

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

402-341-7730

Email: graceluth@graceluth.com

Web Site: www.graceluth.com

Like us on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/gracelutheranomaha

REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS

9:30 a.m. Christian Education

11:00 a.m. Worship Service

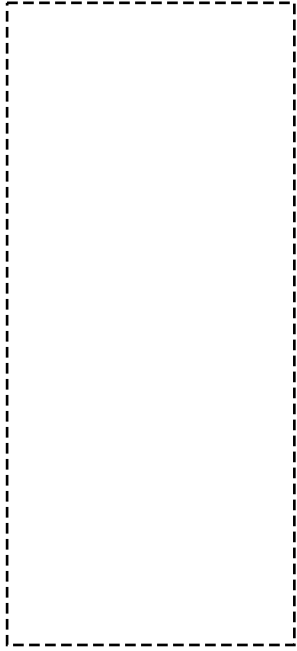
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey
Sexton - Alma Lopez

Delivered to the Post Office July 24



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THE GRACE MESSENGER

1889 - 2018



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



2018 Council Members

Donna Adrian	Vicki Cox	Andrew Edwards
Tom Emery	Arlone Farber	Greg Hula
Marsha Moyer	Terry Nielsen	Brenda Spahr
Pastor Laaker		

Officers Serving the Congregation:

Financial: Janet Hula Treasurer: Ralph Fitle

The regular meeting of the Council was held on July 10th. Council members shared their prayer concerns for individual's medical needs; families separated at the border; for the recovery of the Thailand Soccer team trapped in a flooded cave; for connection, guidance and great experiences for both Vacation Bible School and Crossroads Connection meal.

Devotions: Pastor led devotions from Proverbs 11:24 and Hebrews 13:2. The first reminds us that God loves a cheerful giver, not just in the monetary sense but also through the giving of the time and talents God has given each of us. The second speaks how we are all God's children and how we are invited to accept and welcome one another, not just at home or church but in our daily life.

Visions for Ministry: Council continued the discussion in Chapter 3 and the connection it reveals to be more missional in both thinking and action. Being faithful to "what was" (Western Church) or "what is" (Eastern Church). The Living God continuously inviting all of us into a relationship with God. Council Members are asked to read Chapter 4 in "We Are Here Now" by Patrick Keifert before the next meeting.

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

Christian Education: Vicki made the statement that all who are willing to help out with Vacation Bible School on Saturday, July 21st would be greatly appreciated. The VBS theme this summer is "Lego: Building on Jesus – Faith."

Evangelism/Outreach: We are now serving 45 to 50 individuals through the Loaves and Fishes Pantry; it is an awesome thing to witness this service growing through word of mouth.

OTOC House meeting will take place here later in August at Grace and we plan to include conversations with St. Luke's and Prince of Peace.

Continued...

There will be a Guardian Angel Training session at St. Matthew's on September 22nd, the meeting time will be set soon.

Finance: The Congregation Computer and Internet Use Policy and the Operational Ethics Policy was approved and passed by the Council.

The Endowment Board met on Sunday, July 1st and the Council ratified the Disney Endowment distributions.

Property: MUD did not receive a copy of both reports regarding the backflow preventers. They are contacting the inspection company to receive their report copy.

Service/Social Ministry: Everything is in place for the Crossroads Ministry meal on Sunday, August 5th, Colleen has agreed to play for the service and Mary, Arlone and Amanda will be in charge as Vicki will be out of town that weekend.

Support/Stewardship: None. Worship: None. Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: The Council has been encouraged to think of a project for "God's Work – Our Hands" which will be held this year on Sunday, September 9th.

Announcements: There will be a Council Gathering from the six cluster churches on Wednesday, August 22nd to participate in cross conversations and enjoy three different meal courses at three different locations. Augustana will provide the appetizer at 6:00 p.m. Bethel will serve the meal at 7:00 p.m. and St. Luke's will finish with desert at 8:00 p.m., please reserve the evening.

The annual baseball event (a Storm Chaser's game!) with St. Luke's will be August 4th.

River Boat ride will be on Sunday, September 23rd. An invitation will be extended to Prince of Peace and the Sudanese ministries. A Potluck lunch will be served at Grace following the boat ride.

Pastor has been asked to attend a meeting regarding Palestinian rights with Kara Eastman, whom is the Nebraska Democratic Nominee running for U.S. Representative in the November election.

Donna will bring treats in August. Arlone closed in prayer at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Brenda Spahr, Secretary



I have been struck by the faithful efforts of many spiritual leaders who seek to rebuild community in times of chaos and a fracturing of community. In May, a group of twenty-three Christian leaders and elders of various denominations presented “Reclaiming Jesus: A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis.” [http://](http://www.reclaimingjesus.org/)

www.reclaimingjesus.org/

Here is a portion of their confession: “We are living through perilous and polarizing times as a nation, with a dangerous crisis of moral and political leadership at the highest levels of our government and in our churches. We believe the soul of the nation and the integrity of faith are now at stake.

“[As Christians,] it is time to be followers of Jesus before anything else—nationality, political party, race, ethnicity, gender, geography—our identity in Christ precedes every other identity. . . . “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).”

Parker Palmer broadens this shared responsibility to those of other faiths:

“All three traditions [Christianity, Judaism, and Islam] are misunderstood because some of their alleged adherents engage in hateful and violent behavior that distorts and defies the values they claim to represent. At their core, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and all of the major world religions are committed to compassion and hospitality. . . . In this fact lies the hope that we might reclaim their power to help reweave our tattered civic fabric.”

I hope that I can faithfully partner with these and many others as we seek to exemplify the very heart of Jesus. Building community is paramount to our efforts to be Christ-like. In building community, I hope to share the love God has for me with all.

Pastor Damon Laaker

Stewardship Moment

The International Catholic Stewardship Council has shared this special prayer for August.

Lord God,

As we prepare for the transitions of August;
of routines becoming regular,
signs of schools beginning to emerge,
and traffic patterns getting heavier,
help us to appreciate the sacred rhythms in our lives.

Give us the wisdom to make our hearts be still,
much as the August wind is still,
so that we may listen to the gentle words you speak to us.

Help us understand that you alone are the source of every good gift,
of the vast array of our universe,
and the mystery of each human life.

And help us see that we are called to be good stewards of all the gifts
you have entrusted to us;
tending them faithfully and responsibly so they may ultimately be
returned to you with increase.

In this month of August while a measure of summer’s stillness remains,
speak to our hearts,
guide us in your Son’s ways,
and through your Spirit,
give us the strength to proclaim your justice and peace in our every day
words and deeds.

We ask this through Christ, Our Lord.

Amen.



And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 6:18



Prayer Service
Wednesday
August 15, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Please keep in your prayers the individuals listed below who have health issues and concerns:

Theresa Courtney
Jayne Gustafson
Jack Pablo McGill
LaVonne Moss
Pam Reents
Dan Taylor
The family of Roy Gugat
The family of James Adrian



Andrew Edwards
Carolyn Matson
Sue Mize
Don Olson
Pauline Stechenfinger
Urbano Vasquez



Pray for wisdom for your Church Council here at Grace Lutheran.

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 Damon Laaker, Grace Lutheran Church
Bishop Brian Maas, Nebraska Synod
Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA Bishop

Pray for the Sudanese community in general. David Nange, John Boato and Charles Tuv are the elders for the Sudanese Worshiping Community.

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

Pray for our Shut-in and Nursing Home resident:

Mickey Andersen - Home
Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn



An inspiring and quiet experience in meditation, light music, and a deeper connection within God's presence, peace, and love.

Grace Lutheran Church
ESL (English as a Second Language) Classes
Saturdays 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
402-341-7730



Do you know anyone searching for the opportunity to learn the English language? Please direct them here at Grace. Every Saturday morning they would be greeted with a smile and very helpful tutors to start their education in one of the most difficult languages to learn as a second language.



The Salvation Army
Kroc Center Food Pantry
2825 Y Street, Omaha NE 68107

Open every Wednesday
9:00 - 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Documentation needed: Photo ID, social security cards or birth certificates for everyone in the household and mail dated within the past 30 days.



For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10

- ✝ Thank you ESL tutors; Vicki, Arlone, Mary, and Amanda, for making connections with the students willing to learn and form friendships.
- ✝ Thank you Greg, Janet, and Mary; who take turns picking up altar flowers every Sunday morning.
- ✝ Thank you LaVonne, Marilyn, Gloria, Donna, and Ron, for your dedication and help in assembling the monthly Grace Messenger!
- ✝ Thank you Ron, Donna and Brenda for taking care of the altar, and preparing the communion table.
- ✝ Thank you to all ushers, Andrew, Vicki, Oren, and Mary for greeting everyone on Sunday mornings.
- ✝ Thank you to all Loaves and Fishes Pantry Volunteers in greeting and serving all with smiles, care and love!

**MOTAC - Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition
Tobacco Free Parks**

Send a positive message to youth, families, and athletes.

Decrease ugly tobacco litter that can be ingested by children and animals.

Ensure adults serve as positive role models.

Decrease secondhand smoke exposure.

For more information please visit: TobaccoFreeForMe.org



Mobile Grace Cafe Food Truck

Your donations have helped Table Grace Cafe's current service programs to allow feeding more people with equity and expand the 10-Day Job Readiness program, thereby increasing participants' competitiveness and readiness in the growing food service industry. Which now includes Omaha's first ever "Pay" What-You-Can food truck.

To stay informed of what's happening at Table Grace or Mobile Grace, please visit the following websites:
Tablegracecafe.com and Mobilegracecafe.com

Mission Statement - to foster a healthy community by offering great food prepared and served in a graceful manner to anyone who walks up to the truck.

Grace's Free Little Library continues to be used in the neighborhood on a regular basis and continues to be in need of additional books. Pre-school, 1st grade and 2nd grade books and periodicals seem to be the most popular items. If you have any of these items that you are willing to donate, please speak with Vicki or Arlone. Please continue your participation by stopping and browsing for an interesting book. Let's help encourage the youth this summer through reading a good book!



Drinking From The Well is a new program of spiritual formation for adults, offering teaching and prayer practices to help open them receive the fullness of life in Christ and the richness of God's mercy - right here, right now! Information about the program and the process of registration can be found at www.nebraskasynod.org, drinking from the well. You may also contact Deacon Connie Stover at 308-440-4450 or conniestover@nebraskasynod.org.



Registration will remain open until August 17th.

Diapers & Wipes Baby Shower
 Friday, August 17th at 10:30 am
 at
 Lutheran Family Service's
 "Foster Care Support Shoppe"
 in the Garage at 120 S. 24th Street



We hope to see you 10:30am on Friday, August 17th as we enjoy some cake and punch as you deliver wipes and diapers. If you are unable to attend the shower, please consider sending a gift card to Lutheran Family Services, 1032 Sunset Trail, Omaha, NE 68132. Thank you for your consideration and your assistance would be so greatly appreciated! Please RSVP to Della at 402-748-4012.



Sponsored by Luther Memorial WELCA and Thrivent Financial.



Become a Member of the Columbus Park Neighborhood Association:

Monthly Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church. If you have any questions, please call the church office, 402-341-7730.

Classes for young people of confirmation age will begin with Orientation on Wednesday, August 29th, at Augustana Lutheran, 38th & Lafayette. Regular classes will begin on Wednesday, September 5th, 6:30-7:30 pm at St. Matthews Lutheran, 60th & Walnut.



The confirmation program is a shared program with four churches, Augustana, Bethel, Grace/St. Luke's and St. Matthews. We will meet each month at one of the churches on Wednesday evenings.

If you have a young person you'd like to attend, please put these dates on your calendars and let Pastor Laaker know your interest.

Prison Ministry

Grace will host the Crossroads Connection Sunday evening meal on August 5th. If you are interested in this inspiring opportunity to set up, plan the menu, serving the meal and/or clean up, please speak with either Vicki or Arlone, or call the church office, 402-341-7730.



**Save the Date!
 Worship on the River**

We will gather on Sunday, September 23rd, beginning at 9:30 am at the River City Star. We will sail the Missouri River at 10:00 am. A short worship service will be conducted on the boat. A pot luck luncheon will be held at Grace following the service. Someone will be at Grace to receive food before the river boat ride.

August 2018



- 5 - Greg Hula
- 12 - Brenda Spahr
- 19 - Mary Laaker
- 26 - Terry Nielsen
- Sept. 2 - Arlone Farber



- 2 - Vicki Cox
- 3 - Bobbi Jo Pankaj
- Joseph Everitt
- 13 - Barisila Koka
- 23 - Charles Emery
- 26 - Kirstin Pafford
- 29 - Lily Casey

August Acolytes

- 5 - Donna Adrian
- 12 - Andrea Spahr
- 19 - Brenda Spahr
- 26 - Janet Hula
- Sept. 2 - Greg Hula



Did we miss your birthday?
Please contact the church office and let us know!

August Ushers

- Mary Laaker
- Andrew Edwards



August Greeters

- 5 - Bobby Stechenfinger and Mary Laaker
- 12 - Marsha and Loren Moyer
- 19 - Brenda and Andrea Spahr
- 26 - Andrew Edwards and Ralph Fitle
- Sept. 2 - Madison and Sarah Emery



Responsibility List



Altar Flowers

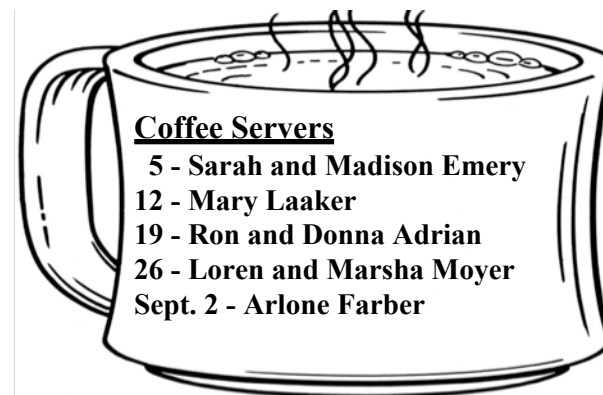
- 5 - OPEN.
- 12 - Marilyn Van Ormer in loving memory of her husband, Jerry.
- 19 - OPEN.
- 26 - OPEN.
- Sept. 2 - Ron and Donna Adrian in celebration of their daughter in-law, Melissa's birthday.

Flower Pick-Up for August: Janet Hula



Backpack Program

- 5 - OPEN.
- 12 - Marilyn Van Ormer in loving memory of her husband, Jerry.
- 19 - Pastor and Mary Laaker in celebration of their grandson, Charlie's birthday.
- 26 - OPEN.
- Sept. 2 - Ron and Donna Adrian in celebration of their daughter in-law, Melissa's birthday.



Coffee Servers

- 5 - Sarah and Madison Emery
- 12 - Mary Laaker
- 19 - Ron and Donna Adrian
- 26 - Loren and Marsha Moyer
- Sept. 2 - Arlone Farber



Loaves and Fishes Pantry

Grace Lutheran Church
1326 South 26th Street
402-341-7730

North Door (Parking Lot Door)
Opens at 9:45 am

Pantry is Open 10:00 - 11:00 am
Every Monday



Variety of fresh foods donated by
Trader Joe's and Whole Foods.

All are served with love and care.



Loaves and Fishes Pantry is currently serving the surrounding neighborhood. In any new adventure, there is the opportunity to serve one another. Grace's mission statement: "Inspired by Christ, It is our mission to Share God's Word and Love in care and service to all."

A Sign-up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board with the opportunity to volunteer your time in a few needed areas, including unloading food items on a Sunday morning, placing food items in freezers or refrigerators and help with distribution on Monday mornings. Above all pray for weekly success in all that God is directing at Grace Lutheran!

Vacation Bible School ~ Lego: Building on Jesus - Faith



Most of the children posing in front of their memory verses:
For by Grace you have been Saved through Faith. And this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God. ~ Ephesians 2:8

Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ~ Colossians 3:13

A fun game of passing the hula hoop around the group while hands remain holding one another!
Laughter shared with all!



Ice Breaker, getting to know each others names and their favorite animal!

Thank you to all who volunteered and for all the prayers!

Habitat Faith House Build begins on Saturday, August 4th!
3323 Emmet Street; 8:30 a.m.



All are welcome! It will be a wonderful opportunity to meet the future homeowners, Lino and Grace, and share in fellowship with one another, as well as the Thrivent representatives who are helping to fund some of the project. The event itself will be casual and informal. Food will be provided! As soon as the celebration is over, folks can sign up as construction volunteers and start working. This is a GREAT opportunity to engage new people in your church with Habitat! Some people don't know what to expect, so this will give them a wonderful in-person overview.

Congregation members who want to volunteer are encouraged to register ahead of time at <https://tinyurl.com/faithhouse2018>. Registering ahead of time 1) helps our construction supervisor Mike know how many people to expect ahead of time, 2) helps us accurately track volunteers for grant purposes, 3) helps us to be safe and have a one stop shop for your emergency contact info.



Sunday School News

New opportunities for Sunday School Classes! St. Matthew's, Bethel, Augustana and Grace/St. Luke's are beginning a new adventure with Sunday School classes.

The first Wednesday of every month students (K-6th) and teachers will learn Bible studies at a different church based on a rotation schedule. The first class will be held at St. Matthew's, 60th and Walnut Street, beginning with a meal served at 6:00 pm and class time set for 6:30 - 7:30 pm. This new effort seeks to begin the connection between the children so they will grow to know one another when the time for confirmation classes begin.

The regular second and fourth Sunday morning classes here at Grace will begin on Sunday, September 9th at 10:00 am.

If you have any questions, please speak with Brenda, Mary, or Sandy.



A new Lutheran Volunteer Corps member will be joining the staff at Grace Lutheran. Tyler Burkhoff has been assigned to Grace. He arrives in Omaha mid-week August 15. He begins his new role at Grace on Monday, August 20. Tyler is one of five new LVC volunteers who will be working in the Omaha area for the next year. We will welcome them in a commissioning service on Sunday, August 19.

You can help support them by holding them up in prayer and volunteering to bring some of the needed supplies to stock their pantry as they arrive.

Grace Lutheran has volunteered to help support the new Lutheran Volunteers upon their arrival to Omaha. These groceries are essential as incoming Volunteers are not usually familiar with their neighborhoods and need about a week to learn where to buy groceries, etc. Items in need are: cereal, granola, milk, yogurt, fruit, granola bars, rice, dry beans, oatmeal, flour, vegetables (frozen so that they will not go bad before they arrive), peanut butter, frozen fruit. Some snack foods like chips/salsa, cookies, candy, etc. **A sign up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board to avoid the 12 bags of rice syndrome!**



OTOC House meeting will take place here at Grace the end of August or mid September. St. Luke's and Prince of Peace will also be invited to participate in conversations. If you have any questions, please speak with Vicki or Pastor Laaker.

Have You Included
Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
Endowment Fund
in Your Will?



A current, Remember the Church in Your Will, brochure has been placed on the back table in the sanctuary. Please pick up a free copy during your next worship time and consider Grace Lutheran a place for remembrance.



Grace Lutheran Church has three additional ways that you could contribute without spending any out of pocket funds. Only a few moments of your time to download apps for TAGG - Together A Greater Good and when you

shop at smile.amazon.com Amazon will donate - Grace's unique link is: <https://smileamazon.com/ch/47-0667089>. Register your Bakers Plus card with Kroger and choose Grace Lutheran as your charitable choice! All of these opportunities will match a certain percentage of your purchases and direct those funds to Grace.

Lutheran South Pantry
4401 South 23rd Street
402-502-7070



Items that clients cannot purchase with their food stamps are always appreciated: Dish Soap, Kleenex, Bar Soap, Deodorant, Toothbrush and toothpaste, Shaving Cream, Razors, Mouthwash (without alcohol), Feminine hygiene products, Hair products (combs, brushes, picks), Bathroom tissue, Shampoo, Dry Laundry Soap, Can Openers, Diaper wipers, and Diapers, especially sizes 4, 5, 6 and pull-ups.

We always need paper or plastic bags.



Maintain Your Vehicle to Save Money and Energy

Keeping your car maintained properly does more than prolong its life: it'll save you money at the pump too. And you'll reduce smog and the emissions that contribute to global warming. Follow these tips to keep getting the maximum fuel efficiency from your car.

Change your air filter. Cleaning your air filter regularly can improve your gas mileage significantly.

Avoid speeding. Speeding, rapid acceleration, and hard braking are not only unsafe; they lower your gas mileage. Every 5 mph you drive over 50 mph is like paying an additional \$0.24 per gallon for gas.

Use cruise control. Using your cruise control will keep you driving at a more consistent speed and can generally improve fuel efficiency.

Don't idle. Idling wastes fuel. It's more efficient to turn the car off and restart when you are ready to go. Hitting the drive-through? Consider parking and picking up food inside. The US Department of Energy has some resources to encourage cities to reduce idling.

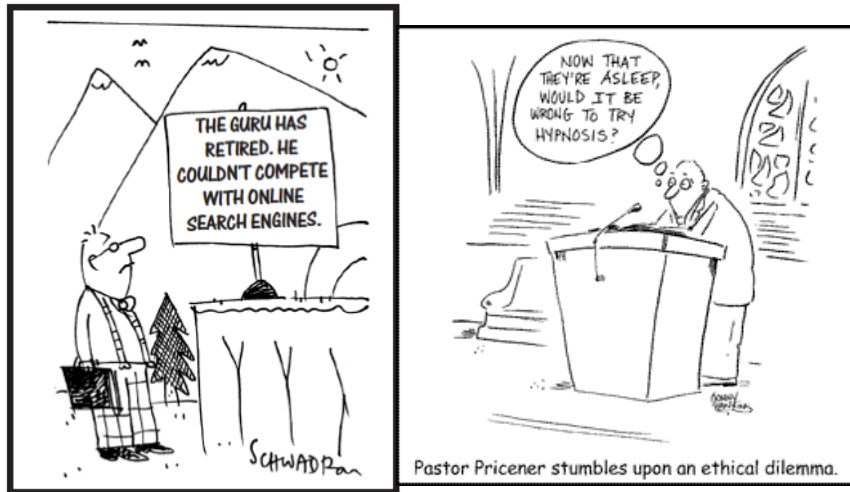
Lighten up. Driving around with heavy objects in your trunk? Leave them at home and save some fuel.

Inflate tires properly. Car tires that are under inflated will lead to poor gas mileage. You can often find the correct pressure for your car printed on the edge of the driver's side door.

Mileage still too low? A tune-up could make a considerable improvement in your miles per gallon.

earthshare.org





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Quotes ~ Shared from JoyfulNoiseletter.com

“Laughter is the beginning of prayer.”

~ Reinhold Niebuhr, Protestant Theologian

“You have as much laughter as you have faith.” ~ Martin Luther

“They say I tell a great many stories. I reckon I do; but I have learned from long experience that plain people are more easily influenced through the medium of a broad and humorous illustration than in any other way.” ~ Abraham Lincoln

On Sunday, the pastor went into the pulpit wearing a pair of new bifocals. The reading portion of the glasses improved his vision considerably, but the top portion of the glasses didn't work so well. In fact, he was experiencing dizziness every time he looked through them.

He explained to the congregation that the new glasses were causing problems. “I hope you will excuse my continually removing my glasses,” he said. “You see, when I look down I can see fine, but when I look at you, it makes me sick.”

~ via Rev. Dr. Karl R. Kraft, Dover, DE
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Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 275

Matt. 19:1-14

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

L	D	E	H	S	I	N	I	F	C	R	O	W	D	S
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- ASKED
- BETTER
- EXCEPT
- FATHER
- FEMALE
- GIVEN
- HANDS
- HARD
- HEAVEN
- HINDER
- JESUS
- JOINED
- JUDEA
- LARGE
- LEAVE
- LITTLE
- MOSES
- PRAY
- WIFE
- BELONGS
- CHILDREN
- COMMAND
- COMMITTS
- CREATOR
- CROWDS
- FINISHED
- GALILEE
- HEALED
- HEARTS
- JORDAN
- KINGDOM
- LAWFUL
- LONGER
- MOTHER
- REASON
- REGION
- UNITED
- WOMAN

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

MORE PUZZLES AT: <http://biblewordgames.com> COPYRIGHT 2018 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Laughter is a melody, A concert from the heart,
A tickling by the angels, Creative living art.

Laughter heals and comforts,
It's sometimes gentle - sometimes bold
Laughter is a freeing dance,
Performed within the soul.



Share a Smile-
It's Contagious

~ via Rev. Bill Park, Bethany, OK
from his book *Go Ahead and Laugh!*
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