4 & 5 can be found at <http://www.unwater.org/statistics.html>

#2 can be found at www.fao.org and is highlighted in our Hunger Playbook

A jar sits at the back of the worship space. You can deposit your coins or cash in the jar and Help LWR Fill the Well.



August Trivia

- ☼ has 31 days
- ☼ 8th month of the year.
- ☼ Named in honor of Augustus, known as Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, one of the most important Roman Emperors. (Octavian)
- ☼ Flower - gladiolus or poppy.
- ☼ Birthstone - peridot, sardonyx, or sapphire.

You Might be a Lousy Cook If...

Your family automatically heads for the table every time they hear a fire alarm.

Anyone has ever broken a tooth eating your homemade yogurt.

Your kids know what "peas porridge in a pot nine days old" tastes like.

Your son goes outside to make mud pies, and the rest of the family grabs forks and follows him.

Your kids' favorite drink is Alka-Seltzer.

You have to buy 25 pounds of dog food twice a week for your toy poodle.

Your kids got even with the neighborhood bully by inviting him over for dinner.

Your husband refers to the smoke detector as the oven timer.

No matter what you do to it, the gravy still turns bright purple.



<http://www.gcfl.net/>



Little Known Laws

(These are real laws. Some are off the books. Most are not enforced.)

Nebraska Laws:

- ◆ In Omaha, Nebraska, more than one person cannot use the same finger bowl.
- ◆ In Nebraska, it is illegal for a woman to wave her daughter's hair without a state license.
- ◆ There must be a hitching post in front of every home in Omaha, Nebraska.
- ◆ In Nebraska, public sneezing is prohibited by law.

Other States:

- ◆ A Louisiana law upholds your right to grow as tall as you like.
- ◆ In Wyoming, it is illegal to take a picture of a rabbit during January, February, March or April...unless you have a license.
- ◆ According to a health ordinance in Riverdale, California, kissing on the lips is against the law unless both parties first wipe their lips with carbolized rose water.

"You Can't Eat Peanuts in Church and other Little-Known Laws, Barbara Seuling, Random House 1975

Luke, Chapter 13, Puzzle 1

WORD LIST

away	Jerusalem
bent	kill
chicks	last
crippled	narrow
cut	pleading
delighted	praised
desolate	Sabbath
died	saved
dig	seed
door	six
dough	soil
eighteen	stall
evildoer	tell
feast	told
fell	tomorrow
few	water
fig	weep
flour	west
fox	wings
free	year
goal	
hen	
humiliated	
hypocrite	

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h w v c a i x i s v d q q o i
f o x u w e g o r l e j v f o
a r r e c r i p p l e d i v g
k d e v i l d o e r s g n i w
e p w e h r c i u y a j o e h
v r e t a l o s e d v e s i h
h u m i l i a t e d e t y x v
r o o d l l p l e a d i n g r
g l l l e t i r c o p y h e l
f f z m f g d k i n p g t l b
n e e t h g i e a g u a a u p
k w a t o m o r r o w t b n c
a d e s i a r p d a s d b p n
v d j a t o l d y l n p a h f
c u q l w k a c h i c k s l n
    
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Whaaaat?



An elderly gent realized he needed to purchase a hearing aid, but he felt unwilling to spend much money.

"How much do they cost?" he asked the salesperson.

"That depends," he said. "They run from \$2.00 to \$2,000."

"Let's see the \$2.00 model," said the miserly man.

The salesperson put the device around his neck. "You just stick this button in your ear and run this little string down to your pocket," he instructed.

"How does it work?" asked the man.

"For \$2.00, it doesn't work," the salesperson replied. "But when people see it on you, they'll talk louder!"

