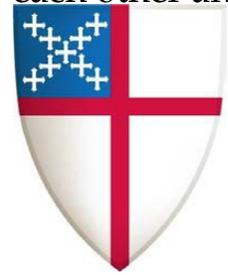


**Our Vision:** As a welcoming congregation, we share the transformational grace of God through worship and spiritual growth; we glorify God by building up each other and community through love, care, and outreach.

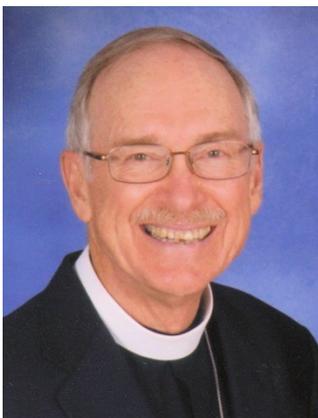


## SHARING GRACE

October 2017

A Christian Newsletter of Community Caring of Grace Episcopal

### ***FROM OUR INTERIM RECTOR***



Dear Friends-in-Christ,

September brought us a return to Sunday School and Choir. It's been great to have both back in operation. Unfortunately, last Sunday brought a bit more excitement after church than we expected, when Lynne's car and purse were stolen. Fortunately, Lynne's car has been recovered and after a thorough cleaning is back in service. This is the kind of excitement we don't need. It has caused us to rethink the safety around the church. For years we have been taking about re-keying the church and it is about to happen. We are also discussing how we can make the place less accessible during church times. It's truly a shame that an institution for good has to take steps to limit access. Such is the state of society today.

October 1<sup>st</sup> is our annual celebration of St. Francis and the Blessing of the Animals. We've had good coverage in the *Daily Republic*.

Saturday, the 14<sup>th</sup>, we will have the Solano County Health Department offering free flu shots to anyone, and the mobile dental lab will be at the church for dental exams. Also beginning Sunday, the 8<sup>th</sup>, we will begin a sermon series on the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Throughout the rest of the month, we will be singing some Lutheran hymns, most of which are in our Hymnal.

There were many Reformations in Europe and England. We owe our ancestors in the faith a great deal of gratitude for reforming the church. They made us who we are today. This year is the 500<sup>th</sup> year of the Reformation. It's dated as such because legend has it that Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the Church in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517. I called it a legend because there is no specific evidence that he really did pound it on the door of the church. He did call for debate on the 95 issues. By the way, theological debates were all the rage as a form of entertainment in college cities like Wittenberg. Rather than staring at their smart phones, teenagers went to the debates to hear and heckle the participants. Can't you just

see our teenagers being thrilled to hear theological debates? But, of course, that was the only game in town in those days. I'm sure they thought it was better than staying at home and working in the kitchen and feeding the chickens.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> we will have a guest preacher and celebrant, The Rev. Dr. Richard Johnson from Grass Valley. Richard is an associate at Emmanuel Episcopal in Grass Valley and is a retired ELCA pastor. That day, we'll be using a Lutheran liturgy. Richard's daughter, Johanna, is a Lutheran pastor in the Rochester NY area. (Don't ask him as his two grandchildren there. You don't have enough time to see the pictures.) Johanna and I were classmates in my first Clinical Pastoral Education unit at Sutter Roseville Medical Center.

On the 29<sup>th</sup>, we'll join the rest of the world in celebrating Reformation Day. It is said that Episcopalians are Catholic in liturgy and Protestant in theology. That's pretty much true. Our Presiding Bishop is not our Pope. He's an elected leader and his work is constrained by what our elected General Convention Delegates say he can do. Yet we have retained many parts of our worship from our Catholic roots.

Our Second Sunday Offering this month will go to the Episcopal Relief and Development fund for Hurricane Relief. It is truly tragic that parts of the US and the Caribbean islands have been decimated by three powerful hurricanes. We need to do as much as we came to support them. We normally restrict our Second Sunday Offering to local non-profits, but we need to make an exception. If you didn't know it, the Episcopal Diocese of Puerto Rico has 50 congregations and about 5,400 members. Their Bishop +Rafael Morales was consecrated July 22. See the article later in this Sharing Grace.

Blessings,

Perry+

**FROM GEM**



**Next meeting is Sat., October 7th, Huckleberry's in FF, 7:30am.**

Church yard weed cutting and bush trimming will be accomplished every four months by GEM. The yard work will be done after the November 4th GEM Fellowship Breakfast.

St. Augustine Episcopal Church sponsored a Christian Men's Conference on Saturday September 16th. Presentation topics covering Cursillo, Kairos, Human Trafficking, how to engage in the struggle for "Social Justice", Discipleship, Reaching Millennials and Discipleship were discussed. Key phrases such as develop relationships for understanding, read listen, pay attention, be a disciple by assisting others; get to know the person. Prayer, study and service are key terms for developing Men's ministry - "The Brotherhood of St Andrew". All mentioned were presented and reviewed. The topics presented were sensitive and addressed realistically.

As mentioned in the church bulletin, on Saturday October 14, 2017 from 9:00AM to 1:00PM Grace Episcopal Church will sponsor free Flu Shots and Dental Exams; sponsored by Solano County Health. Assistance will be needed for Parish Hall table set up and demobilization.

Discussion about upcoming fundraisers, the coat drive and Holiday giving will be discussed at the October 7th Fellowship Breakfast.

Next meeting: The next GEM Fellowship Breakfast meeting will be Saturday, November 4, 2017 at Huckleberry's Restaurant, 7:30AM meeting start time.

Ron Cupid



**FROM ECW:**

**Next meeting is Tues., Oct. 3rd, 11:30 in Room 6**

The ECW meeting was held Sept. 5, 2017 at 11:30am in room 6. Marajean Scarfe VP was on vacation so the meeting was called to order by Millie C. Treas. Pat Minkel prayed for blessing on our food. Thank you to Patty Butler and Debbie Denhof for refreshments which were enjoyed by all. After refreshments Pat Minkel gave the opening prayer followed by a spiritual reading from "Jesus Lives".

Our monthly donations to Heather House and the Rector's Discretionary fund were approved and distributed. In addition, we sent a donation to the Episcopal Relief Fund for Hurricane Harvey victims. We asked that our donation to the 150-year celebration be transferred to the organ fund as there is a surplus. A special thank you to Linda Miner for her generous donation for the 150-year luncheon in the Parish Hall.

Anna K. reported that she & Marajean went to Home Depot with Shane on the women's bathroom remodeling. Hopefully it will happen soon. Anna also reported on the Veteran's BBQ. ECW was represented by Anna K. Marajean S. and Sue P. We furnished cookies, potato salad and macaroni salad. Anna asked we try and have more attendance from ECW next year. The veterans really appreciated the BBQ.

Thank you to Pat Minkel for organizing the reception for Betty Harper's memorial service. Also thank you to all who brought food, flowers, helped set up and clean up and all who helped in any way.

New business: a letter was read from Marajeau asking members to consider running for President. This was tabled until next meeting.

Lynne Secrist suggested everyone try and bring one new member to our Oct. meeting. Lynne volunteered to send postcards with invites. Thank you, Lynne. Lynne will talk to Father Perry about ECW assisting GEM with Fairview projects, box tops, breakfast and school supplies.

Lynne shared with us what a wonderful experience the total eclipse was. Thank you again Lynne.

Millie C. won the mystery drawing Yea!

Millie C. closed the meeting by leading us in the Lord's Prayer.

Our next meeting will be Tues. Oct 3, 2017 @11:30 am in room 6. All women of Grace Church are members. Refreshments will be served. Come join the fun and service.

Love and Belief

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## **Safety Corner for the October**

### **Health Based Community Events Provided by Grace Episcopal Church:**

Free flu shot and dental examination event for the community is planned for Saturday October 14, 2017, at Grace Episcopal Church. Event time is from 9:00AM until 1:00PM. Solano County Health is a co-sponsor for the event.

As part of Solano County's chronic disease prevention efforts, they are aiming to network with the church to support our efforts to improve the health outcomes of the community members.

### **Classes Offered by Solano County Health:**

Reducing Sodium in Your Diet to Help Control Your Blood Pressure. Diabetes Prevention Program. For more information: Contact Diabetes Prevention, phone: (707) 784 – 8344.



### **Driving Some Where? – Keep Your Eyes on The Road:**

Paying attention while driving is critical for your safety and the safety of your passengers. If you are transporting kids in the car, your approach to driving attentively and safely presents you as positive role model.

If an activity prevents you from devoting full attention to your driving, take care of it

before you get behind the wheel.

Ron Cupid

## Coming Events



October 3<sup>rd</sup> – Tuesday – ECW Meeting – 11:30am – Room 6

October 7<sup>th</sup> – Saturday – GEM Meeting – 7:30am – Huckleberry's in Fairfield

October 9<sup>th</sup> – Columbus Day – Office Closed for Holiday

October 14<sup>th</sup> – Flu shot and dental clinic – 9am – 1pm here at Grace

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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Manuella Garcia 10/09

Don Allen II 10/12

Les Westling 10/19

Laura Minkel 10/23

Mary Ann McKinney 10/24

Heidi Lindsay 10/25

Barbara Lopossa 10/28

Ruth Anne Wagner 10/28

Charles Karnopp 11/10

Lynne Secrist 11/11

Nancy Klopstock 11/12

Ken Snyder 11/13

Shauna Chastain 11/22

Jack Weir 11/24

Judy Smith 11/25

Jim Jerrell and Perry Polk+ 11/26

Stephen Harris 11/30

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### **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Operating:

**August 2017 Income**

\$ 11,705.00

**YTD Income**

\$85,138.00

**August 2017 Expenses**

\$ 11,051.00

**YTD Expenses**

\$96,845.00

**Net Income/Loss**

\$ 654.00

**Net Income/Loss**

\$(11,707.00)

## Diocese of Puerto Rico

Episcopal Relief & Development also sent emergency support to the diocesan emergency committee ahead of Hurricane Maria in San Juan, knowing communication would crash and systems would be compromised. Authorities delayed the distribution due to the chaos, but permission is expected soon. Episcopal Relief & Development staff members sporadically have been able to text with Puerto Rican diocese members.

Ordained as the Puerto Rican diocesan bishop little more than two months ago, the Rt. Rev. Rafael L. Morales Maldonado formed a plan with diocesan staff, Zorrilla said. During the storm, they boarded up what they could and rode the storm out with their families at home. By Sept. 25, they were clearing the fallen trees at the diocesan center, which has electricity from a generator but no communication capabilities. They met to create an assessment team. They plan to head out Sept. 27 to designated areas on the island, bringing necessities and checking on Episcopal missions, parishes and homes.

“They will bring basic items for parishioners and collect inventories of the needs of clergy and parishioners. Physical damage to churches or structures will also be documented,” Morales wrote in a Sept. 25 letter posted on [Facebook](#), translated from Spanish. “Have much faith, God is with us. Be strong.”

The [Cathedral San Juan Bautista](#) in San Juan is relatively unscathed, Zorrilla said.

But three nearby Episcopal churches were not so lucky. Their roofs were torn open and rain flooded the interiors. Because of that flooding, Zorrilla and Morales led a Sept. 24 church service in the parking lot of Santa María Magdalena Episcopal Church in Levittown. So far, he hasn't heard of any clergy or parishioner injuries or deaths, but time will tell as the assessments get underway.

Maria's fury was unparalleled, Zorrilla said.

“The sounds were awful, the wind force. What I saw, I never saw before, and we've experienced other hurricanes before because we live in the tropics,” Zorrilla said. “This was so huge. The force of nature was amazing.”

Excerpt from “Episcopalians don't forget Puerto Rico in their hurricane relief efforts By Amy Sowder | September 27, 2017,  
<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/ens/2017/09/27/episcopalians-dont-forget-puerto-rico-in-their-hurricane-recovery-and-relief-efforts/>

## **Monday Matters (September 25, 2017)**

by RenewalWorks Admin

I was glad when the movers finally carried our piano into our living room, but somehow we couldn't locate the box with sheet music. So I decided I'd go shopping, finding something simple I could play. At the time, I was new in town as I went looking for a music store. I saw a likely spot in a strip mall. I noted as I approached that the place looked kind of dark.

As I walked in, I could immediately tell that I wasn't going to find Bach Inventions or Chopin Nocturnes. This was really heavy metal. Really heavy. A few unfriendly faces behind the counter gave me the once over. They checked out my clerical collar, and deduced that I was probably not their target audience. The total effect of the place was to make me feel that I didn't belong. I took a quick tour of the merchandise, feigned interest and made a hasty exit. I ordered music online.

But I have thought about my experience in that store. I wondered if people ever feel like that in church. I wonder if people ever summon the courage to walk through red doors, dare to believe ubiquitous signs: "The Episcopal Church welcomes you", find themselves in a pew and feel they don't belong. Maybe they can't figure out which book to use. Maybe they need a coach in liturgical aerobics. Maybe they feel under-dressed. Maybe they make their way to coffee hour, where a friendly gaggle of congregants talk to each other in friendly huddles as newcomers orbit the periphery, looking at dated bulletin boards, feigning interest in printed materials, checking out clouds in the coffee, the way I faked my way through the music store.

As you may know, I vent by cartoon. One of the cartoons that gets a lot of Episco-response depicts a young couple awaiting an 8am eucharist. They are seated by the aisle, though the church seems pretty empty. A well-dressed elderly woman approaches, perhaps a pillar of the parish. She taps the young man on the shoulder and says: "You look like you're new. Welcome to our church. Oh by the way, you're in my pew."

This cartoon appeared on some Facebook page. A person commented that it was dumb, that the artist was feeding an unfair caricature of the Episcopal Church. The comment: "That would never really happen." Almost immediately, from all over the country, people responded that they had had exactly that experience. I

wondered if that imaginary (or perhaps real) couple felt like I felt in that dark music store.

We sometimes sing in our church this hymn: "All are welcome in this place." It's a wonderful biblical aspiration, with roots in ancient Israel instructed to welcome the stranger, all the way to the gospels, where Jesus says: "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me." (Matthew 10:40), all the way to the end of Paul's letter to the Romans where he says: "Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."

Fact is, we are all strangers (some stranger than others). We all probably share Woody Allen's angst, noted in his refusal to attend football games because he was convinced that in the huddle they were talking about him. We all probably have moments, individually and collectively, when we fail to welcome as Christ has welcomed us.

Spiritually vital congregations are able to get people moving in the spiritual journey. That begins with welcome. What are the welcoming opportunities available to you? When this week will you have the chance to practice hospitality, in church or outside of church? What would it mean for us to welcome one another as Christ has welcomed us?

*-Jay Sidebotham*

*Let all guests who arrive be received like Christ, for he is going to say, "I came as a guest, and you received me."*

*-The Rule of St. Benedict*

*A story said to originate in a Russian Orthodox monastery has an older monk telling a younger one: "I have finally learned to accept people as they are. Whatever they are in the world, a prostitute, a prime minister, it is all the same to me. But sometimes I see a stranger coming up the road, and I say, 'Oh, Jesus Christ, is it you again?'"*

*-Kathleen Norris, Dakota*

*For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who ... defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing.*

*-Deuteronomy 10:17-18*

*Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle.*

*-Philo of Alexandria, quoted in Dan Wakefield, How Do We Know When It's God?*

*That is our vocation: to convert ... the enemy into a guest and to create the free and fearless space where brotherhood and sisterhood can be formed and fully experienced.*

*-Henri J. M. Nouwen, Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*

## Monday Matters (September 18, 2017)

by [RenewalWorks Admin](#)

### **Just because**

Recent travels gave me the privilege of dropping in on a lively Bible study (not an oxymoron). Turns out I needed to be there. The topic du jour was forgiveness, based on the gospel read yesterday in church. The topic of forgiveness has been coming up a lot on Sundays. It's also been brought to my attention in other settings recently, which reinforces my own need to do spiritual work in this area. I'm not that good at forgiveness.

I've been wondering why forgiveness gets so much biblical and liturgical airtime. Not only did Jesus talk a lot about it. He practiced it at the crucial moment of his life. On the cross he prayed: Father, forgive them.

In our worship, forgiveness seems to be the threshold we must cross to grow in relationship with God. When we gather for eucharist, we precede Holy Communion with the confession, recognizing we have been forgiven. Before we receive bread and wine, we claim forgiveness as we have forgiven others. The Lord's Prayer, repeated in every liturgy in our tradition, holds forgiveness at the center.

As the discussion about forgiveness unfolded at the Bible study, one person mentioned Anne Lamott's well-circulated insight about resentment. She compares withholding of forgiveness to drinking rat poison and hoping the rat dies. I have a photo by my office door, a reminder in my comings and goings. It's a picture of the small jail cell where Nelson Mandela spent 27 years. Soon after his release, he spoke of how he had forgiven his captors. Someone asked how he could possibly do that. He said if he failed to forgive, they would still have him in captivity.

That principle was echoed by Desmond Tutu who affirmed that there was no future without forgiveness. The study group noted recent examples in Amish communities or in Charleston where unspeakable injury was met with forgiveness. Amazing grace.

Our discussion ranged to include the challenges around forgiveness, the myth that you can forgive and forget, the annoying (or worse) difficulty of forgiving someone who is clueless or careless about the injury that person has inflicted, the depths of injury human beings inflict on each other, often most painfully in families. And sometimes in churches.

In my work, as we explore movement in the spiritual journey, a key topic we consider is forgiveness, beginning with the good news that we have been forgiven. We observe that an inability to practice forgiveness can be a stumbling block, an obstacle thwarting spiritual growth. I have a feeling that Jesus knew that, when he said (as we heard yesterday) that we are called to forgive, not just once, not just seven times, but seventy times seven. He calls for limitless forgiveness. Which of course, makes no sense.

Which brings me to the comment made by one of the participants in the study. This wise person (also wise guy) said that, in the end, he was committed to being a forgiving person just because Jesus said to do it. He compared it to his own family when he was growing up. At certain points, his parents instructed him to do something he wasn't inclined to do. In lively adolescent rebellion, he asked why. They said: Just because.

From his point of view, Jesus' call to forgiveness had little to do with whether we wanted to forgive, whether we felt like it, whether it was just or fair, whether it even felt possible. It was a matter of listening to our teacher who said that forgiveness is good for us. It was a matter of obedience. As followers of Jesus, we sometimes are led to practice forgiveness just because Jesus taught us to do it, trusting that Jesus knows stuff we don't, trusting that Jesus knows who we are, trusting that Jesus knows what it means to build loving, liberated lives.

Just because.

*-Jay Sidebotham*

*No one is incapable of forgiving and no one is unforgivable.*

*-Desmond Tutu*

*Always forgive your enemies; nothing annoys them so much.*

*- Oscar Wilde*

*To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you. - C.S.Lewis*

*Forgiveness is the fragrance that the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it.*

*- Mark Twain*

*Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies.*

*- Nelson Mandela*

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

-Ephesians 4:32

RenewalWorks is a ministry of Forward Movement.

<http://www.renewalworks.org>



*Office of Public Affairs*

## **A Word to the Church from the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops**

[September 26, 2017] The Episcopal Church House of Bishops, meeting in Fairbanks, Alaska (Diocese of Alaska) approved and presented the following Word to the Church.

### **A Word to the Church from The Episcopal Church's House of Bishops Gathered in Fairbanks, Alaska, September 21-26, 2017**

**The bishops of The Episcopal Church came to Alaska to listen to the earth and its peoples as an act of prayer, solidarity and witness. We came because:**

- *"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers"* (Psalm 24:1-2). God is the Lord of all the earth and of all people; we are one family, the family of God.
- *"You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are ... members of the household of God"* (Ephesians 2:19). The residents of interior Alaska whom we met are not strangers; they are members of the same household of faith.
- People have *"become hard of hearing, and shut their eyes so that they won't see with their eyes or hear with their ears or understand with their minds, and change their hearts and lives that I may heal them"* (Matthew 13:14-15). We are blind and deaf to the groaning of the earth and its peoples; we are learning the art of prayerful listening.

**What does listening to the earth and its people mean? For us bishops, it meant:**

- Getting out and walking the land, standing beside the rivers, sitting beside people whose livelihood depends on that land. We had to slow down and live at the pace of the stories we heard. We had to trust that listening is prayer.
- Recognizing that struggles for justice are connected. Racism, the economy, violence of every kind, and the environment are interrelated. We have seen this reality not only in the Arctic, but also at Standing Rock in the Dakotas, in the recent hurricanes, in Flint, Michigan, Charlottesville,

Virginia, and in the violence perpetuated against people of color and vulnerable populations anywhere.

- Understanding that listening is deeply connected to healing. In many healing stories in the gospels, Jesus asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” That is, he listened first and then acted.

#### **What did we hear?**

- “The weather is really different today,” one leader told us. “Now spring comes earlier, and fall lasts longer. This is threatening our lives because the permafrost is melting and destabilizing the rivers. We depend on the rivers.”
- The land in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge where the caribou birth their calves is called the “sacred place where life begins,” so sacred the Gwich’in People do not set foot there. “Drilling here,” people said, “is like digging beneath the National Cathedral.”
- After shopping together, a native Episcopalian told one of us how hard it is to even secure food. “We can’t get good food here. We have to drive to Fairbanks. It is a two-hour trip each way.”

What we bishops saw and heard in Alaska is dramatic, but it is not unique. Stories like these can be heard in each of the nations where The Episcopal Church is present. They can be heard in our own communities. We invite you to join us, your bishops, and those people already engaged in this work, in taking time to listen to people in your dioceses and neighborhoods. Look for the connections among race, violence of every kind, economic disparity, and the environment. Then, after reflecting in prayer and engaging with scripture, partner with people in common commitment to the healing of God’s world.

God calls us to listen to each other with increased attention. It is only with unstopped ears and open eyes that our hearts and lives will be changed. It is through the reconciling love of God in Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit that we and the earth itself will be healed.

#### **A Prayer for Our Time and for the Earth**

Dear God, Creator of the earth, this sacred home we share;  
Give us new eyes to see the beauty all around and to protect the wonders of creation.  
Give us new arms to embrace the strangers among us and to know them as family.  
Give us new ears to hear and understand those who live off the land  
and to hear and understand those who extract its resources.  
Give us new hearts to recognize the brokenness in our communities  
and to heal the wounds we have inflicted.  
Give us new hands to serve the earth and its people  
and to shape beloved community.  
For you are the One who seeks the lost,  
binds our wounds and sets us free,  
and it is in the name of Jesus the Christ we pray.  
Amen.

**Resources are here**

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/environment>

## **GRACE CHURCH STAFF**

Interim Rector	The Rev. Perry W. Polk
Associate	The Rev. David Cavanagh
Organist	Lynne Secrist
Senior Warden -	Gregg Wickham
Junior Warden-	Shane Tyler
Treasurer-	Gretchen Smith
Vestry—	Carol Allen, Linda Chandler, James Fulmer, Janet Heise, Scotty Hodges, Jim Klopstock, and Lynn Thomas.
Staff: Office Mgr./Bookkeeper:	Kim Worthen

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### *Our Mission:*

Welcome • Transform  
Build Up • Reach Out • Glorify God

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#### **PLEASE NOTE :**

Sharing Grace Articles are due by the **20TH OF EACH MONTH**. Please email submissions to [gracechurchff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gracechurchff@sbcglobal.net) as the office staff is consolidating information for the rector. \_\_\_\_\_

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