

WELCOME TO *St. Stephen the Martyr, ELCA*

Service Times: Saturday - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:00 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.



the **MARTYR MONTHLY**

DECEMBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

*St. Stephen the Martyr
Lutheran Church, ELCA*

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SSM STAFF

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Bob De Frank, Sunday School
Superintendent
Janet Snyder, Organist

2007 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Sat/Sunday, December 1 & 2 after services
Loose Ends Christmas Craft & Bake Sale

Saturday, December 8th - 5:00 PM
GALA CHRISTMAS CONCERT
with Senior & Children's Choir, Handbell Choir,
Soloists & Guest Choir
Followed by refreshments & Hors D'oeuvres

Sunday, December 16th - 6:30 PM
Sunday School Children's Christmas Program

Monday, December 24th
5:00 PM—Christmas Eve Family Worship
Service of Carols, & Readings
10:30 PM—Christmas Eve Holy
Communion Worship
Service of Carols, Readings and Special Music

Tuesday, December 25th - 9:30 AM
Worship with Holy Communion &
Special Music

Monday, December 31st - 5:00 PM
New Year's Eve Service
Joint Worship with St. Luke's Lutheran/Holy Communion



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PASTOR GAIL'S COMPUTER NOTES...

Can you believe it? This is the Advent/Christmas issue of our Martyr Monthly newsletter! Advent begins on the weekend of December 1-2 this year, as we begin to light the Advent candles and sing a lovely new hymn: "As the Dark Awaits the Dawn". Advent means 'coming'. But Advent also means 'waiting'. We are waiting in Advent for One who comes among us. We are waiting for the coming of the Lord! The question is always "What will we do while we wait?" Will we shop 'til we drop? Will we fill our list of things to do with so many items that our Lord can find no room to come? Will we try to 'buy happiness' for others and ourselves? Or will we find some ways to listen, and watch, and rest, and pray for His coming? I truly believe that more and more Christians are eager to discover ways to make Advent and Christmas an expression of their faith, to "put Christ into Christmas". They want this time of year to deepen ties of family and friendship. Many Christians recognize Advent and Christmastime as an indispensable part of their religious journey. They want to observe these seasons as a challenge to what usually goes on in life, a joyous interruption by God! I often sense a 'spirit of good-will' in our congregation, and more so, during Advent and Christmas. Our Human Concerns Committee works to give us opportunities to be active in doing good (see articles in this

newsletter and displays in our gathering space). John Rech Sr. reminds us to help the Salvation Army in their good work (see article elsewhere) And we all are learning to say "No!" to the pressures of giving and getting, just for the sake of it. Consider honoring a loved who already has too much to dust, by giving in their name to the ELCA Hunger Appeal, Lutheran Disaster Response, Heifer International, the Family Treatment Fund serving in Uganda (see article elsewhere!), or other worthy groups. And give yourself away this Christmas! Give your kids and grandkids less, and play with them more! Tutor a child, visit a shut-in, give a call to a lonely relative, or ask me for the name of someone who could use a call or a visit.

In Advent, we examine our lives, and we look to God for re-direction. Give it a try: confess what's out of whack in your life. Accept God's forgiveness and love. Accept the gift of Christ come to earth. Watch for Him in the world. Follow in his footsteps.

And be joyful! THE LORD IS COMING!

Praying that I will see all of you at worship in Advent and Christmas--these seasons of hope!

Your partner in the Gospel,

Pastor Gail

FORWARD MOVING TEAM

Dear Congregation,

The mission statement of St. Stephen the Martyr Church is: "We come together in Word and Sacrament that we might go to live and serve in the grace of Jesus Christ our Lord." Staying true to our mission, it is important that we evaluate the needs of SSM and our community from time to time. That being said, a Forward Planning Committee has been established by the Church Council.

The Forward Planning Committee's purpose is to establish a course of action for St. Stephen the Martyr over the next several years. This plan will lead to positive discussion regarding spiritual growth, programs, outreach, facilities, staffing, and many other possibilities. The process will offer all SSM members the chance to provide input in setting the future direction of our congregation.

Opportunities will exist to share your thoughts as the process evolves. It is imperative that we hear from every member as we gather ideas and opinions. The Forward Planning Committee consists of the following members:

Pastor Gail Brodersen-Heins, Jim Arneson, Bob DeFrank, Tim Falksen, Bob Gleason, John Muroi, Eric Sanders, Julie Starks

This committee encourages your questions and comments throughout the process. Please keep this committee in your prayers and prayerfully consider your thoughts and guidance for our future.

Yours in Christ,

John Muroi, Council President



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Women's Bible Study will meet on December 12 at 10:15 a.m.

Join us as we study the scripture texts for the following weekend.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT & BAKE SALE

DECEMBER 1ST & 2ND

FOLLOWING THE SERVICES

The Ladies of the Loose Ends have been busy preparing for the Christmas Craft and Bake Sale. We welcome and appreciate your personal donations of baked goods. If you have donations, please bring your baked goods on Saturday from 2-4 pm, or early Sunday prior to the services.

Don't forget to bid on our Silent Auction items! Bidding will close at 11:15 am on Sunday, December 1st.

Proceeds from this event will be donated to various service projects of the ladies of Loose Ends, Women of the ELCA.

FAMILY MINISTRY NEWS

UPCOMING EVENTS		
Dec 7		Lock-in @ Adoration Church
Dec 8	10:30 AM	Parents Day out
Dec 9	7:00 PM	Revolution!
Dec 15		Family Day for Salvation Army Bell Ringing

Save the Dates:

Saturday December 8th is an important day!

Parents, during and after the rehearsal for the Children's Christmas program, parents can drop off their kids at the Church for a day of fun under the careful watch of our teens, while mom and dad can scoot off to the mall for a day of kid-free Christmas gift buying! See Kori Kriewaldt or Stephanie Mayer with any questions and forthcoming details about Parent's Day Out.

Saturday December 15th - Bell Ringing

Second, the next week, is St. Stephen the Martyr Youth and Family day for Salvation Army Bell Ringing at Southridge Mall. Please speak with Kevan or John Rech to sign up for a time to participate in this important service event!

Another 'Save the Date':

A week of mission work together as family and friends for the whole congregation this coming August!

The feedback from last summer's Congregational Mission Trip to Imago Dei Village was overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Many people who were not able to go last year have already expressed an interest in going this year. If you need to request vacation time for next summer by the end of this year, mark your calendars for August 10 - 15!

Note: REVOLUTION! this month is moved to Dec. 9th due to the Children's Pageant on the 16th.

HOLD ON TO YOUR HAT, IT'S CHRISTMAS!

The angels are in charge of delivering boxes of hats to everyone in the Christmas story and the hats have arrived just in time! Each hat box includes a note: "Hold on to your hat, and remember that God is always with you."

Mary and Joseph receive their hats in a barn in Bethlehem and are reminded that God will be with them as a new family. The shepherds receive practical hats for their work in the fields and are reminded that God is always with them - which is quite a promise, because the sheep really keep them moving! The wisemen know that God has been with them in their search to find the savior and they trust that God will continue to be with them as they finish their journey. You'll be surprised by what the wisemen do with their hats!

This Christmas musical invites you hold on to your hat as you celebrate Jesus - God's promise to always be with us . . . Emmanuel.

Please join us Sunday December 16th at 6:30pm as the SSM Sunday School presents Hold on to Your Hat - It's Christmas! A juice & cookie reception will be held in Fellowship hall following the program.

Attention Sunday School Families

Christmas program rehearsals:

-Saturday December 1st at 9am for all speaking and acting parts only

-Saturday December 8th & 15th at 9am for all Sunday School Students. If a child is unable to attend any of the rehearsals please contact me as soon as possible.

The children will be performing at the Senior Choir Concert on Saturday December 8th, please have children read to warm up in the Luther Room by 4:30pm.

On December 16th, we will meet for warm-up in the Luther Room at 5:45pm, handchimes will meet at 5:20 in the Sanctuary.

What to Wear: plain white shirt/blouse & black pants/skirt on the 16th. Once again this year we ask that children bring winter hats, mittens, etc. (wrapped in tissue paper as A Gift for the Christ Child and a dozen cookies—for refreshments after the program.

~Stephanie Mayer

3-4-5 TO PASSING ON THE FAITH

(from Frogs without Legs Can't Hear by David W. Anderson & Paul Hill)

Over the past few months we have been looking at the 5 Principles in the 3-4-5 program. The first of these is 'Faith is formed by the power of the Holy Spirit through personal, trusted relationships.'

With this one we looked at *John 1:35-44* and saw that as Jesus started his ministry and gathered his disciples, some were disciples of John the Baptist. As they travel and gather more disciples, we find they are relatives and friends of the first two. We, too, receive our faith very often from those we know and love.

The next principal is 'the Church is a living partnership between home and congregation.' Here we looked at *Acts 2:42-47* during the beginning of the Christian church and how they met in one another's homes and learned to work together showing love as they shared their resources with everyone as they had a need.

The third principal, 'where Christ is present in faith, the home is church, too,' looks back to *Deut. 6:4-9* where the Israelites learned how to pass on their faith to their children. We are told to love God with every part of our body. Heart, soul, mind and strength. With Christ being present, we can live out his teachings in all that we do.

In the fourth principle we are told that 'faith is caught more than taught.' In *Matt 16:16-19*, we see that Peter answers Christ's question of who he is. He is "the Messiah, Son of the living God." He wasn't told this, but the Holy Spirit revealed it as Peter saw it and experienced everyday life with Jesus; spending time with him day in and day out, just as we should do. When we spend time with our living Christ, in devotions, prayer and Bible reading, we can then model the Christian life to those in our 'personal, trusted relationships.'

The last of the principles is 'If we want Christian children and youth, we need Christian adults and parents.' This is almost redundant with some of the other principles and yet it defines what we are to do. When we look at *Proverbs 4:1-4*, we see that in some Bibles it is subtitled 'Parental Advice.' As parents we must live our lives as examples of Christ and his teachings. If we live this way in the church building and at home, then our youth will see and follow our example, not just our words. The church isn't just a building we go to on Saturday evening or Sunday morning. The church is a living body that is spread across the entire world. We go to a building to worship and grow together in faith that we might take the love of Christ to all the world, whether it is in our neighborhood or around the world.

COMING UP NEXT IN THE SERIES: The 4 Keys—not keys to a house, a car or locker, but keys to live out our faith in everyday life: Caring Conversations, Devotions, Service and Rituals and Traditions. Until next time, peace be with you.

~ Tim Falksen

Contact our Discipleship Coach, Kevan Penvose: 414-258-0858 stillierz7@yahoo.com



Next Music & Worship Meeting
Wednesday, December 5 @ 6 pm

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED for all areas of Music & Worship: ushers, communion set-up, communion servers, lay readers... NOW is the time to volunteer! Help is always needed and appreciated. We are also seeking new members for our committee. Call Karen Rasmussen (414) 421-5170 to start the new year right by serving at SSM! We'd love to have you!

USHER NOTES

Time is drawing near to create the usher schedule for February—mid-June, 2008. If any usher -- currently serving -- does not wish to continue, please contact Bob Rasmussen @ 421 - 5170 or via his church mailbox. All others will remain with their present usher team, and be scheduled to work for the coming late winter/spring church services.

Also, anyone who would like to join our usher team is welcome, and can indicate this to Bob with a telephone call or a note. On-the-job training will be provided and you'll be assigned to join a "veteran team".

New usher schedules will appear in the mailboxes of ushers in mid-January. Note that because of the suggested downturn in the economy, usher pay will remain as is, so plan accordingly for the coming year! Thanks to all who have ushered this past year. Your service to your church is greatly appreciated.

WHY PARAMENT COLORS CHANGE

The first Sunday of Advent, December 2nd, this year begins the new church year. Royal blue, the color of hope, marks this season of waiting. The theme is "from the darkness to the coming light."

We also note the presence of the Advent Wreath which originated in Europe for home use after the Reformation in the 1500's.

The parament color changes to white with Christmas. The white indicates the light and purity of Christ and joy at the birth.

CAROLING, CAROLING, NOW WE GO!

Come young, come old and everyone in between!

December 17, 5:30 p.m.

Join us for a Family Christmas Caroling Adventure! We plan to have a snack at church and caravan from SSM at 6:10 pm to go caroling to shut-ins in our area and enjoy a hot chili supper afterward. Sign up sheet is in the narthex.

Advent & Christmas Concert - December 8th - 5pm

The music ministry of SSM will present a concert of Advent and Christmas favorites, Hymn Singing, and excerpts from Handel's Messiah!

Participating ensembles include the Senior Choir, Bell Choir, Children's Choir, and the Pewaukee High School Madrigal Choir.

**Reception to Follow the
December 8th
Christmas Concert**

An hors d'oeuvre and dessert reception will be held immediately following the concert.

A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board outside the church office.

Please let us know if you plan on attending, how many will be attending and if you are willing to provide either a 'hardy' hors d'oeuvre or dessert to share.



"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age,"
(Matt. 28:19-20).

SSM Member Highlights

In September, Pastor Gail received a request from Lutheran Social Services for help with some house projects at a group home in Greendale. Thanks to members Jay Chadwick, Gordy Flohr, John Hoffman, Faith O'Connell, Ron Ropel and Dick Rutzen, bushes were trimmed, the gutters were cleaned and the trim on the house was painted. Thanks for your service to our community.

World Aids Day is December 1st. Member Sarah Raasch will represent The Family Treatment Fund (which provides AIDS medication to poor Ugandan families) with photos from her 2005 trip to Uganda at an exhibit at the Milwaukee City Hall Rotunda. The event begins on Friday, Nov. 30th and will continue the following week. SAVE A LIFE THIS CHRISTMAS. Give to The Family Treatment Fund. Brochures are available in the Narthex.

Milwaukee High School of the Arts Winter Concert will be Sat. Dec. 15 at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. The concert will feature Choral excerpts from Handel's Messiah.

Lutheran Social Services

Living longer brings blessings as well as growing needs. To help meet those daily needs, LSS of WI and Upper MI offers adult day services from a variety of locations.

Centers in numerous communities offer socialization, personal care, health monitoring, nutritious meals and snacks, exercise, educational programming, and entertainment in a home-like environment.

Personalized care such as medication monitoring is also offered at all sites, and assistance with bathing is available at some locations.

These community-based group programs are designed to meet the needs of functionally and/or cognitively impaired adults. They assist people to stay in their family home longer and provide respite to caregivers.

Experience has shown that socialization and stimulation add greatly to the quality of life for people who might otherwise be isolated and depressed. For more info visit us on the web at www.lsswis.org or 1-800-216-3437.

Human concerns

Next meeting is December 4th at 6:30 p.m. Call Shirley Lieske with questions: 761-0734

Helping to Give Christmas Blessings To Those in Prison the House of Corrections

We will be collecting small items/Christmas gifts for the folks at the House of Correction in Franklin. Take an ornament from our Giving Tree and please return the gift on or before Sunday, December 16th. No need to wrap them!

Waukesha Prison

On Saturday, December 15th at 9:00 a.m. we will gather in the church kitchen to bake Christmas Cookies. Young and old are welcome to join in the baking and maybe sample a cookie or two. Cookies will be delivered to Waukesha prison on December 17th.

Knit Wits

The next Knit Wits meeting will be December 3rd at 6:30 p.m. Please join us!

ELCA WORLD HUNGER APPEAL IN ADVENT

"Go and Do Likewise" Luke 10:37

ELCA World Hunger responds to Christ's call to "Go and do likewise," serving with compassion, people who are most vulnerable, paying focused attention to the full participation of women and the needs of children.

ELCA World Hunger is a comprehensive and sustainable program that uses multiple strategies—relief, development, education and advocacy—to address the root causes of hunger and poverty. ELCA World Hunger responds to neighbors around the world through both domestic and international efforts. How are your gifts used? Gifts to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal total well over \$18 million each year, with a goal to grow to \$25 million per year. Out of each dollar contributed, over 70¢ will go to international hunger relief and development work. In total, over 90 percent of every gift provides direct support for our church's hunger ministry, with fundraising and communication.

The Human Concerns Committee of SSM will have available World Hunger Appeal Boxes or the enclosed envelope for your use during the advent season. Please make any checks payable to SSM. Together in Christ's Name, let's make a difference this year!



COFFEE NEWS

So far in 2007, the Mt. Meru Coffee Project has sold \$119,000 worth of coffee! There are 85 congregations in the Greater Milwaukee Synod who participate and sell coffee. There are also some commercial sales of the bulk coffee and some mail order accounts.

Think of all the coffee farmers in the Meru Diocese who are benefiting from the sale of their coffee to the people in the Milwaukee area! It is a great success story. Farmers receive \$2.00 per pound for their coffee. Not only that, but monies left over from shipping, grinding, packaging, etc. are also returned to the Meru Diocese to use on various projects there. Thanks again to all our SSM customers. If anyone is interested in helping with this worthwhile endeavor, please call or contact Carol Birk @ 421-6162. It is a good way to volunteer, especially if you like marketing or sales.

For Christmas, we will have gift bags available for \$15.00. Each gift bag includes a bag of Meru coffee and a decorative hand carved gourd ornament from Kenya. In addition, don't forget that a bag of Mt. Meru is a great hostess gift. Asante Sana—Thank You!

Doing Justice Never Tasted So Good!

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR AMERICAN SOLDIERS

When you make out Christmas Cards this most blessed season, please prepare and send an extra card to:
A Recovering American Soldier
C/O Walter Reed Army Medical Center
6900 Georgia Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20307-5001

Christmas Gifts for Bay View Community Center

Once again this year SSM will help the Bay View Community Center collect Christmas gifts for needy children and elderly senior citizens. We have chosen to help 15 children and 15 seniors. For each person we are hoping to send three presents.

Watch for the poster in the narthex for instructions. There will be 3 cards for each person, each one with a different gift idea. If you can't find the exact item, something close will be fine. Select a card and return the gift with the card securely attached. This is important, as that is how the recipient is

identified. Bay View will pick up the gifts the morning of Monday, December 17. Gifts may be wrapped or unwrapped.

Thank you for continuing the Christmas tradition of giving and sharing with those who need a helping hand.

-Human Concerns

Stewardship

Next Stewardship Meeting is December 4th at 7:00 pm.

In our current stewardship drive, as of 11/15/07, we have received 120 pledge cards for a total of \$193,740 for the General Fund, and \$42,386 for the Building Fund.

Our goal is to have every household make a commitment to be a generous giver in 2008 by returning a pledge card.

Just Say Yes! And you can still make your pledge. Please review your giving for 2007 and help make up the deficit of approximately \$10,000 prior to the end of the year.

The ministry at St. Stephen the Martyr is a vibrant and growing ministry. Let's keep it that way.

When speaking of Stewardship it is very important to include your time and talents in your faith journey.

We affirm our faith by our actions. The use of our talents for God's work are acts of stewardship. The deeper and stronger our faith, the more we will perform acts of love that further the mission of St.

Stephen the Martyr.

Thank you!

~ Stewardship Committee

OTHER NOTES

MISSIONARY HOLIDAY GREETINGS

Christmas Greetings from our missionary family the Grow-Hansons in Senegal, Peter, Sarah, Elijah, and Simon. They appreciate our continued support for them as another year goes by.

They ask for prayers for the Lutheran church of Senegal (ELS), as it learns by trial and error how to reach out beyond its ethnic base. Pray for all of the outsiders looking in, that they might be a help, rather than a hindrance

in the progress. In the past few years, there has been a desire on the part of the ELCA and the ELS to work

more closely together, to build on one another's strengths, rather than continuing to foster separate and at times competing Lutheran ministries in Senegal. As the pastors and community members get to know one another, the desire to work together grows.

Peter has a fairly new BLOG on the internet called "A Lutheran in Senegal".

He writes once or twice a week.

Go to: growhansonsenegal.typepad.com Interesting articles like "Flies in the Communion Wine," "Cost of Living Adjustments," "New Member Sunday," and others.

Check it out!

Ba bennen yoon ak jamm (peace until next time)

FIRST FRIDAY POTLUCK

You are cordially invited to come to our Christmas Potluck!

All are welcome, especially those who live alone. Bring non-perishable food items for the Food Pantry.

December 7, 6 pm

Bring a main dish, salad or dessert. Sign up on the bulletin board.

Questions: Call Sue Jarchow

@ 421-9031

Lutheran Choir Christmas Concert

The Lutheran A Cappella Choir of Milwaukee will present its Christmas concert, "A Ceremony of Carols," on Sunday, Dec. 2nd at 3:00PM at Capitol Drive Lutheran Church, 5305 W. Capitol Drive, Milwaukee.

The concert will feature Benjamin Britten's "A Ceremony of Carols" and a set of sparkling arrangements of traditional carols by Jackson Berkey.

Admission is \$12.00 or \$10.00 for seniors and students. Tickets may be purchased at the door or by calling 262-521-4545. A portion of this concert is being underwritten by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

For more information, visit our website at www.lutheranacappella.org.

CONDENSED MINUTES—NOVEMBER 13, 2007

(A complete set of Minutes can be found on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex)

All Council members were present except C. Malinowski and S. Larson. Pastor Gail Broderson-Heins and Kevan Penrose were also present.

Approvals: The Secretary's minutes from the September 11th, 2007 were reviewed and accepted. The minutes from the October 20th, 2007 meeting were reviewed and accepted with these changes: we did not review and accept the September minutes at the October meeting and under Pastor's Time - it should state "Pastor Gail Broderson - Heins recognized G. Jacobsen and E. Sanders for teaching the third grade Sunday School program." The Financial Secretary's Report was reviewed and accepted. The Treasurer's Report was discussed. J. Bugajski reported that we are currently short \$11,823.03 in year to date offerings. J. Bugajski reported that he had sent checks to Southwest Inter-Faith, Lutheran Social Services, Hanson-Grow Ministry and Cristo Rey.

Pastor's Time: Pastor thanked C. Malinowski and her Stewardship Committee for mailing and compiling

pledge cards and for speaking at past church services. The Choirs Advent/Christmas concert will be on Saturday, December 8th and will take the place of the regular service. A reception will follow. Pastor Gail reported that Pastor Paul Baumann and his wife Rae have transferred to SSM. Pastor Baumann recently retired from King of Glory Lutheran church in Greenfield. Pastor thanked J. Arneson for organizing the fall clean-up and E. Arneson for helping clean. Pastor Gail stated that Pastor C. Aranda of Cristo Rey has resigned after defending a member of his staff, over the direction of Bishop Paul Stumme-Diers. She asked that everyone keep Cristo Rey and Pastor Aranda in their prayers.

Old Action Items: J. Muroi thanked everyone that attended the Council retreat held on Friday, October 19th and Saturday, October 20th.

New Action Items: K. Penrose gave the council an overview on how many of our youth become inactive members after being confirmed. This is a major concern for all ELCA churches, not just SSM. He asked that we continue to pray and study the problem and asked the council for suggestions on how we can keep our youth involved in worship services. The council agreed that the Forward Moving Team, formerly known as the Long Range Planning Committee discuss these concerns at their meetings. K. Penrose also suggested that at future council meetings he would bring different models from other churches that have successful youth involvement. S. Lubus discussed some recent criminal activity near church, one that included an attempt burglary to the church. She volunteered to have a representative from an alarm company prepare an estimate on the cost of an alarm system for the church. The rest of the meeting was devoted to reviewing the proposed 2008 church budget, prepared by J. Miller. Each council committee chair reported on their monetary needs for 2008. There was a lengthy discussion on how much the church should donate to various organizations, such as World Hunger, the ELCA Synod Greater Benevolence, Hanson and Grow fund, etc. After reviewing the proposed budget, it was decided that the Executive Committee would meet prior to the December council meeting, to review the budget again, make suggestions and present their findings to the rest of the council. Pastor Gail thanked J. Miller for her hard work in preparing the 17 page report. The meeting adjourned at 9:55 P.M. The next council meeting will be held on December 11th, 2007.

Respectfully Submitted, Shellee Lubus, Church Secretary

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