

THE STONE NEWS

STONE CHURCH OF WILLOW GLEN, PRESBYTERIAN USA

APRIL 2014



Our fabulous youth group recently helped with gardening projects for Ed & June Tablak and Karen Scott. Above are youth group leaders, Craig & Justine Murphey, Kathleen Oliver, and Kate Wheatley, with June Tablak and the hard-working youth! The picture was taken by the Rev. Irene Pak, who also helped!

Holy Week
2014

Stone
Church of
Willow Glen



April 13: Passion/Palm Sunday
9:30 am Worship Service
11 am Easter Egg Hunt

April 15: Tuesday of Holy Week
6:45 pm Lenten Taizé Service

April 17: Maundy Thursday
7:30 pm Worship Service

April 18: Good Friday
noon - 4 pm
Sanctuary Open for Prayer

April 20: Easter Sunday
6:30 am Easter Sunrise Service
9:30 am Easter Worship Service

Lenten image courtesy of
Lynden Keith Johnson



GRACE AND EASTER

by Rev. Dr. Ken
Henry

"How long do we have to suffer in order to receive grace?"

The woman who posed this query now sat across the table from me, sipping her tea, and waiting for my reply. My answer was short and pastoral (probably even a bit glib), but I think her question begs further attention.

She made me think more about my understanding of suffering and how many of us might be asking the same question. We wonder how long we will have to endure uncertainty, chronic pain, unremitting grief, and a whole host of Jobian trials.

Like the psalmist, we pray to God, "How long will you hide your face from me? How long will you forget me, Lord? Forever? How long will I be left to my own wits, agony filling my heart? Daily?" (Ps. 13:1-2)

Then, I suppose, in an attempt to bring some closure, we ask God to replace our suffering with grace. Like poor Job, we want God to say to us, "That's enough suffering. Here's your reward," or "You've carried your pack of troubles for too many miles. You can set them down now."

We would like to think of grace as something that drops out of the sky in order to ease our pain and answer life's most heartbreaking questions. And yet, my concept of grace is the belief that grace is always available to us whether we suffer or not. And that grace is the unearned and unconditional love of God – a free gift that comes by faith alone (*sola fide*¹). Ephesians 2:8 reads, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God."

On April 20, as I stand in the pulpit to preach my eighth Easter sermon at Stone Church of Willow Glen, I am thankful for the grace that brought me to all of you. (For those of you who don't know, Easter 2007 was my very first sermon at Stone!) The day we celebrate Christ' resurrection marks a milestone for me. Back then, it was a leap of faith on your part to call me as your pastor and a leap of faith for my family and me to come to San José.

And so every Easter Sunday holds a special place in my heart. Because not only do we proclaim, "He is Risen. He is Risen Indeed!" as God's ultimate answer to suffering and death – we also receive the precious gift of grace.

"Grace is the discovery that no one is ever really lost." (anon.)

¹In the 16 c., Martin Luther made the Latin phrase, *sola fide*, the rallying cry for Protestants who sought to believe that faith apart from works was how believers were saved and/or received grace from God.

SESSION DISCUSSES MYRIAD THINGS, FROM HEARING ASSISTANCE, TO ROYCOTT HOUSE, TO NEW MEMBERS

At the monthly meeting of Session in March, Ruling Elders (that is, laity) and Teaching Elders (that is, clergy) discussed a variety of issues – everything from improving hearing assistance in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings to preparing the Roycott House for a new renter in September: The Rev. Irene Pak.

Bill Ribble talked to the Session about the hearing difficulties of many worshippers, including the challenges of engaging in conversations in the Social Hall after worship.

After a walk-through of the Roycott property a few weeks ago (the small house behind the church), Session decided to set aside some time between when our current renter leaves and when Irene will take residence to make repairs, paint, and do some light remodeling.

Worship attendance continues to grow at Stone Church. For the month of February, we averaged 218 in the pews.

Session also reviewed names and prayed for new people who are becoming members or who are interested in the ministries at Stone Church. Twenty new folks attended a Session luncheon hosted by the Fellow-

ship and Renewal Committee (thank you, Della Smith and Catherine Edwards).

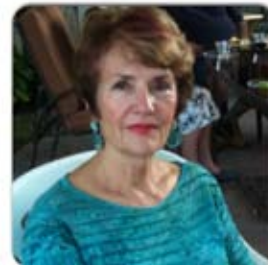
If anyone is interested in finding out more about our Angel Grant program, go to stonechurch.org and look under “Links to New Web Items.” Angel Grants provide funding and support folks who wish to pursue a new idea or an innovative way to do mission and are open to all members at Stone Church. (See article, page 6.)

Presbyterian Women continues to sell Fair Trade chocolates, coffee, and other items on the second Sunday of each month. PW thanks the congregation for supporting the mission and purpose behind purchasing Fair Trade items.

Jody Meacham was not at the Session meeting. Instead, our beloved regular *Session Beat* writer was at a National Presbyterian Stewardship Conference in St. Louis. The Rev. Irene Pak was also away from the meeting. She was attending a Progressive Youth Ministry Conference in Chicago. Session expressed joy over all the exciting ministries and opportunities for spiritual growth at Stone Church of Willow Glen.

- Guest writer, Ken Henry

REV. IRENE PAK, AND FOUR FROM STONE, TO TRAVEL TO HOLY LAND FOR PEACEMAKING CONFERENCE



Four Stone Church members/friends, along with the Rev. Irene Pak, will embark on a journey to the Holy Land, beginning April 28 and returning May 10, through the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, one of the arms of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Marsha Wadley, Joyce Summers, Carrie Campbell, and Caryl Westerberg (pictured above, clockwise) will be participating in the Peacemaking Conference titled, *Mosaic of Peace: Responding to a Call for Peace and Wholeness in a Land Called Holy*. They, along with about 100 participants from around the country, will be traveling to Israel and Palestine and listening to different voices and perspectives and how they might be called to be peacemakers. They will travel to Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Galilee and visit holy sites along the way.

Rev. Irene Pak is part of a nine-member planning team for the conference and is anticipating a meaningful trip that has been almost two years in the making. She is also one of the small group leaders for the trip.

This will be a wonderful and enriching time for all five who will be traveling.

Rev. Pak asks for your prayers of safety and wisdom as they travel. And they all thank you for the wonderful support Stone Church has provided and will share their experiences when they return.

- Rev. Irene Pak



TAIZÉ LENTEN SERVICES

These last two weeks of the Lenten Season, consider taking special time for yourself, and join us for Taizé worship and prayer on Tuesday evenings, April 1, 8, and 15.

The service runs from 6:45 to 7:30 pm and provides a sacred space for quiet prayer,

contemplation, and resting in the Presence of God. This beautiful prayer service so fully supports our walking the *Stations of the Heart* as we move through this season toward the celebration of resurrection and new life on Easter morning.

- Mary Alice Collins

LEARN ABOUT PRAYING WITH "ICONS AND IMAGES"; "CRITICAL DECISION POINTS"

Adult Study classes meet on Sunday after Worship, in the Fireside Room, from 11:15 am to 12:15 pm. Childcare is available in the Nursery.

There will be no Adult Study on April 13 (Palm Sunday) or April 20 (Easter).

For more information about any of these classes, please contact Pat Magee, Chair, Adult Ed Subcommittee.



April 6: "Praying with Icons and Images," with Ken Henry

Using photos, artwork, and ancient icons, Rev. Ken Henry will discuss the spirituality of using images to deepen our faith. He will present a historical perspective of the artistic techniques used by iconographers to inspire viewers to reflect on the mysteries of God. Class participants are welcome to bring images that help with their own spiritual growth.



April 27 - May 25: "Critical Decision Points for God's People and Human Life," with Dale Bracey

For each session: what does the passage mean in the context of when it was written, and how does it apply in societal and political issues today?

April 27: Pushed out of Eden, humans have to choose.

What will they be and do; where will they go; how will they (and us) relate to others and to God?

May 4: After the Reed Sea crossing.

When the Lord rescued a nation "clogging the Egyptian chariot wheels," it ensured they would have a future. How did this special treatment affect their pride and destiny? How about our American assumption that we are the Christian nation and God is on our side?

May 11: Now we have a king and are a world power.

When you get what you asked for, watch out; it can pervert your destiny.

What does it mean to be "a nation under God"?

May 18: After Jesus was gone.

What happened for the disciples, and what happens for us today?

So many rivals claimed to have the true Jesus in their pocket.

How should we relate to people of other faiths: Muslims, Jews, Mormons, Christian Fundamentalists?

May 25: When leadership makes decisions with which we disagree.

When the Council of Jerusalem abandoned traditional beliefs, did it get it right?

For us today: why do we stay in the denomination, while other churches are leaving?

DISCOVER NEW BOOKS FOR EASTER AND EARTH DAY IN CHURCH LIBRARY

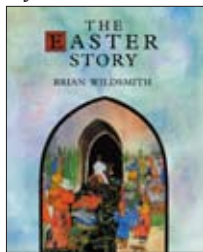
Easter and Earth Day suggest some new books. Enjoy!

- Sue Williams, Library Coordinator

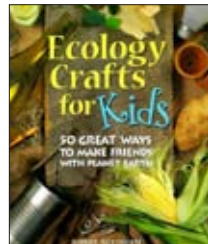
For our younger members



Miss Fannie's Hat by Jan Karon (1st Bks J Kar)

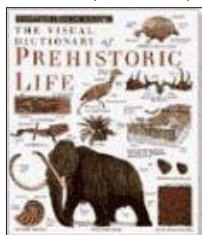


The Easter Story by Brian Wildsmith (J 232 Wil)

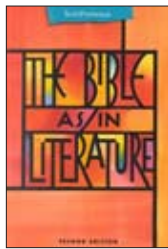


Ecology Crafts for Kids by Bobbe Needham (J 745.5 Nee), given by Charlotte Dickson

This Is What Happy Looks Like by Jennifer Smith (YA Smi)



Visual Dictionary of Prehistoric Life by Eyewitness (YA 560 Eye)



Additions to our regular adult collection

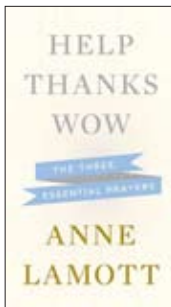
The Bible As/In Literature by James Ackerman & Thayer Warshaw (220 Ack), given by Alice Thorn



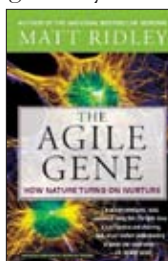
The Cross in Our Context: Jesus and the Suffering World by Douglas John Hall (232.2 Hal)



The Trouble with Resurrection: From Paul to the Fourth Gospel by Bernard Scott (236 Sco), given by Pat Magee



Help Thanks Wow: The Three Essential Prayers by Anne Lamott (243 Lam), given by Sara Holtzapple



New to our special collections

The Agile Gene: How Nature Turns on Nurture by Matt Ridley (Ecol 155.7 Rid), given by Brad Bauer



The Human Family Tree by National Geographic (Ecol DVD 569.9 Nat), given by Gail Chaid



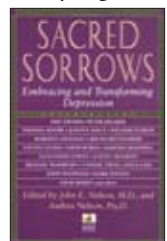
This Flowing Toward Me: A Story of God Arriving in Strangers by Marilyn Lacey (Soc Iss 261.8 Lac), given by Claudia Hamm



Playing God? Genetic Determinism & Human Freedom by Ted Peters (Soc Iss-Health 174 Pet), given by Pat Magee



Bringing Heaven to Earth: A Journey into Grace & Gratitude by Lee Ann Laraway (Spec Needs 362 Lar), given by Ethel Homer



Sacred Sorrows: Embracing & Transforming Depression ed. by John & Andrea Nelson (Spec Needs 616.85 Nel)



Horizons Magazine subscription (end of "Women" section), given by Stone PW

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



During this holiest of seasons, Presbyterian Women of Stone Church continue to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study, to support the mission of the world wide

church, to work for justice and peace, and to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom. This is our purpose.

Along those lines, we continue to be active in so many different ways, both at home and far away.

Watch for **Mothers' Day Cards**, which will be available Sunday, **April 27**, and Sunday, **May 4**. The donation of your choice benefits women and children in Africa as funds collected go to the *Healthy Women, Healthy Families* program, which offers medical treatment and education to women and their families.

At home, we will be selling **Fair Trade Coffee** (and tea and cocoa and candy bars!) on Sunday, **April 13**,

which benefits small farmers in Central and South America and Africa.

On Saturday, **April 26**, from 9:30 am to 1 pm, we will offer a "sew-in" for a program called **Little Dresses for Africa**. Keep your eyes open for this one as it promises to be a great time. Even if you don't sew, you can help by donating a few dollars to send the completed dresses to young girls overseas. Every little bit helps. (See the article on page 5.)

Also at home, we continue to collect **Coupons for Education**. Our



featured items for this month are Ziploc bags and paper products, such as Kleenex and Cottonelle. Sometimes you may have to hunt a little for



those coupons, but they are there, and our collection benefits K.R. Smith School right here at home.

In case you haven't heard, we have a **Prayer Shawl Ministry** where women and men of the church knit or crochet shawls, scarves, baby hats, and the like to be given to people going through a difficult time. Wouldn't a lovely prayer shawl bring comfort to you when you are down?

And lastly, we would love to have you join with PW in any of the following activities.

We have three Bible study groups that meet monthly:

Amethyst Circle meets the first Wednesday of each month in the Church Library. Contact Jan Keifer if this is of interest to you.

Emerald Circle meets in members' homes on the first Thursday of each month. In April, they will meet at Charlotte Dickson's home. If this fits your schedule, contact Carolyn Clendenning, the circle leader.

If you prefer an evening circle, then **Sapphire Circle** is the one for you. They meet the second Monday evening of each month, and Joan Peckham is the circle leader. In April, they will meet at Sally Magee's home.

We also have book groups. **Book Group 1** meets the fourth Monday of each month at 1 pm at the home of Hazel James. **Book Group 2** meets at members' homes; on April 21, they will meet at Rhonda Lakatos' home and will be discussing *The Light between Oceans*, by M. L. Stedman.

We wish each and every one a most meaningful, blessed, and heartfelt Easter season.

- Sheri Cunningham, PW Secretary

MEN'S MINISTRY



The Men's Ministry of Stone Church includes a mission work team, a book group, a flying group, and wine- and beer-making groups.

For more information about any of these activities, please contact Parish Associate David McCreath.

Mission Team Breakfast, April 12, Featuring Bill Ribble

The next Men's Mission Team Breakfast will feature a movie shot by Bill Ribble from the cockpit of his F-4 Phantom while in Southeast Asia in the early '70s.

All men of the church and their guests are welcome at the breakfast, which will be held April 12, from 8:30 to 9:30 am.

"Gospel Portraits" Bible Study, Wednesdays during Lent

Gospel Portraits, a Lenten Bible study for men, will continue through April 16.

The group is looking at the many titles and names for Jesus in the Gospels.

All men of the church are welcome to join the class, on Wednesdays during Lent, from 6:30 to 7:15 am in the Church Library.

Book Group, April 21, Discussing "Civilian Warriors"



The Men's Book Group will meet on April 21, at 7 pm.

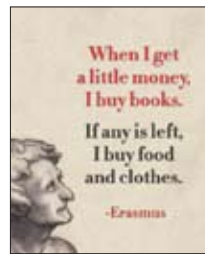
The book for discussion is *Civilian Warriors*, by Erik Prince. It is a review of the Blackwater Group, a paramilitary

organization with many contracts with the State Department for security and other similar tasks.

All men of the church are welcome to attend. Bruce Raby will host at his home.

Spring Book Sale, April 27

The Men's Mission Team Spring Book Sale will be held on April 27, in the Social Hall following morning worship.



Contributed books may be left in the large box in the Social Hall until April 13, after which the room

will be prepared for Holy Week and Easter services.

This will be a good opportunity to winnow book shelves and to find some excellent summer reading.

“UP TO TEN EVENT,” ADULT WOMEN’S CLOTHING EXCHANGE

Ready to clear out your closet, and maybe find something special for yourself, too?

Come to the Stone Church “Up to Ten Event: Adult Women’s Clothing Exchange,” sponsored by the Fellowship & Renewal Committee.

Where: Stone Church
Social Hall

When: Saturday, May 2,
from 10 am to 2 pm

How it works: Bring up to ten items, and take up to ten items

Suggested Donation: \$5 at the door

Event Guidelines:

- ✳ Bring gently used items in Grade-A condition, including adult women’s clothing, handbags, jewelry, belts, scarves, sweaters, and coats.
- ✳ Do not bring shoes, socks, hats, underwear, or other intimates.
- ✳ Ensure all donations are clean and gently worn, with no tears or stains.
- ✳ Bring all donated items on hangers.
- ✳ BYOB (Bring Your Own Bag).

Donation drop-off:

- ✳ Bring items you’d like to swap to the Social Hall on either Friday, May 1, between 4 and 7 pm, or Saturday, May 2, between 9 and 10 am. (Sorry, no early shoppers!)
- ✳ You will receive one ticket for each item donated (up to ten items).
- ✳ Once shopping begins, you can exchange one ticket for one item.

All for a Good Cause!

- ✳ All proceeds go to our Stone-works Committee.
- ✳ Leftover items will be donated to either The Career Closet, which provides work-appropriate attire to disadvantaged women, or the Sacred Heart Community Service assistance program.
- ✳ Bring something to benefit these worthy causes while finding something “new to you”!

If you have any questions, please contact Michele Chandler.

“SEW-IN” DAY, LITTLE DRESSES FOR AFRICA



You are invited to a “Sew-in Day” to make simple dresses for little girls in Africa on Saturday, April 26, from 9:30 am to 1 pm, in the Social Hall.

“Little Dresses for Africa” is a 501c3 Christian organization that provides relief to children in Africa where the dresses are distributed through orphanages, schools, and churches to plant in the hearts of little girls that they are worthy!

The dresses are simple, made from washable cottons without fasteners. Patterns are for two styles: the tie-shoulder and the peasant with elastic neck. Sizes will be 2 to 12 and will use 42-inch width fabric in lengths from 20 to 38 inches.

Collect your fabric pieces, thread, elastic, bias tape, and other decorations, and bring your portable sewing machine and scissors. Come even if you’ve never sewed before – these dresses are simple enough to learn to sew in one lesson.

Sign-ups will take place in April. Plan to be there on April 26. We’ll join others in changing lives, one dress at a time!

If you have any questions, please contact the project coordinator, Evelyn Tower.

NEW CLASS BEGINS FOR STEPHEN MINISTRY

Training has begun to prepare four persons to minister to those who are experiencing a difficult time in their lives.



These Stephen Ministry trainees are Carol Lathrop (from First Presbyterian, San José), Kathie Lloyd, Joyce Summers, and Stephania Verhaegen.

After 50 hours of training in listening skills, confidentiality, feelings, crisis theory and practice, distinctively Christian caregiving, and many other subjects,

the trainees will be prepared for ministry.

Stephen Ministry provides caring individuals who accompany care receivers on a journey through grief for a loved one, job loss, parent support, chronic health issues, hospitalization (before, during and after), separation and divorce, dealing with losses related to aging, etc.

Stephen Ministers are available now if you, or someone you know, has need of a caring companion to help them through a troubled time.

For more information, or to request a Stephen Minister, please contact Joan Peckham.

STONEWORKS COMMITTEE OFFERS ANGEL GRANTS FOR “CHANGE IN OUR CONGREGATION AND COMMUNITY”

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead

Stone Church Angel Grants are now available to encourage positive change in our congregation and community.

Undergirding this concept is the idea that people who have ideas need more than our words of encouragement to get their ideas off the ground. They need money, people, coordination, approval, permission, publicity, and a pathway to implementation. They need the leaders of the church to support them and coordinate their activity within the large framework of the church’s ministry.

An Angel Grant is a small (under \$1,000), one-time grant to try something new. The idea of angel funding comes from management strategies in the technology world. By investing a small amount of capital in a high-risk situation, we hope to see benefits for the congregation, including increased involvement, emergence of new ministries, and attraction of new members through their participation in Angel Grant funded projects.

The philosophy behind an Angel Grant is an incredibly low barrier to those wishing to apply. Being awarded an Angel Grant involves a short application (on stonechurch.org, look under “Links to New Web Items”). The applicant should show that his or her idea is something that might (but not definitely) fit in with the congregation and/or Stone’s broader San José community.

Angel Grant applications may be e-mailed to representatives of the StoneWorks committee including:

- ♥ Nick Hurley, Angel Grant Committee Chair
- ♥ Meredith Wright, StoneWorks Vice Chair
- ♥ Don “Skip” Skipwith, StoneWorks Chair

StoneWorks will review all Angel Grant applications at their monthly meeting and decide on the award.

The only other requirement of an Angel Grant award is to report back in writing on the results of the trial run. Once we have the report, we can evaluate the idea to see if we want to fund it further.

If the program/ministry is a wild success, then great! That means it’s time to consider expanding the idea. If, however, the outcome is a spectacular failure, then at least everyone can walk away knowing that we tried. This is a collaborative effort. It is also an invitation to be experimental and innovative.

Please, if you have an idea that you’d like to share, reach out to StoneWorks, and we’ll help you develop your idea further and get it funded both financially and with manpower.

Investing in God’s kingdom includes taking risks not only with our money and with our time, but it also means taking risks with our hearts.

- Don Skipwith

A MOMENT FOR TAIZÉ



“Taizé is a time to center on my deeper self, my soul self, through music and prayer.”

- Bob Cole

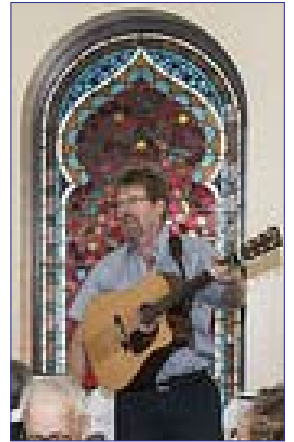


CHURCH OFFICE MANAGER, JENNIFER SCOTT BRAND, NOW A NOTARY

Our Office Manager, Jennifer Scott Brand, has been trained and commissioned as a notary public.

During church office hours, Monday through Friday, 9 am to 1 pm, Jennifer can provide notarized signature services to church members at no cost.

Please call ahead, to the church office, to make an appointment with her,



Wonderful Activities Abound at Stone Church! Above: Youth Group Helping with Gardening
Right: Deacons' Spring Tea





DEACONS' ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT ON PALM SUNDAY

The Deacons' Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Palm Sunday, April 13, immediately after church.

All church school-age children are invited to participate in the hunt for both real and plastic eggs.

There will even be a few very special gold eggs.

Please bring your own basket, and join us for the adventure of the hunt.

If you have any questions, please contact Brad Tips, Nancy Hopson, or Peter Nelson.



PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR 2015 STONE FAMILY SNOW TRIP

It's already time to start thinking about the 2015 Stone Family Snow Trip!

This annual event is a delightful way to get to know Stone families better and to jump-start your new year.

Mark your calendars for Jan. 23, 24, 25, 2015 (our requested dates). If you would like to attend, we will need to know, and have advance deposits in hand, by April 30.

As we did for the 2014 trip, we are asking Stone attendees to help cover the initial deposit to guarantee our space: \$100 for a single/double room and

\$150 for families (three or more people).

In order to meet our minimum obligation of ten rooms, this deposit will be non-refundable after April 30, and we'll have all year to dream about the snow. If we do not meet the minimum of ten rooms, deposits will be returned, and we will (sadly) have to cancel our request at Zephyr.

For more information, including making reservations, please contact Chris Coleman, Marta Espinal, or Katherine Webb Calhoun.

JOIN US FOR THE 2014 CROP WALK!



It's not too late to join us for this year's South Bay CROP Walk for Hunger, on April 6, with check-in at 12:30 pm and walk starting at 1:30 pm.

There are always a lot of Stone Church walkers, and we always have a lot of fun on the walk! Lizanne has even developed a "world famous" annotated map of the course! For the second year, the walk is being held in downtown San

José, starting at San José First United Methodist Church (24 North 5th Street), across from City Hall Plaza, and ending at First Presbyterian Church, 49 North 4th Street.

There will be 1 and 3.5 mile routes. And there's free parking at 50 North 4th Street. Hope to see you there!

For more information, please contact Lizanne Oliver or Emily Meacham.

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