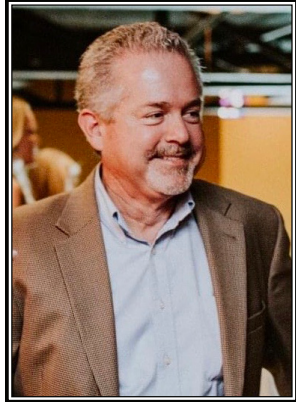


**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**
San Luis Obispo

The Kirk

September 2020



Dear First Pres SLO Family,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ, the one who promises new beginnings, even if it feels like we're stuck in the same old rut.

Who could have thought we'd still be here in September?

When we closed on March 15th, there were optimistic voices saying that we'd be back in the church by summer. Then it was going to be August. Now we're entering September and the realistic voices are talking about keeping our distance quite possibly until the end of the year.

Who could have imagined?

I suppose the answer to that is the scientists who have been tracking and fighting the COVID-19 virus knew—they'd seen the seriousness of the illnesses and continue to be engaged in the long fight to keep us safe.

What does that mean for us as a church?

We're learning lots of new things—new ways to be a community of faith when we can't gather together. There have been coffee groups and even a little Bingo. We're keeping contact with people we would otherwise be visiting. Last month we started reading the Parables of Jesus together, giving groups in the church a chance to contribute to my preaching on these powerful little stories.

We're learning a lot about how to be the church in new ways.

One of the parables that we're not looking at during this series is the Parable of the Talents. In this story, a wealthy man gives three of his servants some bags of money (that's what Talents were), and then leaves on a journey. Two of the servants invest the money and make it grow, while the third one buries it and keeps it just as it was when his master left. When the wealthy man returns, there are rewards for the two who took some chances and grew the fortune, but the third servant is condemned for doing nothing—for creating nothing.

As we live through this disruptive time of pandemic, we've been entrusted with a church that has a rich history and a potentially bright future. What will we do with these riches? There's a temptation, I suppose, to come back when we can, dig up what we were doing before, and restore everything to exactly as it was when we had to close down.

I think we can do better than that.

I think we can invest some time and creativity into seeing what this church can be, rather than simply missing what it once was. That's the commitment I want to make to you all. I'm taking this pause time seriously and thinking about what we might look like when we can open up again. I'm engaging that conversation with our leaders and with many of you. *The last thing I want for us is to reopen (on that glorious day!), and then present the same church we buried back in March.* I think we can do better than that.

If you're looking for something to pray about while we're protectively distancing from each other, make it this: "God, show this church how we can grow into serving our community for the next 25 years. And teach me how to be open to change in order to make that happen."

I can't wait to see how God answers that prayer for all of us together.

Blessings to you all,

Pastor John

FROM THE DCE

Our dear sweet Anne will be moving just after Labor Day - we are truly going to miss her! Anne has been a blessing to the Children's Programs and so many other programs at First Pres! Family is priority and she will soon be reunited with her family, including that beautiful granddaughter of hers. Keep the Walling family in your prayers during this transition. We love you Anne!



CHILDREN'S ED

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

We wanted to take this space to thank all of you who supported the VBS Kit hand outs this summer. We had a lot of fun doing this and from the response so did our families. We passed out 95 kits this summer. And, the kits made it all over the county. We loved saying hi to the families as they drove through the parking lot. We made new friends and are thankful to those who shared kits in their neighborhoods. God has blessed us with the resources and the creativity to continue to reach out to families.

We will continue to find ways to keep in touch and continue programing this Fall. Watch for details as we come up with new ideas. Not only new ideas but safe ways to successfully accomplish them.

Thank you again for your continued support!





YOUTH

Things have been busy with the Youth this past month! We are continuing to enjoy doing Youth Group on Zoom every Sunday at 7 p.m. It has been a joy to catch up and be silly before we start the lesson. We continue to have two Minecraft Nights but will be switching to once per week once school starts. Youth Group and Minecraft Night are open to all youth, so please let us know if you would like to join! My email is stephanie@fpcsl.org.

Youth Schedule

Minecraft Night:

- Wednesday at 5 p.m.
- Saturday at 4 p.m.

Youth Group: Sunday at 7 p.m.

The Youth and I have had the joy of helping read stories for the August VBS. We were able to record them from home and put it on the August VBS YouTube playlist for families to watch at home. We look forward to continuing to adapt during this pandemic to make the Youth Program the best it can be.

Stephanie Vigil,
Youth Intern

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

FORM A CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

The Presbyterian Women's Bible study groups (circle of friends) not only go through monthly lessons from our Horizon's Study book but are also challenged with a book of their choice for discussion. These studies build trust and friendships where they can share concerns and support and trust for each other. These relationships are precious and express the type of love Jesus envisioned for his people. If you would like to join or develop a group, we are here to help you.

BIBLE STUDY

This year's study is *Into the Light - Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament*. Even though we have not launched the study or probably won't be able to, through our usually planned September Introduction, this study is very timely considering the pandemic we are dealing with. We have

concerns about contracting the virus, concerns about financial strains, lack of being with family and friends, and the list goes on. We are fortunate for our church family for helping members stay in touch. The Bible study will walk us through this new way of life where we have more time, we are outside more, we have changed our habits of going out and shopping, etc. Be encouraged... read the lessons and learn more about "Prayers of Lament."

Presbyterian Women's Annual THANK OFFERING

Do not worry about anything...Philippians 4:6-7. God hears our prayers and we need to be grateful for that blessing. Through our blessings we can provide support for others this fall through the PW Thank Offering. Our usual method for collections of financial support is through the Congregational offerings. This year we pray that the Holy Spirit will guide each of you to be part of this support. If you are able to give, Please memo your contribution to "PW Thank Offering." There are so many people in our country that don't enjoy the kind of blessings we realized. We can help change that by supporting the 15 Synod and two international programs that focus on their needs, such as:

- Maternity needs of the homeless,
- Educational programs to teach women how to assist people with medical needs,
- Renovating a community kitchen to help train low income and immigrants to develop their own food business opportunities,
- Leadership training for developing awareness to racial equality, family support for the homeless,
- A truck for a traveling food pantry to areas without a local supplier, and much much more.

The two international programs are in the Congo and Ethiopia for training women for leadership opportunities to help improve the lives of families. As we think about the pandemic around the world, we need to turn our hearts to Christ and pray for healing and give thanks to God for our blessings and this opportunity.

KAYENTA MISSION

The Presbyterian Women in San Luis Obispo are the most loving and generous women ever...how do I know thisI know because of the overwhelming response of donations they have provided to the Navajo Church in Kayenta, Arizona. A list of needs was provided to the women by Pastor Norma McCabe, the Navajo pastor who serves several (up to 5) churches and travels long distances to reach and teach the people about Christ. The women of our church are a major part of this outreach with supplies and goods they need every year.

Dorothy Truesdale, Moderator

LIBRARY REVIEW

Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a Difference in Your Community, by Robert Linthicum is one of the new books that has been added to the library. This book was recommended by Kate Murray for its application for helping to address ongoing racial problems. Many in our churches and communities face injustice, crime, poverty, racism, and other daunting evils. But often Christians have not known how to respond effectively Christians must become proficient in the practice and exercise of power. ... God calls his people to wield power responsibly and use it to promote his kingdom ideals of justice and peace. Robert Linthicum offers an integrative, biblical study of the proper use of power. Based on a thorough exploration of Scripture and decades of real-world experience in community organizing and urban ministry, Linthicum's model of relational power provides sound, practical strategies for changing individuals, communities, structures, and systems. (Review by Amazon)

Here is also a list of books about the parables in the library which might be of interest due to the ongoing sermons and discussion groups concerning the parables.

Parables query		
Author	Title	Year
Barclay, William	And Jesus Said	1970
Ogilvie, Lloyd John	Autobiography of God	2013
Shephard, J. Barrie	Diary of Prayer, A	1981
Weatherhead, Leslie	In Quest of a Kingdom	1944
Inrig, Gary	Parables - Understanding What Jesus Meant, The	1991
Capon, Robert Farrar	Parables of Grace, The	1988
Jeremias, Joachim	Parables of Jesus, The	1972
Buttrick, George A.	Parables of Jesus, The	1928
McKenna, Megan	Parables, the Arrows of God	1994
Claypool, John	Stories Jesus Still Tells	1993

MISSION COMMITTEE

First Pres SLO Mission Committee is dedicated to providing assistance to those in need in our community, country, and world. Often our global missions, such as the Haiti school project or Ukraine and Romania missionaries, get more attention than local groups we assist. For some of the local groups we support, such as Stand Strong (Women's Shelter) and Noor Foundation, the bulk of the funds are raised during the Alternative Gift Fair. Locally over the years, First Pres has supported summer camps for children through CASA and Wilshire Hospice. When it became clear that COVID-19 closures would prevent

any summer camps, the Mission Committee made the decision to redirect those funds to more immediate needs in our community. So, in May donations were sent to Meals on Wheels, Food Bank of SLO County, Meals that Connect (Senior Nutrition Program), and Stand Strong. Since Green Pastures has not been able to operate from the church, funds from that account are being sent to the Salvation Army for distribution to help people with utility payments.

You will be hearing soon about our virtual Alternative Gift Fair this year. Since we can't gather in Wilson Hall, you will receive information via email or postal service about how to give gifts to others by supporting those organizations who do so much good in our world. I am so impressed with the creative ways our Mission Committee and First Pres SLO is making a difference "in this old world" (to quote Eugenia Gamble).

Susan Updegrove, Mission Chair

PEACE MAKING & SOCIAL JUSTICE

This year we have become more aware of the social injustices that many people in America are experiencing. The Presbyterian Church (USA) urges us to act boldly and compassionately to serve people who are hungry, oppressed, imprisoned, or poor. As stated in Matthew 25:40, we are called to actively engage in the world around us: 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' By displaying a HERE WE BELIEVE yard sign you tell others that God loves and extends mercy to all people.

The HERE WE BELIEVE yard sign project of the Peacemaking and Social Justice Committee has been a huge success. The first 100 signs were each sold for a small donation of \$5.00 which covered the cost and made it possible to order more signs. Now the second order of 100 yard signs is here and ready for pick up. Contact Judi Davies judithadavies@yahoo.com, or check the Weekly Peak to learn how to obtain a yard sign.



FRONT PORCH

The summer of the COVID-19 virus is over. The changes in programming made during spring quarter allowed Front Porch to continue some of its programs over the summer. This is a first! Weekly book discussions continued as did weekly Wednesday night gatherings, alternating between Zoom with trivia and in person, socially distanced, and picnics in a park. Dom and Joel were available for virtual contact with students as needed.

The excitement and uncertainty of a new school year is in the air! Three interns start on September 8. Emily Biekert and Paul Gillis-Smith are continuing from last year, and Hailey Firstman is new. Freshman students begin moving in shortly thereafter. While most classes at Cal Poly will be taught virtually, students were encouraged to come back to SLO. The big question is: How do you run a college ministry that was centered around a coffee house when that coffee house cannot be open to welcome students? For starters, programming will continue as it was in the spring quarter, with Zoom daily office hours and weekly worshiping gatherings added to the summer schedule. I am waiting to find out the various creative methods that the staff will use to reach out and connect with students. I am sure with a mission of "experiencing life together," they will find a way.

Front Porch always welcomes your questions, input, and support. Prayers for the staff, students, and the ministry as they move forward in this unusual time are greatly appreciated, as is your financial support in these challenging times for fundraising.

BOOK BROWSERS

Book Browsers is starting our 20-21 year of book discussions on Sept., 1. We will be meeting in Zoom meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. These are the books we will be reading this year.

Sept. The Giver of Stars by Mojo Moyes
Oct. The Story of More by Hope Jahren
Nov. Midnight in Chernobyl by A. Higginbotham
Dec. The Other Einstein by Marie Benedict
Jan. Dreaming in French by Alice Kaplan
Feb. Say Nothing by Patrick Radden Keefe
Mar. The Daughter's Tale by Armando Correa
Apr. That Churchill Woman by Stephanie Barron
May Water From My Heart by Charles Martin

Questions: Please contact Diane Shervem at dshervem@charter.net or 805-459-9844.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

To the following seniors (over 85) who have birthdays in September:

September 6 - Jerry Hempenius
September 11 - Richard Andrews – 90 this year
September 17 – Judy Barnett
September 21 - Glenn Carlson – 90 this year
September 29 - Lou Fogo – 90 this year

And to everyone else who has a September birthday.

Our church records may be incomplete.
If we have overlooked someone, please contact the church office.

by Gloria DeKleine

CONGREGATIONAL CARE CORNER

Please pray for our church family during this difficult pandemic, especially

For Pastor **John D'Elia** as he guides our congregation,

For our **Elders** as they lead us during this challenging time,

For the **Deacons** as they care for our church family,

For **Jen Rabenaldt** and others as they stay in touch with our children and youth,

For the Health Care workers and care givers in our community,

For those people worried about their jobs and businesses,

For members, friends and family who are undergoing treatments for various health issues,

For our church's seniors, especially those who are confined to their homes or care centers during this time of isolation,

For members & family & support personnel serving in the military,

For **Shirley Keif**, her family and the friends of **Rod Keif** who passed away recently,

For all of us as we serve God wherever He calls us.

If you have a prayer concern, please call the Church Office at (805) 543-5451.

by Gloria DeKleine

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN NEEDS YOUR CONTRIBUTION!

The Wilson Hall roof and appurtenant heating/air conditioning and related ductwork are over 34 years old. The roof is beyond its expected life of 30 years, and it has leaked these past two seasons. In order to replace the flat and pitched roofing, the old vents, air conditioning and heater need to be removed and also replaced with energy-efficient facilities. You can't re-roof the Wilson Hall without removing the HVAC system. See the photos!



The total estimate for both this effort is around \$80,000, to be funded through our Capital Campaign Program. We have received about \$30,626 and are confident we can make our goal before the Fall rains begin.

Please support this separate funding effort. Your continued generosity will help maintain our wonderful Church facilities.

Respectfully, Property Committee

GREEN PASTURES GREEN PASTURES MINISTRY TEMPORARILY CLOSED

The Green Pastures ministry that provides needs assistance to 200-400 community members a year, is temporarily closed due to the COVID-19 virus and the difficulty in providing a safe environment to administer the program.

During the interim the Green Pastures staff is providing funding to other Community organizations such as the Salvation Army to provide assistance for those in need. Green Pastures will reopen when the Church campus is open again and it is safe for staff to offer this mission.

Your continued donations to Green Pastures are important to provide for current needs and to continue this important mission in the future.

ENDOWMENT CREATE A LASTING LEGACY

FPCSLO ENDOWMENT FUND PROVIDES FUNDS FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND YOUTH MINISTRY

Forward looking First Presbyterian Church ancestral members created an endowment for Christian Education and Youth Ministry. Four Funds in the FPC Endowment include the names of the **Gaustad, Kendall, McMillan, and Beck Families**. Those families made bequests to our Church which today, and for perpetuity, are providing funds which help pay for teaching the Word of God to our youth. Another source of revenue for Youth Ministry is the Elaine Horton Fund, which Elaine created at the Presbyterian Foundation.

Together, these endowments are providing close to **\$11,000** in 2020. Cumulative since 1999, these five endowments have provided close to **\$82,000** for Christian Education and Youth Ministry while serving as memorials to those families. The four funds held in the FPCSLO Endowment and invested with the Presbyterian Foundation had an initial combined principal of **\$97,898**. On June 30, 2020 those four funds had a combined principal of **\$148,124** and that is on top of the allotments.

If you are currently doing tax or estate planning and/or feel led to include a gift to the First Presbyterian Church of San Luis Obispo in your financial or estate planning, please contact any member of Endowment Committee: Don Green, Jerry Kaml, Bert Townsend, Dorothy Truesdale, Roger Verity, or Virginia Walter (Chair).

You can now donate electronically by credit/debit card or fund transfer from your bank. Use the DONATE button on the church website, fpcslo.org or use this quick response code. See the introduction of the GIVE+ Church app in this issue.



Even a modest gift will make a difference.

ONLINE GIVING

Over 30 contributors to First Presbyterian Church San Luis Obispo are using online giving, either doing so via DONATE/GIVE NOW on the church website or the quick response code.

In June 2020, the online giving totaled over \$9,000.

THERE IS ANOTHER WAY TO USE ONLINE GIVING.

Introducing: Give + Church



You can get this free app from the APP Store or Play Store.

It is easy to set up just by selecting First Presbyterian Church after entering 93401. As with the other online giving methods, you can give once or set up recurring donations.

For full details go to the Frequently Asked Questions on the Church Website. Or, for more information contact Asst. Treasurer, Bert Townsend: 805-748-4380 or churchtreasurer@fpcslo.org.

DRIVE-THRU ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Mark your calendars and join us for an all church, free, drive through ice cream social. All are welcome! Goody bags for the kids. See you as you drive through.

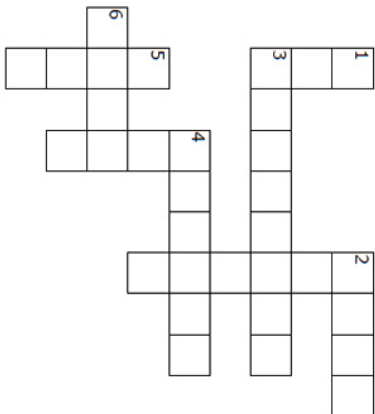
Date & Time: September 13 at 2 p.m.

Where: First Presbyterian Church of SLO
981 Marsh St.,
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Sponsored by Children's Ed- Donations Accepted



Crossword Puzzle



- ACROSS**
- A pathway for vehicles, people, and animals
 - Someone who lives very near to you
 - A person who performs religious duties in the church
 - To hit someone again and again
- DOWN**
- An adult male human
 - Someone who takes money or property illegally from another person
 - To feel sympathy and sorrow for the misfortune or suffering of another
 - Not living

MAN	PRIEST	PITY	ROBBER
ROAD	BEAT	DEAD	NEIGHBOR



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Children's Worship Bulletin

Parable of the Good Samaritan

Luke 10:25-37

Word Search

L A W T N I B Y M E R C Y S A
 E T E R N A L U B D A E K T L
 H N E E I G H B O R U M X H R J
 N J E R U S A L E M L P E E R
 M L K P R I E S T P S E A N H
 S R I R B E A T E R O R R G F
 T S I F Q D V R E I B T T I
 R A W J E E R B I O I L D H H
 I M T E S T B J E R I C H O S
 P A W S B O V U E Q V I C E E
 P R M U R V G H I T G F H T C
 E I I S S M N D G B S T I Y C
 D T N Z N I O E C Q O V T V B
 Q A D A R Y B A P L E I P G Y
 Y N B S O U L D C L P L O V E

JESUS	JERUSALEM	PRIEST	BEAT	CLOTHES
EXPERT	STRIPPED	HEART	PITY	ETERNAL
LEVITE	LIFE	ROBBERS	SAMARITAN	TEST
LAW	INHERIT	SOUL	MIND	DEAD
MERCY	JERICHO	LOVE	STRENGTH	NEIGHBOR



Decoder Puzzle

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
J	T	M	Q	D	X	I	Y	K	Z	A	L	U	N	P	W	O	H	V	C	E	R	F	S	G	B

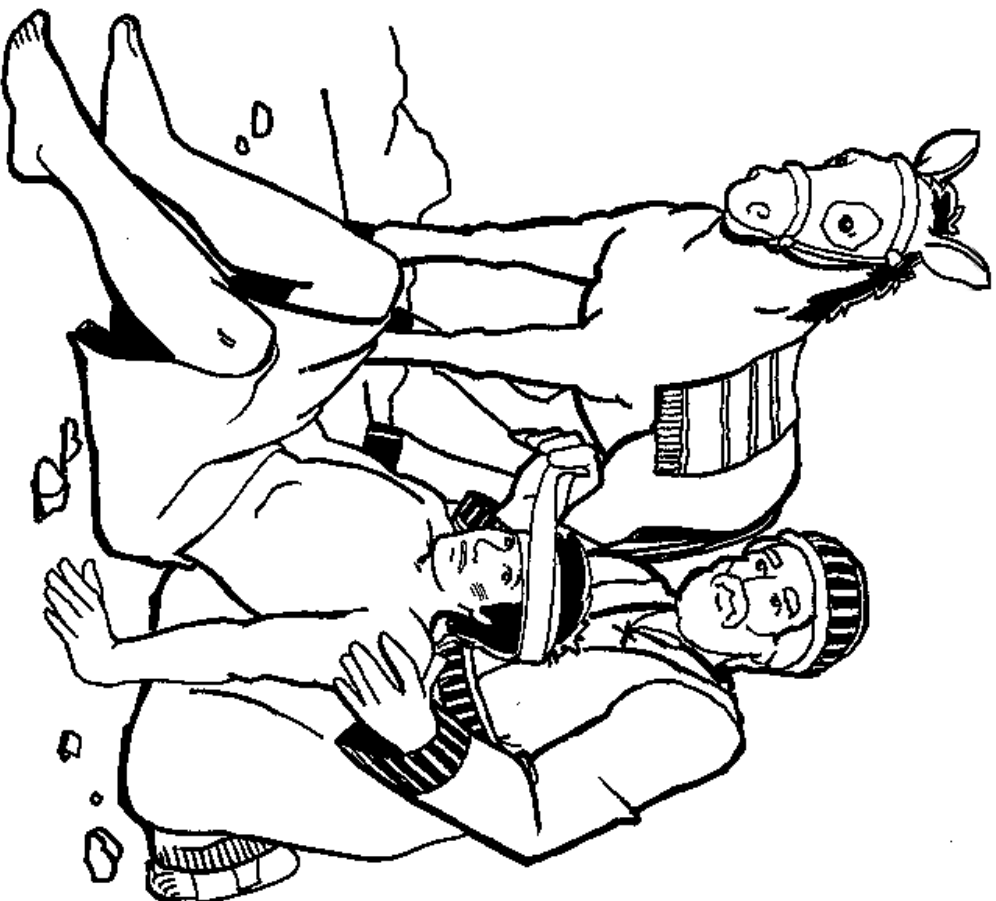
- 24-11-3-11-22-7-2-11-14 _____
- 26-21-11-2 _____
- 22-17-26-26-21-22-24 _____
- 12-21-19-7-2-21 _____
- 24-2-22-7-15-15-21-5 _____
- 15-22-7-21-24-2 _____
- 14-21-7-25-18-26-17-22 _____
- 1-21-22-7-20-18-17 _____

LEVITE	PRIEST	STRIPPED	ROBBERS
SAMARITAN	JERICO	BEAT	NEIGHBOR

The Good Samaritan



Coloring Page



"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

Luke 10:36

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JULY SESSION MEETING

We are happy to announce that Elder Evelyn Ruehr has been elected to serve as our Clerk.
Watch this space for more news about your session.

Deacons:

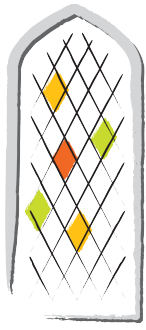
Althea Justus, Amy Gates, Barbara Gillson, Debbie Hoffman, Gary Blythe
Gay McCready, Gloria DeKleine, Joan Green, Judie Davies, Karen Wiles
Kathy Wolff, Maggie Oman, Martha Michalojko-Kettlecamp
Mike Suddarth, Nellie Beecher, Peggy Estes.

Session:

Allen Estes
Bob Gordon, *Chair of Worship*
Deon Dunaway
Don Green, *Chair of Budget & Finance*
Donna Loper, *Chair of Communication*
Doug Hoffman
Ed Musolff
Eric Griffith, *Chair of Property*
Jeff Priest, *Chair of Christian Education*
Pam Rodewald
Susan Norris
Susan Updegrove, *Chair of Missions*
Tim Smith, *Chair of Personnel*
Virginia Walter, *Chair of Congregational Life*

Clerk of Session:
Evelyn Ruehr

Moderator:
Rev. John D'Elia



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