

ST. PAUL'S NEWS

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH - LANSING, MICHIGAN

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Blessing Box is Up and Running

By The Rev. Karen C. Lewis

You may have noticed the cute red house along the west side of the Church on Seymour Street.

Well, it is St. Paul's Blessing Box, and it has been up and filled since the end of November, with a notice saying "Take What You Need. Give What You Can." It was lovingly constructed and painted by John David Hawkins, our "handy man" extraordinaire. Unfortunately, St. Paul's is in an area where food insecurity is a daily issue for some while others may need a little help until the next paycheck. A Blessing Box provides an anonymous way for folks to get help. This is one of the ways St. Paul's is engaging with our community.

The "Box" is filled with items, that include: hand warmers, toilet paper, garbage bags, bar soap, toothpaste and brushes, wipes, socks, band aids, Chapstick, tissues and bottled water. Foodstuffs include small bags of nuts, protein bars, raisins, beef sticks, string cheese, cracker packs, apple sauce cups, canned food with ring pulls and other non-perishable foods, and cookie packs.

The Mission and Outreach (M&O) Committee has been stocking it since the end of November to determine its usage and the items that go quickly. The conclusion is the box is definitely being used. Committee members have taken turns stocking it each week. It empties fairly quickly and we've been trying to keep us with it by restocking two times a week.

Now that we have some experience under our belt, we are inviting all of you to take turns stocking the box with supplies. Perhaps you would like to find another family to share a week or two. Perhaps you have a friend who would like to help. When there are special holidays, such as Valentine's Day, some yummy candy might not be a bad idea. We ask that you sign up in the Merrifield Room for the week(s) you are willing to supply. IF you need some suggestions, there is a list of possible items you might want to purchase and stock in the box. If you don't want to take a week but would like to contribute items to the Blessing Box, there is a plastic tub located in the n the copy room next to the church office for such items.

We are excited about this opportunity and hope many will join us in this Ministry. Any questions? Contact one of our M&O members.

Inside this issue....

Worship in Lent	2
Parish News & Events.....	4
Narthex Windows.....	6
Mission & Outreach	8
Calendar.....	9

...and more!



We're on the web!
www.stpaulslansing.org

OUR WORSHIP IN LENT

By The Rev. Karen C. Lewis

The paschal mystery of the dying and rising again of Jesus Christ and our participation therein is the theological core of the gospel, and its liturgical celebration is the central event of the church year.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of this season of repentance, penitence, reflection, contemplation, fasting and self-denial. Our liturgy on this day has its roots in the Hebrew Scriptures, where covering oneself with sackcloth and ashes was a sign of repentance and mourning. Early Christians also used sackcloth and ashes as a sign of their repentance. The imposition of ashes during this service is intended to give ceremonial embodiment to the theme of penitence. Ash Wednesday was also the day public penitents were admitted to their penitential discipline, so that they might be readmitted to communion before Easter. Taken together, these rites remind us that we stand before God as sinners doomed to die, and that it is only through God's merciful gift that we can hope for anything else.

Since the early days of the Church, Lent has been a time of preparation for deeper commitment to Christ (the preparation of baptismal candidates) and a time of renewal and re-dedication to the promises made in our Baptismal Covenant.

Repentance

The prophet Joel sounds the call in the Hebrew Scripture Lesson on Ash Wednesday, "Turn back to me with your whole heart . . . turn back to the Lord your God; for he is gracious and compassionate, long-suffering and ever constant, always ready to repent of the threatened evil." (Joel 2:12-13). Lent is a time of conscious turning to the Lord in honest and sincere ways. It is a time of reaffirming previous conversion experiences and with renewed vigor, to set Christ and the things of God as the central focus of your life. Lent is a time to re-establish priorities. What are your priorities and do they reflect God's presence in our life?

Penitence

When we consciously turn to God, we know we are mortal, frail, weak, and not in complete control of ourselves. We know that we have, in the words of St. Paul, "sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." And so as a mark of the sincerity of our repentance we confess our sins, examine our consciences, deal with the dark side of our lives and seek God's forgiveness. What are the sins which need confessing so that you might feel the overwhelming love of God's forgiveness and grace?

Reflection

We take time in Lent to reflect on the Word of God in scripture through regular worship and participation in the sacramental life of the Church, as the special means

of Grace. We study . . . we pray . . . we meditate . . . we listen for God! In Lent we make a special effort to clear our minds of unimportant things and think about ultimate things: sin and redemption; freedom from our idols; our separation from God and our salvation; death and resurrection. What are those things that clutter your mind and use your energy that prevent you from focusing on God and our salvation?

Simplicity

Lent is a special season and calls forth the need for austerity to reflect the themes of penitence. The music, the liturgies, the simplicity of the altar setting clearly state that Lent is a time when there are changes from our normal way of doing things in the Sunday liturgy.

Worship in Lent

The First Sunday of Lent begins with The Great Litany. The gateway to Easter joy is the acknowledgement of our limitations and the seeking of forgiveness. It is one of the chief ways we prepare for Easter. The Great Litany has been used in the Church for centuries. On the first Sunday of Lent we join our Christian brothers and sisters who have gone before us as we pray this litany.

Sunday liturgy for Lent 2 through Lent 5

The remaining Sunday liturgies in Lent will begin with the Penitential Order. This draws our attention to our sinful nature and need for God's forgiveness.

Silence

Deliberate periods of silence will be observed during the service. The service will begin with a silent procession after having prepared our hearts for worship in the silence following the organ prelude. Silence will be observed following the Sermon and during the Prayers of the People. In a noisy world like ours, silence is truly golden and an important part of our liturgy.

Vestments

The quiet and simple nature of our worship is illustrated in the "Lenten Array" altar frontal and hangings. The unbleached linen accented with red and black differs dramatically from the heavy satins and embroidery of high feast days as a reminder of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, a journey to his death.

I invite all of you into a holy Lent – to consider this a time of change and growth; a time to reflect on your faith life and your commitment to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; a time to prepare yourself to receive God's grace as one of his children, holy and beloved. May all of you find newness of life and forgiveness of sins during our forty days of Lent.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DECEMBER 16TH VESTRY MEETING

- Correspondence was received from members who have recently left St. Paul's thanking the congregation for their support and caring. Thank you letter was received from Rev. Dr. Susan Carter for the farewell gift.
- Islamic exchange meetings have been very successful – welcoming, good hospitality and sharing of each faith. Exchanges will continue and be expanded.
- Pastoral Care has increased especially close to holiday time.
- Lansing Symphony: The April 4th concert is being finalized. St. Paul's is covering expense from the Shawver Fund. The concert is free to the public. St. Paul's is being considered as a future site for future concerts.
- 2019 Pledge Drive Update: 79 pledges were received in 2018. 72 pledges have been received in 2019. 23 have not been received from the previous 2018 pledges.
- Nominations for the 2020 vestry: The retiring vestry members are the nominating committee and are making contacts. Interested persons may contact Rev. Karen+.
- 2020 Budget –The proposed budget was reviewed. A short fall is predicted at \$85,000 in the 2020 budget.
- Discussion focused on energy savings strategies that have been implemented and possible cuts to the budge. Stain glass window repair and preservation could come from a recent bequest. The vestry moved to set staff compensation as listed in the proposed budget for 2020.
- Committee reports (electronic copy) for the annual meeting are due by January 7, 2020.
- Valentines Tea will be February 16, 2020
- Housing resolution for 2020 for Rev, Karen C. Lewis was adopted for 2020.
- Gift for the Bishop Elect from St. Paul's was decided as \$1000 toward the purchase of bishop vestments.
- North Door Entry: An automatic door from the parking lot will make St. Paul's more accessible and ADA compliant. The vestry supported a motion to spend no more than \$5000 on an automatic door opening off the parking lot on the north entrance.
- Discussed renting a bus or organizing car pooling for the Bishop's consecration on Feb. 8th in Dearborn at the Ford Cultural Center. A signup sheet for car pools will be used to determine interest.

The Lansing Symphony Orchestra will be performing a sacred music concert at St. Paul's on **Saturday, April 4th**. The concert is free and open to the community but you must have a ticket to attend as seating will be limited to 325 persons. More info on tickets to come soon!

Women's Retreat is **April 17-19th** at Geneva Conference Center in Holland.



PARISH NEWS & EVENTS

Bible Study is Back!

We meet on Sunday evenings beginning at 6:30pm. The next meeting is February 2nd and have scheduled the following dates: **Feb. 2 & 16; March 15 & 29**. We look forward to those who have been with us in the past, and also look forward to those who will be joining us for the first time. We use the NRSV Bible version that includes the Apocrypha – if you do not have one, no worries. You can borrow one of mine. For the next several sessions, we will be studying Hosea, one of our better known 'lesser' prophets. This study is titled, "Hosea and the Hooker". If you wish to know more, join us! Questions? Contact Karen+

Acolytes, lectors and chalice bearers

Acolytes, lector and chalice bearers – If you have wondered what it would be like to lead a procession or offer wine to your 100 closest friends or read aloud one of God's stories – then this ministry is something you really need to consider. Karen+ is preparing new training opportunities for those who wish to have a reserved seat on Sunday mornings. Questions about the responsibilities or such – ask Karen+! Please sign up in the Merrifield Room if you are interested. A training date will be established soon.

Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation

Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation – Classes will be starting for all interested in either confirmation, reception and reaffirmation in the Episcopal Church. Some of you may ask, "What is that?" Well, if you were baptized as an infant and wish to reaffirm those baptismal vows that were taken in your name confirmation is for you! If you have arrived at St. Paul's from another denomination and wish to make the Episcopal Church your permanent home – reception is for you! If you have gone or are going through a significant life transition, than reaffirmation of your baptismal vows is for you! If you have any questions about this, see Karen+. If you are interested in any of these three, please sign up in the Merrifield Room. Karen+ will be gathering all of you together for a meeting to determine the best way to plan the classes.



There was quite a turnout for the October St. Paul's Women's luncheon!

PARISH NEWS & EVENTS

New!

A Wednesday noon book study!

New! A Wednesday noon book study! Starting March 11th. Karen+ will be leading a Wednesday 12:00pm (noon) book study on a weekly basis. Bring your lunch and plan to spend an hour discussing what we have learned from our latest read. Our first book will be *From Here to Eternity: Traveling the World to Find the Good Death* by Caitlin Doughty. (\$10.00). A brief summary of this book states: "Fascinated by our pervasive fear of dead bodies, mortician Caitlin Doughty embarks on a global expedition to discover how other cultures care for the dead. From Zoroastrian sky burials to wish-granting Bolivian skulls, she investigates the worlds' funerary customs and expands our sense of what it means to treat the dead with dignity. Her account questions the rituals of the American funeral industry . . ." Sign up in the Merrifield Room so we have a sense of your interest. We will order the books based on the sign-up sheet.

Eating with Jesus

Our four-week Lenten series begins **March 11th through April 1st**. We will gather at **6:00pm** to study, taste, and experience the culture of the first-century Holy Land. We will discover what it was like when Jesus and his disciples shared a meal. When Jesus told a parable about a wedding feast, what did the folks eat? When Jesus ate with the Pharisees, was the food the same as when Jesus ate with Martha and Mary? Or with the disciples at the lakeshore? Banquets, feasts, and other meals provide the setting for a significant amount of Jesus' teaching. A number of his parables use banquets and feasts as themes. The epistles are saturated with discussions and arguments over food. Did you know that in the Roman Empire, the Romans required that divine distinction be given specifically to garlic? The Egyptians even considered garlic to be "among their deities." Ancient records describe how the laborers who worked on the pyramids and other Egyptian monuments were given onions, leeks, and garlic as part of their pay.

Join us as we smell, touch and taste the food of the first century. We'll study the scriptures surrounding the feasts and discover the cultural importance of food, dining rooms, where you sat and who sat next to you. It is important that you sign up as we will need an accurate count for food preparation. We will begin with the meal at 6:00pm and class will continue through 8:00pm. Nursery care will be available.

St. Paul's News February 2020

Lent is not far away!

Ash Wednesday is **February 26th**. Not only does Ash Wednesday signal the beginning of the penitential season of Lent, it also signals the onset of Lent Madness. For those of you who have played before, your Sainly Scorecard is now on-site and available for your study. For those of you who have not played before and do not know what the heck we are talking about – here is a summary of the game.

It began in 2010 as a fun and engaging way for folks to learn about the men and women who have inspired generations of Christians. Lent Madness is the brainchild of the Rev. Tim Schenck who combined his love of sports with his passion for the lives of the saints. Now a national sensation with thousands of players, Lent Madness has become the world's most popular online Lenten devotion.

How to play? "The format is straightforward: Thirty-two saints are placed in a tournament-style, single-elimination bracket. Each pairing remains open for 24 hours, and people vote for their favorite saint. Sixteen saints make it to the Sainly Sixteen; eight advance to the Elate Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the coveted Golden Halo."

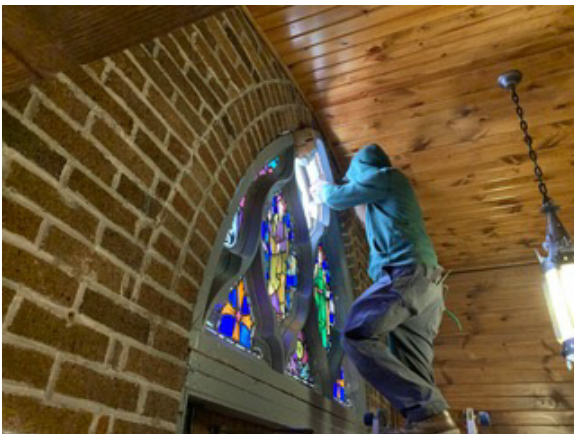
Basic biographical information about each of the saints is available in the Sainly Scorecard which can be found in the hallway rack near the elevator doors. For more information or voting, visit the Lent Madness website at lentmadness.org. You may also follow Lent Madness on Twitter at [@lentmadness](https://twitter.com/lentmadness) or Facebook at facebook.com/lentmadness. Let the games begin!

Where are the Narthex windows?

By The Rev. Karen C. Lewis

If you enter St. Paul's main sanctuary through the Ottawa Street doors you are well aware that the stained-glass windows in the narthex are missing and replaced with plywood boards. They are off being repaired and re-framed in Grand Rapids. This work is possible through the generosity of Dr. Maureen Sander. Many of you may remember Maureen as the quiet woman who sat in the rear section of pews. Others may have known her for her love of crescent shaped nutty glazed donuts which she brought every Sunday to share before the 10:00am service. Did you know Maureen had a love for and collected BMWs? Did you know Maureen was a talented violinist and once played with the Lansing Symphony Orchestra? Or that she was a Fulbright scholar? Or a pathologist at MSU with a specialty in placental pathology? Perhaps you know that Maureen's family had given significant acreage to Meridian Township to establish the Sander Farm Preserved Natural Area on Dobie Road.

Maureen died last May and left a substantial financial gift to St. Paul's in her will. Although the estate has not been finalized, we have received over \$200,000 to date. Vestry is considering a number of options for this unexpected gift. Our bequest policy states that 10% of any undesignated gift will be given to our Mission & Outreach ministry. Vestry also decided to use a small portion of her gift, \$25,000 to have the narthex stained glass windows repaired in her memory. A notation will be etched in one of the glass panes with her name. We give thanks for Maureen's quiet generosity and will greatly miss her presence among us.



Narthex Stained Glass Window Restoration Update

By Bob Merriman

During the 2017 St Paul's Sanctuary restoration activities, our stained glass windows were inspected and future restoration opportunities identified. The TeDeum and northwest Clearstory windows were restored including needed repairs to the Robson window. Vestry approved the next restoration phase to focus on the five windows of the Narthex. Funding for this project was gratefully provided by the Maureen Sander's bequest. On November 14 Nate Bell and Dan Ampulski from Pristine Glass removed the last (center) of the five windows. As an observer (providing a bit of help during the lowering of this massive center window), I was impressed by the skill and loving attention these craftsman applied to their task. The overall glass and leading are in good shape, but it was apparent that the old wood frame needed replacement. The windows will be fitted into a frame similar to the TeDeum window and will preserve the appearance of the old wooden frame. Nate and Dan fitted and sealed temporary wood panels to the five openings. You Did It! At the end of January, due to your generosity, we were able to pay off the first of two loans, \$240,000 from the Diocese for our SP21 restoration. Our hope is to pay off the second, \$145,000 by the end of the year. THANK YOU!!!! We are expecting the restored windows back in place before Easter!



Candidacy - the next step

By Timothy Flynn

December 17, 2019 marked a new step for me in my journey toward ordination. Bishop Gibbs officially admitted me as a candidate for ordination to the Sacred Order of Priests. As he reminded me in his letter, "this is a significant time" in my continuing journey. At this point, I have met a number of canonical requirements, including education, committee interviews, exams, and the like, but I still have more to do. This spring I will complete my final course (ethics and theology) at the Academy for Vocational Leadership, and receive my Certificate in Theological Studies from the Seminary of the Southwest's Iona Initiative. As I am a firm believer in life-long learning, I am sure I will have more education in my future! Technologies offer myriad possibilities of educational opportunities, whether via distance learning, traditional classroom studies, and/or summer school and travel courses. I'm very excited about what God has in store for me next!

As a candidate, I will refine and update my spiritual autobiography, incorporating the various recent experiences I have had which have changed or affected my life and ministry since becoming a postulant. In addition, the diocese will assign me a large-scale project, which will bring to bear all the elements of my education: a type of capstone project combined with a master's thesis, if you will. This period of candidacy offers me more opportunities for growth in my faith, the practice

of ministry, and continued learning. During this time, too, I will have a second year of field education in which I will further be able to hone and develop skills in various areas of the practice of ministry, leadership, and worship/liturgy. Details of this are not completely set at this point, so that will be more news to come.

At the conclusion of my candidacy, I will be eligible for ordination to the transitional diaconate. Time as a deacon normally lasts about six months and it will allow me to experience the work of being a deacon from the inside out. This will include the liturgical function of a deacon – preparing the altar at Eucharist and leading various prayers – as well as the ministerial function of a deacon, bringing the concerns of the world to the church and bringing the church to the world. After this period of transitional diaconate, God willing and the people consenting, I would be ordained to the priesthood. However, as you know, we will have a new bishop beginning next month, and our bishop may have ideas and policies which might change the diocesan process some. So, nothing is set in stone!

My current period of candidacy promises to be an exciting and educational time for me and I'm really looking forward to it. I ask that you please remember me in your daily prayers, as I remember you and the good work you are doing, in my own.

You Did It! At the end of January, due to your generosity, we were able to pay off the first of two loans, \$240,000 from the Diocese for our SP21 restoration. Our hope is to pay off the second, \$145,000 by the end of the year. **THANKYOU!!!!**

Mission and Outreach News

MISSION AND OUTREACH MINISTRY

Mission and Outreach had a busy fall and winter as evidenced by all the many activities keeping them busy!



Warm mittens, gloves, scarves, hats and coats are packed and ready for delivery to Riddle Elementary School and Cristo Rey Community Center to help keep children and adults warm during our cold winter weather. Thank you for all your donations. We will continue to collect these items during the winter months.



A big thank you to Marilyn Maloney for her many years of faithful trips with food bank donations to Lansing's First Presbyterian food pantry. Stepping up to continue regular trips down Ottawa Street are Jack Baker and Deborah McMartin-Finkel. Thank you! The first Sunday of each month is our designated Sunday to support the local

food bank with donations of toilet paper, paper towels, detergent, and women's products.



On November 25th St. Paul's hallway filled with baskets and bags of Thanksgiving groceries ready to be picked up by Community Mental Health case workers, one of St. Paul's many projects to feed hungry families in our community. This year our generous donations fed nine families, who expressed their sincere thanks and gratefulness. Thank you, Kathy Vogel, for organizing the case workers, and thank you, St. Paul's, for your continued love and concern for hungry people in our community.



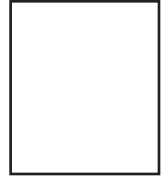
The humor and drumming continue every second Sunday of the month during Project Laugh and Play. Our own Bob Merriman and our new friend Gail Kendall lead the drummers to new heights of percussion skills that results in a warm sense of community -- not to mention a release of stress and lots of fun. Come join us. No experience or drum needed, just a good sense of humor. Noon to 2:00 pm.

Calendar

February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Sanctuary 11:30 AM Annual Meeting & Potluck - Merrifield Room 1:00 PM Vestry Meeting - VanAtta Room	27 6:15 PM Men of Orpheus - Choir Room	28 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service - Chapel 12:30 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's	29	30 5:00 PM Jeremy Alexander at Class 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room	31 OFFICE CLOSED 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's	1 9:00 AM Jeremy at Class 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's
2 FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION/CANDLEMAS FOOD BANK SUNDAY NOISY OFFERING SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Sanctuary 6:30 PM Bible Study - VanAtta Room	3 6:15 PM Men of Orpheus - Choir Room	4 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service - Chapel	5	6 5:00 PM Jeremy Alexander at Class 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room	7 OFFICE CLOSED 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's	8 Bishop Consecration 9:00 AM Jeremy at Class 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's
9 Baptism Anniversary Celebration 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Sanctuary 12:30 PM Project Laugh & Play - Merrifield Room	10 12:00 PM Facilities Ministry Team Meeting - VanAtta 6:15 PM Men of Orpheus - Choir Room	11 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service - Chapel	12 5:45 PM Mission & Outreach Ministry - VanAtta	13 5:00 PM Jeremy Alexander at Class 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room	14 OFFICE CLOSED 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's	15 9:00 AM Jeremy at Class 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's 11:59 PM SPN Deadline!!
16 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Sanctuary 11:15 AM Valentine's Tea - Merrifield Room 6:30 PM Bible Study - VanAtta Room	17 6:15 PM Men of Orpheus - Choir Room	18 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service - Chapel 6:00 PM Vestry Dinner - Meeting @ 6:30 pm - Hill Room	19 5:30 PM Pastoral Care - VanAtta Room	20 5:00 PM Jeremy Alexander at Class 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room	21 OFFICE CLOSED 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's	22 9:00 AM Jeremy at Class 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's
23 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion - Sanctuary	24 6:15 PM Men of Orpheus - Choir Room	25 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service - Chapel	26 Ash Wednesday 12:00 PM Ash Weds. Liturgy & Holy Communion 7:00 PM Ash Weds. Liturgy & Holy Communion 8:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room	27 5:00 PM Jeremy Alexander at Class	28 OFFICE CLOSED 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's	29 Vestry Retreat w/Jim Gettel @ St. Paul's 9:00 AM Jeremy at Class 2:00 PM Jeremy at St. Vincent's

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