

Looking Up | Reaching Out



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Harbinger

May 2020
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No Sew Face Mask

At 2am, in my college dorm, my roommate pulled me out of bed saying there were guys looking for me down in the lobby. He looked visibly upset. I went down, not knowing what to expect. The first person I saw was George, a friend from my high school church. He had been expelled from college earlier in the year for having his girlfriend spend the night in his room. (*Yes, those were different times!*) He had been expelled, but none of the details. He said he came back to school to beat me up for being the one who told on him and ruined his life. (But, I hadn't done it!) Still, I was paralyzed with fear and had no clue how I could get out of this. George kept talking, which gave me time to look for the nearest exit. He said he had spent the whole year plotting this night. He said he hated me for what he thought I had done. (I was shaking as I anticipated what was coming next.) But I was in for another surprise. He said when arrived that night, he and his buddies went out for a beer as they plotted his revenge. At the bar, another guy from our home church (George's roommate and best friend) admitted that he was the one (not me!) who had ratted George out. George wanted me to hear the whole story! And there we stood. Then he walked toward me, while I was still trying to comprehend what was going on. Then he did what I never would have expected. *He asked me to forgive him for all of the hatred he had carried over that past year!* I was still trying to figure out if this had just been a dream, or what. But he hugged me and we all started crying. (Yeah, college guys in tears — that was weird too!) But what I remember most is that he asked me to forgive him! (How often have I talked behind someone else's back and they never knew?) George could have just headed home when he found the truth, but instead he felt compelled to confess to me and ask for me to set him free! I'll never forget that night and hope that I don't ever forget how important it is to "be forgiven." He did more than he needed to do that night, and I am so glad he did. What a night and what a lesson I learned from George.

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Blessings! Pastor Seeber

What Is Going On During the Quarantine?

(At the time of publication, we don't know when the stay at home order will be lifted!)

This is truly a unique time for all of us, and we are learning as we go how best to keep in touch and support your spiritual lives. We appreciate your support and understanding for the entire staff as we are limited by order of the Governor as to what we can do.

Our prayers go out to all have lost jobs, whose family members are ill, and those who serve that life might be as normal as possible (even as they risk exposure themselves!) Many now understand how lonely those who live in care facilities or have been home alone for many years regularly feel. Please don't ever again take any of them for granted!

Our Directors have been meeting with the staff and have a good plan for keeping track of finances and the like. We have enrolled the CARES program for small businesses.

Zion's members have been incredible in finding ways to keep financial support current. Your gifts have made a difference.

Our WKZO radio ministry (70 years strong!) has become even more of a blessing during this time. We hear regularly from people across our region who this outreach is important to.

Face Book, WKZO, Email, Website, You Tube, and other communication platforms have become important ways for us to keep in touch. Weekly devotions and Sunday worship are posted online on all of these platforms. Many meetings and Bible studies have been able to continue, and worship, devotions, and spiritual support have been enabled by this digital technology.

If you have not already done so, FIND and LIKE us on **Face Book!** Sunday Worship is posted her and on YouTube.

Make our **website** (www.zionkazoo.org) a regular part of your week. Sermons are posted (which you can listen to OR read), announcements and the Harbinger are available here as well.

The website has a link to **You Tube** (red box with white arrow on the bottom of the page.) Click on it and when you get to **Zion's You Tube** page "SUBSCRIBE" to it. (There is no cost, but we need 100 people to do so, which makes it is easier for anyone to find.) Lenten and Holy Week services can be viewed again on the site, and more music and videos will be posted in the weeks and months ahead.

KINDRID, our new **ONLINE GIVING** program can be accessed from the top of our website. Many have already made that their preferred way of giving regularly. If you have any questions, contact Monica, Marta, Pastor Tim or Aaron and we'll be glad to respond.

The office is closed but Marta is checking messages and sending emails and Harbinger from home. Aaron and Preschool teachers have shared online with parents and youth. Pastors have been making phone calls to everyone at Zion. This enables us to touch base, but also gives us the joy of talking with people that we miss.

If you are not receiving emails or phone calls from us, please email (zion@zionkazoo.org) us and give us your updated information. We need current email addresses for all!

Online meetings ,devotions, and worship will never be the norm, but we are learning how to use technology that is available and will add this to our ministry efforts. For now, that is a fairly accurate summary of what we are doing and how we are working to keep in touch! Thanks for your patience, your prayers, and your faithful support of Zion!

We miss you all and keep all of your in our prayers! The pastors and staff of Zion

Catechism Review The Lord's Prayer (part 4)
"Give Us Daily Bread"

When we hear "daily bread" we think "food." Our hope is that God will never let us get hungry. But what about people of faith who don't have daily food and are still hungry? Is God not listening, or do you think God is unaware of the needs of his hungry children?

For many, a food crisis is eating out because I don't want to cook or having one donut instead of two. What we don't need we freeze. What we will eat next week is already in a box somewhere. Most don't really understand the concept of "daily" bread.

For Jesus (as for many still today) it was different. Bread could never be taken for granted. It took an entire season to grow grain. Then it was harvested, threshed, and ground into flour. There were no freezers or 24 hour grocery stores if extra guests suddenly appeared. Much of a day was spent mixing, kneading, leavening, and baking for the one evening meal. When each meal might be the last, "daily bread" was the essence of life!

When we got our puppy, the first thing she did each morning was run to the food dish to see if there was food. What a basic instinct! Yet, how embarrassing when a puppy is more aware of her dependence on me than I am on God! This prayer reminds me to pay attention to where food comes from! It is about the miracle of life! Heavenly manna!

What is "daily bread" for me might not be the same for another. To keep me alive, I might need a job, a home, or loved ones who care. When we ask for "daily bread" we are asking God for the stuff that keeps life going. It is about what I need, rather than what I want.

Most eat whether they deserve to or not. And many are hungry, whether they deserve to be or not. Sometimes evil ones receive a banquet and sometimes the faithful endure

famine. Why pray if God has other plans?

This prayer helps me focus so that when I eat; I celebrate God. And when I share "daily bread" with others, I am sharing God. This prayer opens our living to live-giving nourishment from God that can fill us as no other food. If God is Creator, then God is Owner. And if God is Owner, then all we have to support and sustain life is a "gift."

Don't forget His gifts of sunlight, gravity, rain, fertile soil, a balance between good insect and pest, and so on and so forth. "Daily bread" is the gift of a God who has created all things and a plan so that life might be sustained and replenished. It's amusing to watch birds fight over a slice of bread. They attack, steal, and squawk over what is more than any one could eat. If smart, they would divide the bread so each could eat rather than leaving some bruised and bloody or without anything to take back to their nests. And that becomes another lesson, as we understand gifts are given to be shared.

If I have life and someone else is hungry, this prayer reminds that just as Jesus love is shared so it is shared through me! And when I remember "daily bread" is a gift, then I understand how I use it becomes an act of worship in itself. Do you remember the story of "stone soup?" A village starved by selfishness, was slowly gathered around a stranger, boiling a pot full of water and a rock. His word "it is good" convinced them that it was nourishing. As each added gifts of vegetables and seasoning, an entire village received and was transformed by the "daily bread" of grace. Jesus' word, "I am bread of life" has done the same for me!

As manna brought life to the desert, Jesus (the Bread of Life) nourishes us from an empty tomb. As we pray we remember. As we remember we are fed. As we are fed, we are strengthened for service. Give us "daily bread" indeed! Thank you! Amen.

HELPING OTHERS MINISTRY

is collecting health care items for Ministry with Community. Items were listed in the April Harbinger. When we are able to return to church please check out the hallway display and pick up a list of items needed.

Thank you for reaching out with Jesus' love. If you have any questions, please call Jayne Mayer at 375-8342.

QUARANTINE BLESSINGS

I am at home, like everyone else, reading books and doing jigsaw puzzles



purchased at our holiday bazaar. I have been going through boxes from our recent move and gathering items for the attic treasures. I have also been going through recipes, earmarking some for the bazaar bake sale! I'm not as crafty as many of you, however I hope your fingers and sewing machines have been busy. Why are these blessings? Without the social distancing, I would fill my days with other "busyness" and let these other things go. As you read your books, do your puzzles, clean cupboards and create beautiful items as well as think about baking/canning, know the bazaar team will welcome your donations with welcome arms! Hoping you all stay safe and keep washing your hands!

If you have any questions, please contact Linda Mayer - 375-1241 or Jayne Mayer - 375-8342.

MESSAGE from Your Staff

While we are all experiencing challenges and developing new ways of getting things done, **Your Staff** would like to express gratitude to you for your support of us during this time.

Adhering to Governor's orders, we are limited to those essential operational functions. Please know we are happy to keep Zion running, but mainly keeping you in our thoughts, prayers and know we miss you!

SOCIALLY DISTANCING / Getting it Done!



Something to ponder...

Posttraumatic growth (PTG) is positive psychological change experienced as a result of adversity and other challenges in order to rise to a higher level of functioning. These circumstances represent significant challenges to the adaptive resources of the individual, and pose significant challenges to their way of understanding the world and their place in it. Posttraumatic growth involves "life-changing" psychological shifts in thinking and relating to the world, that contribute to a personal process of change, that is deeply meaningful.... from Wikipedia (God is at work!)

...but only God gives growth

1 Corinthians 3:7

Friends of Jesus Preschool



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Governor Whitmer's closure of all Michigan schools, Friends of Jesus Preschool's school year has come to a very abrupt end. This has been a very sad time for our staff, students and families. For many of our students, this was their final year with us, and some of them the final child of many in one family to complete their preschool experience. Please be assured that the Friends of Jesus staff has been hard at work during this time. We have provided at home learning packets for all of our students, once by pick up at church when the church was still open and the second time by delivery by teachers! We continue to connect with our students each day on our private Facebook page with daily learning challenges. Mrs. Stieve is providing music class each Tuesday and Aaron continues to provide chapel on Wednesdays, both through our private Facebook page for families. Our families continue to be supportive and engaged during this history-making event. We pray that we might still be able to offer summer camps when things begin to slowly return to some kind of 'normal'.

Thank you, Zion congregation, for your wonderful commitment to Friends of Jesus Preschool. We pray that you are staying well and safe at home, in the knowledge that Christ has gone before us in every situation.

Melissa V.

Have a little

**WORDSEARCH
FUN**

S	H	T	E	K	O	O	L	H	D	S	O
U	S	P	E	R	F	E	C	T	P	B	P
E	A	J	D	R	E	B	M	E	M	E	R
B	I	H	A	I	R	U	A	S	V	Q	U
A	R	E	S	T	O	R	E	A	D	N	C
C	A	H	K	R	A	E	G	E	G	W	U
C	H	I	S	G	K	O	D	O	G	R	W
A	C	S	U	E	A	R	D	C	O	R	H
M	A	Z	T	T	I	L	R	O	B	A	T
P	Z	H	H	G	Y	V	P	A	I	T	A
C	H	R	O	N	I	C	L	E	S	L	R
I	V	N	E	L	B	A	R	A	P	A	W

**altar, ark, chronicles, gave, girded, god,
looketh, maccabeus, oath, parable,
pass, perfect, poor, remember, restore,
seeketh, spear, ungodly, uriah, wrath,
zacharias**

Worship Help for Parents and Children

(It is OK for everyone else to read too!)

“Scripture Readings and Sermon”

For Dads and Moms and other adults:

Like any book the Bible is full of words. These words are God's gift of revealing his plan of creation, his parental disappointment when people “sin” or turn away from Him, and his loving plan to bring us back. Since we can't see God, He uses word pictures to help us “see Him” more clearly.

When we talk about the Bible being “The Word of God” we must be careful. The Bible proclaims the Living Word, which is Christ Jesus, but the Bible is not God. The words in the Bible come from God, but those words are not “God.” We must always be clear that we worship the God of the Bible, not the book we call the Bible. The writing in the Bible was gathered over many hundreds of years as faithful people put remembrances, teachings, and stories passed from generation to generation into writing. God guided this process, as the writers were inspired by His Holy Spirit. These words have life and inform our lives of faith, worship, and hope for eternal life with God.

The use of Holy Scripture is rooted in Judaism. In Jesus' day a reading from the Law or Prophets, was followed by explanation of that text by a rabbi (or “teacher.”) We follow this same routine in the Christian Church, adding the New Testament. As the “Word” is proclaimed, we are touched by God just as surely as in Baptism and Holy Communion.

Each week we read from the Old Testament, an Epistle, and the Gospel. Until 1973 we used a 1 year lectionary. There is now a 3 year series of readings for Sundays & festivals designated as “A,B,C.” Each year most of the Gospels are from one writer. “A” is Matthew. “B” is Mark. “C” is Luke. Selections from John are included within each series. This year we use Series A. The three readings are chosen

to reflect the same theme. They are based on the season of the church year, and speak to needs of all times. Sermons are usually based on one or all of those readings, The sermon seeks to “open the text” so that it is relevant and useful for us in our daily lives of faith. Whether we read the scriptures or talk about them in a sermon, our prayer is that whoever proclaims God's words will be open to the Holy Spirit's guidance (just as those who listen, should have the same prayer.)

For Parents with Younger Children

Too many words can confuse. And attention spans can be short (for children too!) Just as adults do better reading and hearing when they have some familiarity with the text (i.e. Bible study!) so children do better with words they understand and questions they want to ask. Our children's bulletins seek to help the children find a theme that the readings might convey. The illustration on the cover of the bulletin also helps focus on a theme for the day. This pattern of A-B-C helps introduce them basic themes and words about faith.

We are always looking for ideas from parents for what we can do to help. Parents should never assume their children aren't hearing — and asking questions afterward will help you to answer questions or make applications on their level. When you hear something in a text or sermon that might apply in your own family life — jot a note down and use that to begin a conversation in the car or around the dinner table. The bags with crayons, books, and even puppets aren't simply to keep kids busy ... they often will act out what they are hearing or draw something that reflects what they are hearing. “God's Word” is never wasted, *it is just that sometimes we get in its way!* Sunday School helps parents to begin a lifelong growth in being changed by God's Words. The living Word is Jesus, and God's Word from Scripture helps bring Jesus' love and practical call into our lives. Let us know how else we can help you with your words about “the Word.” Pastor Tim

Calendar

We cannot predict at this time what events will return, be rescheduled, or cancelled.

Currently, we are still planning a:

- Family Faith in the Home Workshop (probably virtual through Zoom on May 6th)**
- Vacation Bible School (June 22-24)**
- Congregational Servant Event (June 25)**
- Congregational Growler's Game (August 8th)**

ADAPTATION

We are creatures of adaptation. Adam and Eve: kicked out of the Garden, forced to adapt to their new world. The Early Church, not able to gather in large groups, gathered in their homes and traded letters. Pilgrims, not used to American land, crops, and weather, changed their way of life thanks to help from Native Americans. The Great Depression caused new jobs and new opportunities. And this...global shut down of non-essential entities...we will adapt. If we don't, we don't survive.

We have been adapting in ministry too. So much of what we used to do relied on in person gathering. Our adaptation comes in the form of online presence and gathering. Virtual everything! We won't "stop" all this once we're back to gathering in person, rather, we will take what we learned to impact an even greater group of people!

Family Life

Family Ministry News

Youth News

High School:

(Space RESERVED for coming attractions)

Middle School Youth

(Space RESERVED for coming attractions)

Echoes

Worth Re-printing



Watch for God sightings

Echoes

God IS at work through people in our congregation...here is their story:

Growth. It should always be an objective whether you are 1 minute old or 100 years old! My current Growth Plan involves staying connected with colleagues and friends, past and present. Each week I've been taking some time to call or message someone and the God at Work results have been pretty amazing! Some friends have shared struggles they're going through, thankful for the timely conversation. Colleagues have shared vocation changes or have asked for coaching. One, however, sticks out. It was a busy week and I wasn't going to accomplish a call that week. Instead, I received a message from someone I grew up with and hadn't seen in over 10 years. He was in town, knew I lived here, and wanted to catch up. Remarkably, he couldn't stop talking (he was always the quiet kid) and we had a very good conversation. We talked about church growing up and the seeds planted by teachers, pastors, DCE's, etc, that really encouraged him to stay involved in a church despite the current lack of support he had. God is great at showing up! We just need to be more aware of His work in our lives!

Book Review: "Mama Made the Difference: Life Lessons My Mother Taught Me."

T.D.Jakes. Putnam and Sons. 2006.

For Mother's Day, it seemed right to share a wonderful book by a powerful preacher. Bishop T.D. Jakes is founder and pastor of the 20,000 member Potter's House congregation in Dallas. He is a dynamic man of faith. He rightly understands that mother's are the backbone of any community, and certainly our communities of faith.

His reflection on his first day of school, and the influence that his teacher had on him, serves as an introduction to his assertion of the motherly guidance and love that has impacted all of us in powerful ways.

He remembers his first day of school: *"all the students were just as eager and terrified as I was. Mrs. Dills looked up at me and smiled, and I felt school might not be so bad after all. At that moment I let go of my mother's hand, she who had guided me through the labyrinth of halls of this new, strange, and exhilarating locale, and stepped forward with the same sense of monumental achievement as the first man on the moon!"* [p. 2]

Recognizing that all mother's have different schedules and responsibilities, he affirms that their primary role is the same for all. As he celebrates his mother and the various role models of other mother-figures, he does so from the perspective of how they help us to understand the loving and tender guidance of God in our lives. Mothers are one of our first connections to life and love, and have the power to reflect and make clear the touch of God in our lives by their example and selfless love.

This, is autobiographical, and certainly not all have the same experiences as he did. And yet, all know the love and gift of a mother, and even if a mother did nothing else but sacrifice nine months of expectancy and

hours of back breaking labor to usher us into what we call life, the miracle of such a gift can never be forgotten. This is a celebration of mothers, but also a reminder for all parents and role models for the potential we have for shaping our children as we simply carry out our roles as stewards of God's gift of life.

Each chapter has a theme. One titled "Mamas teach us to banish the bitterness" shares the following thoughts:

Of all the barriers to experiencing love, whether romantic or relational, familial or familiar, perhaps none has deeper, more insidious roots than bitterness. My mother certainly had cause to be bitter about her life, particularly after my father became ill and could no longer provide for our family and instead became another dependent. When her daughter was diagnosed with a brain tumor, my mother could easily have become bitter. But through these trials and many more, Mama weeded her garden daily of the creeping roots of bitterness that tried to penetrate the soil of her heart. She'd tell me that she didn't have time for self-pity and that her faith was in the Lord. I believe bitterness is an extremely dangerous condition of the soul. It is like venom flowing the bloodstream of a person and its potential for destruction is enormous. Like poison, it may be untraceable and only noticeably by its effect on the person who has ingested it." [p.140-141]

Some chapters are shared by other people he has asked to contribute, and he offers advice and prayers throughout this book. This is a man who has touched many lives, and written many books. I needed to find the time to read something he has written. He is a blessing to many and I imagine there is something in this book for all. It is an easy read and full of affirmation, challenge, and faith in the God who created mothers.

This month we remember who we should remember every day!

Pastor Seeber

- 5/1 Rhenda Pease
- 5/2 Thomas Bernhardt, Julie Schmidt,
June Schurig
- 5/3 Mandy Scheffler
- 5/4 Thomas Cooper, Kayla Eichaker,
Meredith Freeby, Shawn Schipper,
Pete Tanz, Paul Vickery
- 5/5 Judith Adlam, Crosby Field,
Hunter Laurin, Daniel Phillips,
Megan Wiltse
- 5/6 Eli Frazier, Mike Kamphuis,
Kevin Morrison, David Ostrem
- 5/7 Matthew Folck, Carter Simmons,
- 5/8 Bruce Huston
- 5/9 Jan Johnson, Ella Krill
- 5/10 Diane Alsvig,
Karen Stokes- Chapo,
Marti Nuyen, Steve Slesinski,
Zoey Soppelsa, Patricia Vickery
- 5/11 Myles Ream, Jacob Waterlander
- 5/12 Gilbert Reinkensmeyer,
Celia Schipper, Jeffrey Thiede
- 5/13 Amy Hendricks, Aiden Woods
Thuy Martin
- 5/14 Parker Wagner
- 5/15 Zoe Tinigin, Aaron Whittaker
- 5/17 Wanda Jewett, Alex Schmidt,
Jacob Wiltse
- 5/18 Jill Koning, Kurt Weber
- 5/20 Tim Klein, Steven Stokes
- 5/22 Christopher Glasser, Robert Klein,
Andrew Pridgeon
- 5/23 Carrie Chapman,
Sue Ann Coffinger,
Laine DeMorrow
- 5/24 Donald Klug
- 5/25 Eliza Grube, Eleanor Hayward,
Riley Ketchum, Diane Koning,
Samantha Leitz
- 5/26 Patricia Langworthy
- 5/27 Gregory Dinda
- 5/28 Don Eastman, Nicole Greene
- 5/29 Laurel Cullimore, Kirk Decker,
Hannah Laurin
- 5/31 Brandon Hamilton,
Linda Hoeppner, Paul Maier

Staff Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following staff for their service to Zion (May):

Monica Slesinski 5/29/2018



When we re-open.... Please remember the needs of Loaves & Fishes

KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES

The wish list item for **May is Canned vegetables, low-sodium.**

Please put your donations in the gray tubs under the church office window. Thank you!



Financial Report for March 2020

ZION: March Giving was under budget by \$13,544. Expenses were over budget by \$1,860. March ended with a Net Loss of \$14,053. YTD Net Income gain was \$10,376, over budget by \$7,034.

FRIENDS OF JESUS PRESCHOOL: Income was over budget by \$1,283. Expenses were under budget by \$1,593. March Net income gain was \$326. YTD Net Income gain was \$10,932, under budget by \$877.

Solid Grounds: Income was over budget by \$414. Expenses were over budget by \$2,304. March Net Loss was \$2,910. YTD Net Income loss was \$9,696, under budget by \$12,440.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH	Current Month			Year-To-Date		
	Budget	Actual	Over/Under	Budget	Actual	Over/Under
INCOME						
Zion Giving & Misc.	61,810	48,266	-13,544	592,609	617,527	24,918
EXPENSES						
Zion Staff Support	27,765	35,740	7,975	284,273	306,702	22,429
Office Operations	1,280	575	-705	16,030	17,608	1,578
Church Property	8,910	7,088	-1,822	77,665	72,112	-5,553
Education Ministry	753	287	-466	12,223	9,750	-2,473
Evangelism/Missions	0	0	0	550	803	253
Worship Ministry	1,175	144	-1,031	5,380	5,354	-26
Other Ministries	175	149	-26	2,650	2,053	-597
Music Ministry	3,150	2,002	-1,148	24,750	22,403	-2,347
Finance Ministry	10,341	10,337	-4	103,480	103,312	-168
Zion Haus Ministry	775	712	-63	3,875	5,291	1,416
Missions - General	6,135	5,285	-850	58,391	61,763	3,372
Total Expenses	60,459	62,319	-1,860	589,267	607,151	17,884
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	1,351	-14,053	-12,702	3,342	10,376	7,034

FRIENDS OF JESUS PRESCHOOL

INCOME						
FOJ Income	9,087	10,370	1,283	96,190	96,156	-34
FOJ Staff Support	10,757	8,933	-1,824	77,262	76,557	-705
FOJ Operations Expenses	880	1,111	231	7,119	8,667	1,548
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	-2,550	326	2,876	11,809	10,932	877

SOLID GROUND

Solid Ground Income	8,808	9,222	414	98,838	89,690	-9,148
Solid Ground Expenses	9,828	12,132	-2,304	96,094	99,386	-3,292
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	-1,020	-2,910	-1,890	2,744	-9,696	-12,440

BALANCE SHEET

	6/1/2019	3/31/2020	YTD Change
ASSETS			
Cash	21,918	46,325	24,407
Investments	160,630	136,960	-23,670
Other Assets	1,026	8,292	7,266
TOTAL	183,574	191,577	8,003
LIABILITIES			
Payroll	4,388	8,267	3,879
Dedicated Funds	164,539	147,355	-17,184
Unrestricted Funds	14,647	35,954	21,307
TOTAL	183,574	191,576	8,002

MORTGAGE LOAN BALANCE *****

Dedicated Accounts with Balances over \$3,000			
FOJ Estate Gift	\$4,855	Benevolenc	\$4,476
Equipment Fund	\$6,418	New Staff	\$50,000
FOJ Fundraising	\$11,265	Savings	\$46,500
Youth Ministry	\$7,964		

Monthly Publication of

Zion Lutheran Church

May

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