



Zion Lutheran Church
308 Lambert Street
PO Box 56
Oklee, MN 56742
218-796-5128

Oklee Lutheran Parish

July 2025

Marijo Vik, SAM
931-203-4106
Parish Secretary Bonny Cote
bcote@okleelutheran.org
612-840-9401



Salem Lutheran Church
29531 180th St SE
PO Box 56
Oklee, MN 56742

Check out our website: OkleeLutheran.org

There's Bad News...And Good News

Last month, I wrote about current predictions of drastic declines in membership for all mainline churches, including the ELCA. That's bad news.

But there is good news...if we only know what to do with it.

Another current study shows surprising statistics that give new hope to those same churches. The past showed Elders (born before 1946) and Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) as more committed Christians than younger generations.

However, since 2021, there has been a groundswell in people declaring a "personal commitment to Jesus", especially those in the groups known as Millennials (born between 1984 and 1998, ages 41 through 27) and Gen Z (born between 1999 and 2015, ages 26 through 10).

According to the latest data, 66 percent of all U.S. adults say **they have made a personal commitment to Jesus that is still important in their life today**. That marks a 12-percentage-point increase since 2021, when commitment levels reached their lowest point of 54 percent, in over 30 years of tracking.

This shift is not only statistically significant—it **may be the clearest indication of meaningful spiritual renewal in the United States**. Since then, the research shows a steady, year-over-year increase in the key indicator. This multi-year **climb** in public sentiment **toward** Jesus equates to nearly 30 million more U.S. adults who claim to be following Jesus today than in 2021

David Kinnaman, CEO of Barna Group says, "Many people have predicted the growing irrelevance of Christianity; however, this data

shows that spiritual trends have a dynamism and can, indeed, change. This is the clearest trend we've seen in more than a decade, pointing to spiritual renewal—and it's the first time Barna has recorded such spiritual interest being led by younger generations."

Another counterintuitive trend: men—especially younger men—are more likely to be Jesus followers than are younger women.

Many people are now open to spirituality and Jesus, but are **hesitant to embrace organized religion** or identify as Christian...they want to be affiliated with Jesus, but not with the Church or with Christianity as a religious identity—at **least not yet**.

This is a moment both to celebrate and to steward. People are open—perhaps as much as any time in recent memory—to Jesus. Kinnaman says, "Christians should be encouraged to hold greater confidence in the gospel and to meet this significant opportunity by cultivating deep-rooted discipleship."

As Christian leaders navigate this changing landscape, one thing is clear: Jesus is still attracting people—even those who have left the pews or never sat in them. The opportunity is not just to count commitments and membership, but to help shape people into strong, lifelong disciples who share Christ with others.

If churches can meet people with openness, authenticity, humility, and a focus on discipleship, they may find fresh opportunities to minister and help all people, including Millennials and Gen Z, grow in faith.

More next month on how we measure what matters in ministry.

<https://www.barna.com/research/belief-in-jesus-rises/>

Salem Celebrates 130 Years on July 13, 2025

Officially organized in 1895, Salem Lutheran Church is one of the oldest churches still operating in Red Lake County. A celebration to recognize the 130 years is planned for Sunday, July 13. A parish worship service (it's a communion Sunday) will be held at 10am—notice the time—followed by dinner. After dinner, a program is planned for 1pm. Former pastors who are planning to attend are Kirsten Frantsvog, Rolf Wangberg, Linda Molitor (afternoon only), and Bob Paulson is questionable depending upon his mother's health. Greetings from these people as well as Bishop Bill Tesch will be on the afternoon program, as well as a video about Salem's history. You just might see yourself in this one! There will be time for visiting and sharing memories of Salem. Think of your favorite memory of Salem and be prepared to share. Salem History Book and other mementos will be available.



Birthdays

- 2: Andy Lukkes
- 7: Sheryl Fore
- 11: Molly Smith
- 13: Braxton Verbout
- 14: Phyllis Linder
Jenny Linder
- 18: Orlean Stoneouse
- 19: Sara Olson
Jordan Larson
- 21: Sami Smith
- 22: Isaac Melby
- 23: Stacey Hofstad
Larry (Snook) Olson
- 25: Easton Vettleson
- 26: Brenen Christianson

Anniversaries

- 4: Rod & Toni Johnson
- 12: Orlean & Ginny Stoneouse
- 14: Chad & Amy Parsley
- 17: Andy & Megan Lukkes
- 20: Ron & Ellen Hegge
- 31: Leif & Jill Kolstoe

If you would like to add a birthday or anniversary, contact Bonny Cote at 218-796-4688 or email: bcote@okleelutheran.org

For meal planning for the Salem anniversary, RSVPs are requested by July 2 using the link on the okleelutheran.org website.



During this time of transistion, remember that without a permanent leader, it is important for others to step up and do what needs to be done. The SAM and Pastors we have been hiring do not know all the stuff that needs to be done at our individual churches and how we have done events in the past. Please step up and use your time and talents to keep everything running smoothly and know that you all are a treasure!

okleelutheran.org

It works on your phone or computer web browser. Our website is updated every Sunday night. Check on Mondays for new announcements.

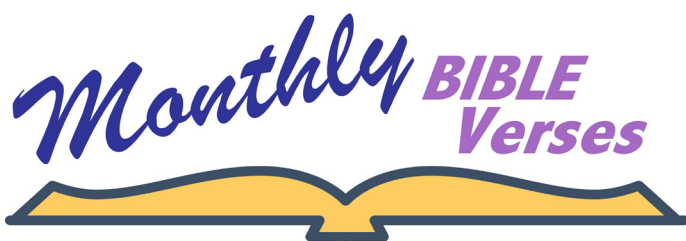
We encourage you to sign-up on our website for emails. Stay informed about upcoming events and special posts to our website. Go to the bottom of any page and look for Subscribe to our emails. Complete the form. We promise no more than 3 emails a month will be sent.

There are links to our Facebook page and YouTube channel.

~ Parish News ~



Current leaders have stepped down effective Jan 1, 2025. If interested in serving as Youth Group leaders, please reach out to the Parish Board.



July 6:

Isaiah 66:10-14; Psalm 66:1-9;
Galatians 6:[1-6] 7-16; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

July 13:

Deuteronomy 30:9-14; Psalm 25:1-10;
Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37

July 20:

Genesis 18:1-10a; Psalm 15;
Colossians 1:15-28; Luke 10:38-42

July 27:

Genesis 18:20-32; Psalm 138;
Colossians 2:6-15 [16-19]; Luke 11:1-13



• Zion's next council meeting is **Wednesday, August 6th** at 7:00 p.m.

• Salem's next council meeting is **Tuesday, August 12th** at 6:30 p.m.

• The Parish Board meeting will be on

Tuesday, September 9th at 7:00 p.m.

Please attend your meetings!
It is important to be there to support your church & community.

HOME VISITS

Marijo Vik would like to have a visitation schedule for every other Sunday after worship starting May 4th.

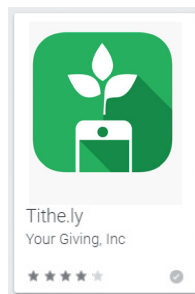
Dates for July would be July 13 and July 27.

Please call Marijo Vik at 931-203-4106 if you want to schedule a visit from her on the dates listed.

If a family member is calling for a loved one, please let them know what day Marijo is coming to visit.

Update: You now have six choices to choose from to make your donation:

- Oklee Lutheran Parish
- Parish Youth Group
- Zion Church
- Salem Church
- Zion Cemetery
- Salem Cemetery



Please continue to be generous in your support!

Use the Tithe.ly app

The Link is on our website:
okleelutheran.org
or

Try our QR Code

Thank You!!



**Thank You
For Giving
This Summer**



Joint Services for the month of July

Salem Ushers List

Sun. July 6: None
 Sun. July 13: Ron Hegge
 Sun. July 20: None
 Sun. July 27: Lisa Kolstoe

Zion Ushers List

Sun. July 6: Kari Hamm
 Sun. July 13: None
 Sun. July 20: Sarah Jo Lee
 Sun. July 27: None

*** Remember, if you are not able to usher the date you are assigned, it is your responsibility to find your replacement.***

Salem News

Salem WELCA Meets

This month the meeting is set for Wednesday, July 2nd at 7:00 p.m. at the Church. Jane Kolstoe is the Bible Study Leader and the Hostess. All ladies of the congregation are encouraged to attend.

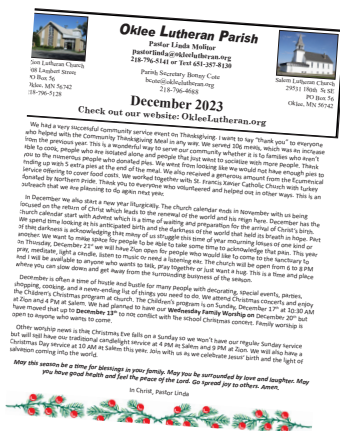
Salem Cemetery Reminder

Reminder that flowers, solar lights, etc. need to be removed by July 1 from the Salem cemetery. Items not removed by July 1 will be discarded.

Update: In order to keep the cost of postage down, Oklee Lutheran Parish's Mailing Permit needs 200 people on the list to qualify for the cheaper rate.

So, if you know someone who would like to get the newsletter or should be added to the list for the newsletter, please contact Bonny Cote at 612-840-9401 or email her at bcote@okleelutheran.org to add them on to the list.

Thank you for the new names I've added to the list.



2025 Zion Altar Schedule

July: VACANT-need new person
 August: Ione Nelson/Amanda Nelson
 September: Kaye Munt
 October: Sheryl Fore/Jo Ann Lerohl
 November: Diane Hanson
 December: Patty Mickelson

2025 Salem Altar Schedule

July - Toni Johnson
 August - Holly Spong
 September - Stacey Hofstad
 October - Paula & Kendra Christianson
 November - Jill Kolstoe

Severe Weather Contact System

The system will use your cell number if it was provided or else we will use home number on record in directory. It works best with cell phone numbers because if you have Garden Valley's option (press 8) it won't go through.

Also have noticed some numbers need to be updated. Please text your name to Bonny at 612.840.9401 to add cell information to the system.

This service will also be used for meeting notices and church service cancellations or other urgent situations.

**** UPDATED ****

Follow Oklee Lutheran Parish on **FACEBOOK & YouTube**
The Worship Service airs on Channel 35 on Wednesdays at 1 pm and Sunday at 10 a.m.
Facebook and YouTube are first available at 1 p.m. on Wednesdays.



Pictures are Appreciated for the newsletter.

Please consider taking and sharing pictures of special services and events.

Salem Council Minutes

SALEM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 10, 2025

Meeting was held at Salem. In attendance were: Erica Motteberg, Shirley Dessellier, Ginny Stonehouse, Alice Hofstad, David Hofstad, Ron Hegge, Wyatt Vettleson, Kyle Vettleson, Leif Kolstoe, Lisa Kolstoe, and Marijo Vik

Meeting was called to order by President David Hofstad. SAM Marijo Vik lead the group in prayer.

Secretary's Report was read by Alice Hofstad. Alice had a correction to the Secretary's Report. The motion was to not go forward with the updated Church Directory instead of the motion being made to approve pictures in the history book. Motion to accept Secretary's Report - 1st by Leif Kolstoe; 2nd by Ron Hegge

Financial Secretary's report was read by Kyle Vettleson. Offerings received as of June 10th are \$24,586.78. Budgeted amount to date is \$27,796.48. We are under budget by \$3,209.70. Motion to accept Financial Secretary's report – 1st by Erica Motteberg; 2nd by Wyatt Vettleson.

Treasurer's Report was read by Lisa Kolstoe. Motion to accept Treasurer's Report – 1st by Ginny Stonehouse; 2nd by Shirley Dessellier.

Pastor's/SAM Report: Marijo resumed services on April 1, 2025. She has had the funeral for Morris Hendrickson, met with Confirmation Students and participated in the making of the stoles with both churches. She attended both confirmation banquets. She officiated the Bennet Larson funeral and the Leona Christianson funeral is this weekend at Zion. She has visited Don and Alma Stenberg and Brian Peterson. She has been asked to be part of a Multipoint Affinity Group. She will be attending a Synod conference meeting in Plummer. She was contacted by Our Savior's Lutheran Church in McIntosh to see if she would be available to help as their Parish has broken up. She offered to do Wednesday evening services with their church for the time being.

Old Business: Lisa is going to contact Bonny to get a membership list to update a member directory. The picnic went well. There was a suggestion to not serve brats in the future and do just hamburgers and hotdogs instead. The first bathroom is in the process of being remodeled. The Board of Education cleaned the storage areas in the basement. A picture that is in memory of Otto Kvasager needs to be reframed or stored. Ron is going to reach out to Joel Kvasager to see if he would like the picture. It was suggested to have the carpets cleaned after the 130th celebration and Vacation Bible School.

The 130th Anniversary celebration is a month away. Alice completed the history book, and they are available for preorder. There will be a hotdish dinner served after church services. Alice has confirmation that four former Pastors are planning on attending. Coffee and bars will be served in the afternoon after the program. We will contact Brennen Christianson about mowing at the church the week of the celebration. Lisa will reach out to JMS Portajohn to get pricing on two portable toilets.

New Business: Vacation Bible School is August 4-7th. There was a discussion regarding the possibility of becoming a 3-point parish with the inclusion of Our Saviors in McIntosh. Salem agreed that we are willing to consider pairing with McIntosh. David will present this at the Parish Board meeting. Erica brought up the idea of building an enclosed storage closet on the South wall in the entry for excess supplies. Ginny brought the paper towel dispensers that she ordered for the bathrooms. A vote was made to install the black dispensers in the bathrooms.

Motion was made to adjourn. Motion to accept – 1st by Leif Kolstoe; 2nd by Wyatt Vettleson

Next council meeting is August 12 at 6:30.

Salem Financials

Salem Lutheran Church

Beginning Balance April 8, 2025		\$37,677.18
Income:		
Offerings		\$5,293.00
RLC Coop Dividend		\$137.84
Total Cash Available		\$43,108.02
Expenses:		
NWMN Synod	\$300.00	
North Star Mutual Ins	\$4,745.00	
RLC	\$181.19	
Total Expenses		\$5,226.19
Ending Balance April 30, 2025		\$37,881.83
Income:		
Offerings		
Trans from Building Fund		\$1,200.00
Total Cash Available		\$39,081.83
Expenses:		
Parish	\$4,237.80	
Jamie Peterson	\$1,200.00	
RLC	\$327.19	
Oklee Lumber	\$1,202.23	
Total Expenses		\$6,967.22
Ending Balance May 31, 2025		\$32,114.61
Income:		
Offerings		
Total Cash Available		\$0.00
Expenses:		
Total Expenses		\$4,237.80
Ending June 9, 2025		\$27,876.81

Cemetery Perpetual Care Savings:	\$13,636.25
Interest	\$64.72
Deposit: Donations	\$0.00
Memorials:	

Cemetery Maintenance Fund Savings:	\$8,959.94
Income: Thrivent	\$61.45
Interest	\$33.15
Deposits:	\$175.00
To General Fund	

Building Fund Savings	\$4,275.91
Interest	\$23.33
Deposits:	
Transfers	(\$2,402.23)

Memorial Fund Savings:	\$3,189.55
Interest	\$11.81
Memorials:	

CD #14297	\$14,637.75	Cemetery Perp. Care	4.50% Maturity	7/25/2026
CD #14298	\$6,128.31	Cemetery Maint.	4.50% Maturity	7/25/2026

Zion Minutes & Financials

Zion Lutheran Church Meeting Minutes Date: June 3rd, 2025

6/1/2025
Zion Lutheran Church
Financial Statement

Members Present: Cheryl O'Neill, Chad Parsley, Patty Mickelson, Sarah Beth Lee, Gin Berns, Jami Hendrickson. Also in attendance: Marijo Vik, SAM; Marcella Melby, Treasurer

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY President, Cheryl O'Neill. Prayer read by Marijo.

The secretary's report was read. 1st Chad 2nd Patty. Motion Approved

Pastor's Report: Marijo gave an update on what she's been busy with since her return in April. She started services on April 6th for Salem and Zion, which included the Easter Services and Confirmation services. She was present at the prayer service and funeral for both Morris Hendrickson and Bennet Larson. She helped confirmation students decorate their stoles at Zion and Salem, attended Zion's confirmation luncheon, and the banquet at Salem. On the 28th, she did a visitation in Crookton. She will be gone on June 15th: Kevin Wright will sub. Bishop Tesch sent a text wondering about Zion's Statement of Intent for Mission Support. Cheryl has the info and will send it on. Our Savior's Lutheran Church in McIntosh approached Marijo to see if she would be interested in leading worship at 5:30 on Wednesdays. She asked the Zion council if there were any objections, and the council had no objections. She will be talking with Salem's council, as well. VBS and Youth Group/ Youth Group leaders were discussed. She also has questions about music changes and will talk to Bonny.

Treasurer's report: Submitted by Marcella Melby. Motion made to accept report: 1st - Patty, 2nd Gin. Motion Approved

Old Business: Zion will provide concessions and food for the truck pull on July 19th. Cheryl is working on getting concession food but is looking for more Thrivent cards and workers. The hamburger stand for Oklee Market Days will be discussed at the next meeting. Thrivent cards are always needed for ongoing fundraising. Work has started on the front steps that need repair.

Pay Chelsey Vettleson \$500 for music. 1st- Patty 2nd- Sarah Beth Motion Approved

New Business: Cheryl has 3 quotes for a new air conditioner as the one at the church needs to be replaced. Chad will inquire about another quote. Cheryl will continue to ask around and get more information. McCliffy Breakfast will be after service on June 22nd, 2025. Confirmation options for the upcoming year were discussed with Marijo.

Ushering for July and August:

July 6: Kari	July 13: Joint at Salem
July 20: Sarah Jo Lee	July 27: TBD

August 3: Cheryl	August 10: TBD
August 17: Jami	August 24: Marcella
August 31: John	

Marijo led us in The Lord's Prayer.

Meeting adjourned: 1st - Gin 2nd - Chad
Motion Carried

Next meeting: Wednesday, August 6th, 2025

Submitted by Jami Hendrickson

Balance 4/1/2025		\$	1,131.89
Income			
Offerings	\$	6,796.40	
RLC SS Room Use Donation	\$	400.00	
Auction	\$	1,568.00	
Replace Cash from Auction	\$	250.00	
Thrivent Donation	\$	98.00	
Fish Fry Fundraiser	\$	106.00	
RLC Dividend Check	\$	144.41	
Total Income		\$	9,362.81
Budgeted Expenses			
Parish Pmt (Apr & May)	\$	7,500.70	
Ottertail	\$	489.27	
Cenex (fuel)	\$	42.90	
Richards Pub. - Fish Fry Ad	\$	54.00	
TRF Times - Fish Fry Ad	\$	105.71	
MN Dept. of Labor (Elevator Permit)	\$	100.00	
	\$	8,292.58	
Non- Budgeted Expenses			
	\$	-	
Total Expenses		\$	8,292.58
Ending Balance 5-31-2025		\$	2,202.12

Passbook Savings

Grace McManus Scholarship \$11,509.67
Note: Interest Earned beyond \$10,000 will be used for scholarships

Building Fund		\$4,850.47
Elevator	\$934.00	
Windows	\$3,056.78	
Undesignated	\$859.69	
Memorial Fund		\$7,801.81
Undesignated	\$5,172.10	
Sunday School	\$345.00	
Building Fund	\$2,154.71	
Elevator	\$130.00	



Parish Minutes & Financials

Parish Board meeting June 12, 2025 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Bonny C, Marijo V, Cheryl O, John P, David H, Gin B, Leif K.

David called the meeting to order.

Marijo started with a prayer.

The minutes from the last meeting were read. They were approved as read by Gin, seconded by Cheryl.

Financial report was given by Bonny. Bonny mentioned that if things continue as they are now, forgiveness should be considered at the end of the year. Financials were approved with a motion by Gin, seconded by Cheryl. Carried.

Pastor's Report: Marijo asked the board how involved she should be referencing Youth Leaders & Confirmation. Do we want her to help get this items moving. She would like to help.

She also brought up that "A New Journey Lutheran Parish" is desolving at the end of June and possibly Our Savior's would be interested in joining our Parish. More discussion on this at the next meeting. Marijo will be serving them on Wednesday evenings. Some council members thought they would go and meet their congregation.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Ziomin is asking for Forgiveness for the month of July to help pay for the new air conditioner. Salem would also receive forgiveness. Cheryl made a motion, Leif seconded. Carried.

Confirmation Banquet: The question was brought up does the Parish pay or the churches. Bonny answered: The Parish usually pays, but since both churches held their own confirmations - should each church pay. It was decided that each church should pay this year.

Block Party: July 15th - St. Francis will furnish the meats, Zion the salads and bars. Bonny will talk to Jo.

Parsonage: Is it being checked - Yes, Cheryl checks weekly.

July will have joint services for the entire month. Zion, Salem, Zion, Salem.

The next meeting is set for Tuesday, September 9th, at 7 p.m.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer at 8:05 p.m. Submitted by: Bonny Cote

Parish Banking Summary 1/1/2025 through 4/30/2025

Category	1/1/2025- 4/30/2025
INCOME	
Income	
Joint Service	15.00
Misc	79.46
Tithely	-135.00
TOTAL Misc	-55.54
Misc. No Budget	107.00
Salem	16,951.20
Zion	14,971.40
TOTAL Income	31,989.06
TOTAL INCOME	31,989.06
EXPENSES	
Operational	
Auto Expense	621.40
Computer Allowance	200.00
Electricity	276.00
Office Supplies	209.71
Copier	476.44
Programs	47.85
TOTAL Office Supplies	734.00
Postage	100.00
Newsletter	528.85
TOTAL Postage	628.85
Telephone	
Telephone Zion	263.95
TOTAL Telephone	263.95
Water-Garbage	957.66
TOTAL Operational	3,681.86
Program	
Bulletins Etc	519.76
Pulpit Supply	4,210.80
TOTAL Program	4,730.56
Salary	
Secretary	
FICA	0.00
Salary	1,600.00
TOTAL Secretary	1,600.00
TOTAL Salary	1,600.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	10,012.42
OVERALL TOTAL	21,976.64

Coloring Page

Jesus goes back to heaven.

Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11





Salem held a reception for its confirmands after the confirmation service on May 4.

Getting confirmed were Isabella Mitzner, Dylan Lundeen, Carter Larson, and Owen O'Neill. They were honored with a cake and gifts from the congregation.



Salem held their confirmation banquet on April 30. The basement was full with confirmands, parents, siblings, grandparents and special guests



Kitchen helpers for the confirmation banquet: Pam Vetteson, Diane Kolstoe, Sandra Tougas.




Confirmation students who were servers: Isabella Brekke, Savannah Brekke, Brennan Christianson.



McCliffy Breakfast was held on June 22 at Zion. A good hungry crowd came from area churches. Thank you to the volunteers who made and served a delicious breakfast.



July 2025						
◀ June						August ▶
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>Salem Ushers</u> July 13: Ron H. July 27: Lisa K.	<u>Zion Ushers</u> July 6: Kari H July 20: Sarah Jo L	1	2	3	4 <i>Indep. Day</i> 	5
6 Joint Service 10 a.m. Zion	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Joint Service 10 a.m. Salem 130th Anniversary Meal after Service 1 p.m. Program	14	15 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Community Block Party Picnic	16	17	18	19
20 Joint Service 10 a.m. Zion	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Joint Service 10 a.m. Salem	28	29	30	31	<u>Salem Altar</u> Toni Johnson	<u>Zion Altar</u> Need new person

The Newsletter deadline will be the first Saturday after the 15th of the month.
 Please send your contributions to Bonny by email to bcote@okleelutheran.org.
 Or call or text Bonny at 612-840-9401. Thank you!!



COMMUNITY BLOCK PARTY PICNIC

Tuesday, July 15, 2025 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Oklee Park next to tennis/basketball courts

Potluck - everyone bring a dish to share!

Hot Dogs, Brats, Buns & Beverages furnished

Bring some games, Bring your appetite

Hall will be reserved in case of inclement weather



**July 2025
Newsletter**

Oklee Lutheran Parish
Salem and Zion Lutheran Churches
PO Box 56
Oklee, MN 56742

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit
U. S. Postage
Paid
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