

IT IS A BLESSED NEW YEAR!!

From the Pastor

"I have a hope in God—a hope that they themselves also accept—that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." Acts 24:15

The decorations are either down or are quickly coming down in your home and in the businesses around us. The Christmas activities and traditions are at an end for another year. Some of the exhaustion of the rush of the season has subsided, and now it is on to the newness in this New Year.

While it is easy to become reflective on this past year, thinking of the good, the challenging, and the rewarding times, it is also a time in which we should optimistically look to the excitement of something new.

While hearing the word "new" may at times seem threatening because of additional responsibilities and burdens, or because it might mean a change in something we are comfortable with, it can also be seen as exciting. What is new on the horizon? How is God calling us into ministry in this New Year?

But in that word is also a hope. It is a hope of God's blessings to us, blessings that offer us grace and hope. It is a gift of confidence and gladness. It is a realization of the love God has toward us and the calling of Christ to be faithful disciples. It is a newness of our mission to be the light to the world through our actions and our words. That is a hope that produces great fruit.

Just as Paul was facing his trial of treason before being transferred to a prison in Rome, he proclaimed his faith in Christ and shared his hope that all will one day accept that Christ has been resurrected and lives. In this hope and acceptance means a willingness to be open to Christ's work in our lives. That is a hope of newness.



As we reflect on another successful year of mission ministry and of reaching new people through a number of activities and services, we pause to celebrate each of those blessings. We praise God for placing us in the right place at the right time to demonstrate Christ's blessings to others. We also show our faith and hope through the support of our ministries and our efforts to assist others in growing in their faith.

In 2025, we celebrated those whose faith journey is done on earth and who now rest from their labors. We received new members and baptized several who proclaim witness to Christ's work in their lives. We rejoiced with the students who completed Confirmation and joined the church, and we praise God for the children who continue to offer fresh ideas and opinions in our weekly worship. The St. Nicholas service was a blessing, the Bazaar was wonderful, and the special activities of EggFest, VBS, SpookFest, and Community Appreciation Day all brought smiles to faces and warmth to the hearts of many.

Looking ahead to this New Year, let us continue to grow in faith, and let us continue to commit to grow in our small groups, in our Bible studies, in our worship, and in our mission ministries. While at times we may need to pause to refresh ourselves from the ministry, we can look to the New Year and new ministries as gifts from God, and we can celebrate God's loving grace through service to others with hope and faith. Happy New Year!

Pastor David



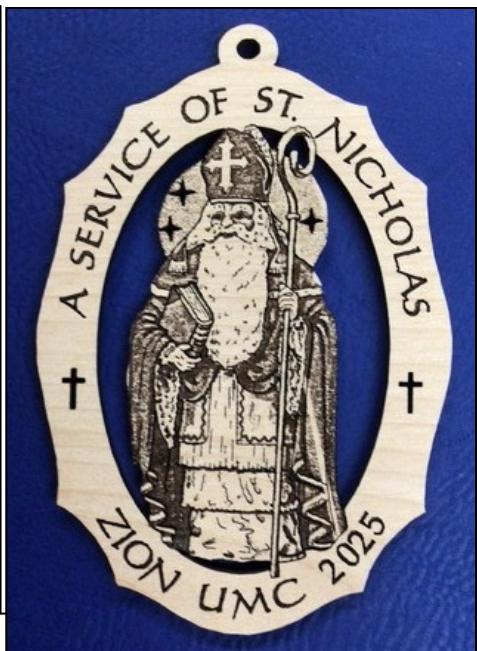
ST. NICHOLAS SERVICE BRINGS SUCH JOY AND PEACE





We celebrated a St. Nicholas service for a third straight year on November 30. The pews were once again filled, and all participated in making the service special. From Jordan and Kacey Murphy, and Glenna Usselman lighting the Advent Candle, to Ryan Berube and Carson Burris sharing the Word of God, the presence of God's Spirit was evident. The trumpets, played by students Ashton Kessler and Ash VanVranken, joined with our Bell Choir, while Will and Maggie Green assisted as the acolytes, and other children helped with the delivering of special gifts.





The Bell Choir's ringing, accompanied by the organ played by, Tara Thomas, along with piano accompanist, Debbie Robinson, offered sounds of joy and sacredness to the service, enjoyed by all.

The delivering of the special offering was made by Sadie Williams, who portrayed Mother Mary, and by Oliver Coldiron, as Joseph.

A special gift for all who attended was a special ornament for the people's Christmas trees, depicting the artwork of St. Nicholas.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this service so special in so many ways.





CONFIRMATION



Zion welcomed into the body it's newest Confirmants on Sunday, November 23. Olivia Collins, Viola Collins, and Sadie Williams were baptized, and Addy Zinno and Cooper Simpson were confirmed into the church during the service.

Congratulations to our students!!



Ava Clarke Robinson

Born: December 5, 2025
3 lbs 0 oz, 15.75 inches long

Parents: Jared & Madison Robinson
Big Brother: Roman Robinson



Lily Ann Tyree

Born: December 23, 2025
5 lbs 13 oz, 17 inches long

Parents: Scott & Britney Tyree
Grandparents: David & Beth Tyree



Now we are looking at music for Lent, Easter, and the upcoming Handbell Festival in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware in March. We have room for more ringers! If you are interested in ringing please come talk with us.

It was a joy working with great musicians and friends that helped bring the Service of St. Nicholas together, in preparing music for special services, and for accompanying the hymns each week during Advent.

Sherry Wornom

New Verdin Carillon System Installed

Zion's Carillon has a long history of chiming every-day, several times a day in the Seaford community, dating back to the 1960's. The latest speakers were installed in 1993, and the digital console installed in 2009. Thanks to the Joan Mills Fund and the Bazaar, we have upgraded the entire system. New speakers have been installed in the steeple, as well a new Verdin Concerto Carillon console. This new system expands our options for song selection, scheduling, and for other special occasions.



Thanks to our engineers: Rebecca Yasky and Matt Burris for the design and construction of the new speaker stand, and also to Carson Burris for helping his dad with installation.



Zion served our homeless neighbors through the PORT Winter Shelter Program on Monday, November 24. Thanks to Jake LaFlam and his amazing team, we were able to serve dinner to over 100 people. Breakfast bags were also packed for the guests who spent the night at St. Stephens Episcopal Church.



Our next date for serving PORT is Thursday, March 5! Come and be a part!

Wes' Wish

Christmas Toy Drive

Thank you to everyone who purchased toys and placed them under the tree in support of the Wes'

Wish Toy Drive! Over 165 toys were picked up, including three bicycles, three tricycles, a TV, Lego sets, games, dolls, puzzles, plushies, and more! The Pak family was overwhelmed by the generosity of our congregation.



VIRGINIA CONFERENCE YOUTH RETREAT

Haley Thomas, Julia & Grace Thompson, Owen Keller, and Cara Shaw, accompanied by Mr. Doug and Cindy Summerford attended the Fall Youth Retreat at the Rappahannock Camp & Retreat Center in Richardville, VA, November 14 - 16. Through worship, music, and leadership classes, our youth learned what it is to "Called to BeUMC" now and in the future.

**CALLED to
#BeUMC**
YOUTH RETREAT 2025



On Sunday, December 7,
we celebrated the baptisms of
Kacey Murphy and Axel Young



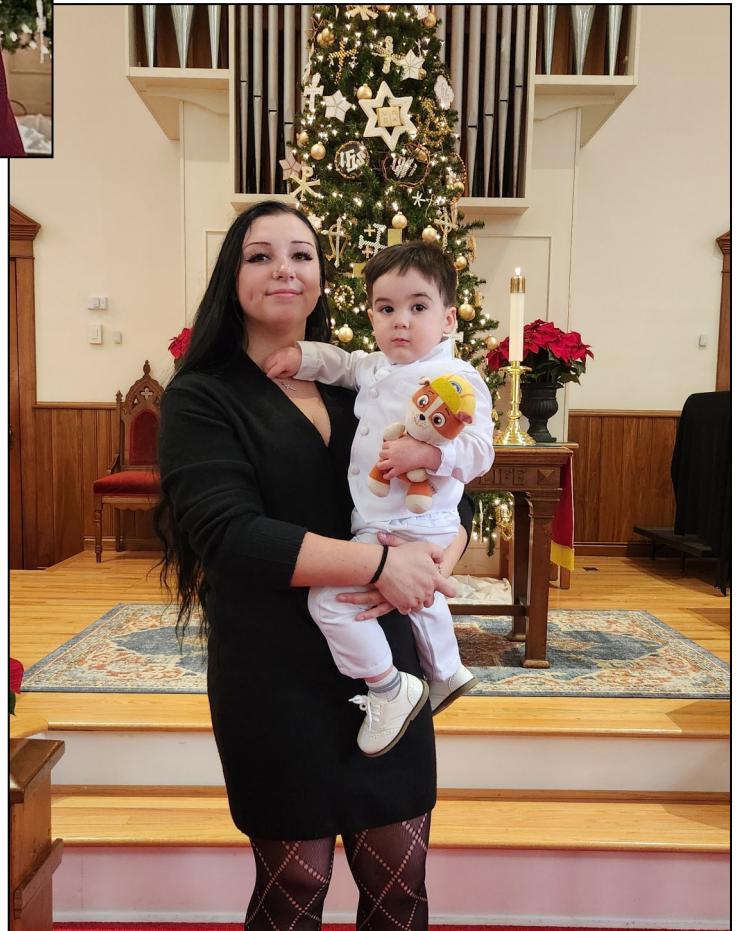
Kacey Lynn Murphy

Daughter of
Jordan & Jordan Murphy
Granddaughter of
James & Glenna Usselman

Axel Chance Young

Son of
Maggie Thompson
Grandson of
Rob Thompson & Bridgitte Ferguson

Great Grandson of
Nancy Thompson



FAMILY CHRISTMAS DINNER

While many family traditions and gatherings may create conflicts for scheduling, the members who came out on Sunday, December 7, really enjoyed the wonderfully cooked turkey, other covered dishes and the fellowship.



CHILDREN WITH PASTOR AT CHRISTMAS TIME

On Sunday, December 14, Pastor David invited the children forward during Children's Time and read to them the birth narrative as told in the Gospel of Matthew.

All seemed to enjoy his reading of the text and some even added their commentary to the Scripture.

What a blessing to have the children with us.



A Night of Live Nativity

Many of the younger members of Zion gathered on the Monday before Christmas to be a part of a Live Nativity. Braving colder temperatures, the kids seemed to enjoy it. Several cars slowed down or honked while passing that evening.



CHRISTMAS EVE - 5:30 SERVICE

Many young families enjoyed the earlier Christmas Eve services where Julie Mason, Katharine and Evertt Mason lit the candles,

and Pastor David and Mr. Doug enjoyed leading the children in A Very Noisy Christmas. That included the shaking of many noise-makers.



Christmas CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

From the noise-makers and celebrations of children praising God for the gift of baby Jesus, to the voices singing out "Silent Night" in the middle of the candlelight service, our Christmas Eve services were enjoyed by all.





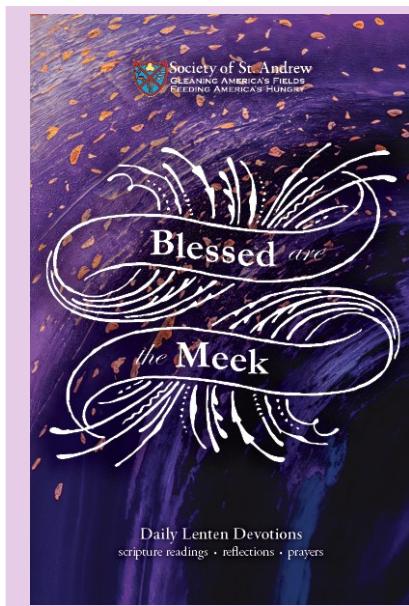
REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The year 2025 began with great faith, enthusiasm, and high expectations on how we as the church will be engaged in the ministry as was laid out at our Charge Conference. Each of the committees and groups of the church had outlined the goals and objectives for achieving in the New Year. While we were successful in our outreach mission and ministry goals, we did fall short of some other ministry opportunities that we identified as important.

But when the challenge was put before the church, people responded. We began a \$5 up challenge, asking people to prayerfully consider adding an additional \$5 to their weekly giving. People responded. We finished the year strong and we are excited about where this may take us in 2026.

I want to thank everyone for continuing to support the mission and ministry of Zion UMC, and your support as I have served as the chair of this Committee. This year, the torch is being passed on to Melissa Harris, who is excited about serving as the chair of this group. I encourage everyone to continue to seek God's direction in your giving for this New Year, because with God's help, we will be amazed at what can be done in mission and ministry in 2026.

Scott Dayton, Finance Chair



Lenten Devotional from the Society of St. Andrew

This Lent, we are invited to a 40-day devotional experience through *Blessed Are the Meek*. The daily readings and prayers in this year's devotional explore Christian humility, service, and strength unfolding in the scriptures and daily life. Few of us aspire to meekness. Yet the scriptures routinely raise up small, lowly, poor, meek, and humble persons as testimony against institutions, societies, and leaders who use power against them. Written by faithful voices from across the country, these Lent devotions invite us to slow down, open Scripture, embrace the quiet courage of meekness, and be shaped by the Lord who blesses the meek.

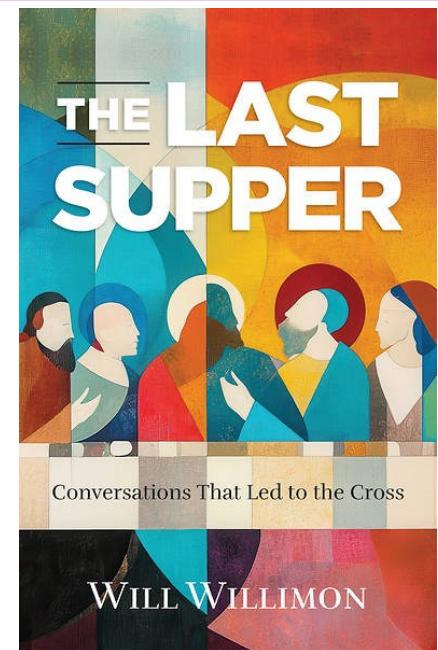
(Devotions and coin banks will be available for pick-up soon!)

Lent Through the Lens of Jesus's Powerful Mealtime Parables

We will travel with Jesus on the road to Jerusalem in this six-week Lenten study exploring the parables and stories Jesus told at tables along the way to his final meal. Bishop Will Willimon will help us experience how these table stories—searching shepherds, welcoming hosts, prodigal sons, and rejected invitations—illuminate the deeper meaning of the Last Supper and Christ's sacrifice.

This Lent, we will gather at the table with Jesus and his disciples to experience the journey from Palm Sunday to the cross through the stories that prepared the way. Willimon's book will help us gain a greater understanding both of the Last Supper and our place at Christ's table.

Pastor David will lead this 6-week study on Thursday's starting February 12. Two time slots, 2 pm or 6:30 pm, are available to accommodate everyone's schedule. Please sign up at the Sign-Up station if you plan to attend.



FEBRUARY SHARE THE LOVE MISSION OPPORTUNITY



The mission project we will be focusing on during our ***Share the Love Mission*** in February, is Chemo Kits. These are kits of various items that will be given to people going through chemotherapy. Simple gestures of love and support can go a long way.

Tags for the items of the kits will be placed on the tree in the Commons beginning mid January, that will include such items as: hand sanitizer, lip balm and lotion (fragrance free), lozenges/hard candy (Lemon flavored/Ginger chew), puzzle books, soft knit cap, and soft socks.

Items need to be returned by Tuesday, February 10.

CHURCH CONFERENCE CONCLUSION

The gift from the estate of John Royal Ironmonger, in the amount of \$74,804.64, was officially accepted at a Church Conference that was held Sunday, December 28, following worship. This gift was designated for the Building Fund by the Will and will be applied to its current balance.



NEW CHURCH TABLES

Thanks to a gift from Joan Mills' estate, the church was able to purchase 20 new tables for the Social Hall. Many of the current tables have been so greatly utilized that they were becoming worn-out. The tables that are being replaced by the new ones are being stored in the garage for outdoor use.



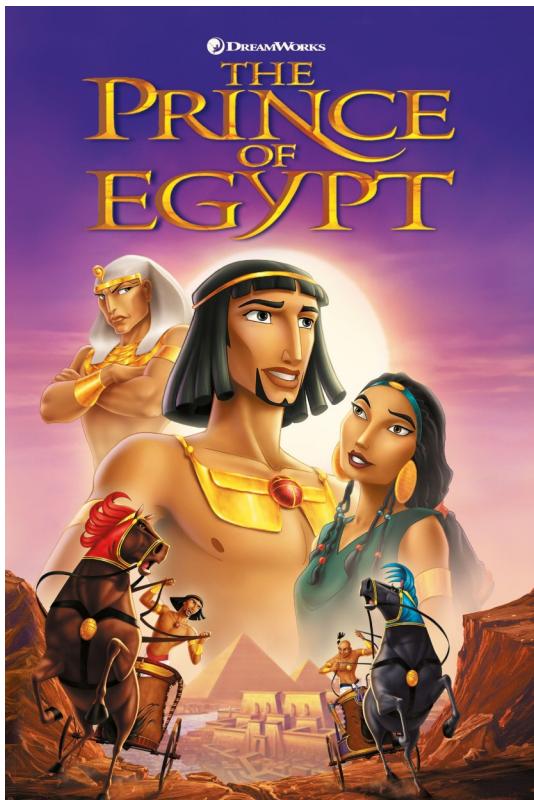
Movie Nights



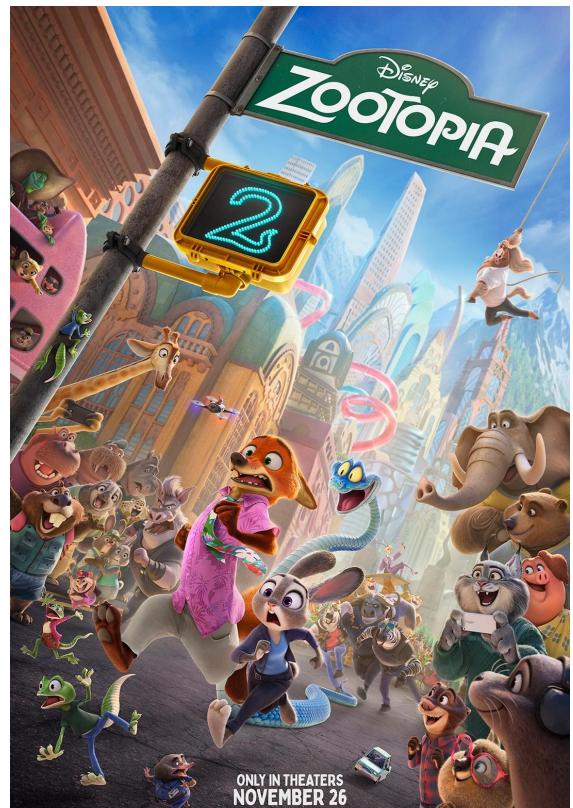
January 17 - 6:30 pm



February 14 - 6:30 pm



March 21 - 6:30 pm



April 25 - 6:30 pm

JANUARY 2026

Jan. 1 - Church Office Closed
 Jan. 7 - 1 pm Graveside Service for David Gibbs
 Jan. 9 & 10 - Social Hall Reserved for Scrapbooking
 Jan. 12 - 6:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting
 Jan. 14 - 6:30 pm Board of Trustees Meeting
 Jan. 15 - 11:30 am Builders Class Lunch at Eggheads
 Social Hall Reserved
 Jan. 17 - 1:00 pm Memorial Service for Liz Blanton's
 mother, Anna Ruth Cook
 Jan. 17 - 6:30 pm Movie Night - ***King of Kings***
 Jan. 21 - 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting
 Jan. 22 - 6:30 pm ZUMM Dinner & Meeting
 Jan. 30 & 31 - Social Hall Reserved for Girl Scout Derby

FEBRUARY 2026

Feb. 1 - 5:30 pm Covered Dish & Games
 Feb. 9 - 6:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting
 Feb. 12 - 2 pm & 6:30 pm Lenten Book Study
 Feb. 14 - 6:30 pm Movie Night - ***Lilo & Stitch***
 Feb. 18 - 5:30 pm - Shrove Wednesday Pancake Dinner
 7:00 pm - Ash Wednesday Service
 Feb. 19 - 2 pm & 6:30 pm Lenten Book Study
 Feb. 25 - 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting
 Feb. 26 - 2 pm & 6:30 pm Lenten Book Study

Weekly Events

Monday's - 5:30 pm Handbell Rehearsal
 Tuesday's - 10 am - 2 pm Bazaar Workshop



Dinner & Meeting
Thursday, January 22
6:30 pm



Offerings & Online Giving

Our offerings are collected in the baskets by the entrances to the sanctuary and the collection box by the church office. Gifts can also be mailed to the church at: Zion UMC, PO BOX 240, Seaford, VA 23696

- If online giving is more convenient for you, please scan this QR Code which will lead you to the E-Giving page on our website.
- In E-Giving you have the option to use your credit/debit card or directly from your checking account which carries no service fee.
- **Text to Give** - Text a dollar amount (example: \$20) to 844-652-1975 and complete the form. There is a \$3 minimum for this option.



Thank You for Your Support!

Zion continues to receive the benefits of being a part of the Kroger Community Rewards program. So far we have received over \$2,200 from Kroger Community Rewards.

Thank you to everyone who continues to list Zion as its community reward partner. Signing up is easy through the app or on Kroger's website. If you need help signing up, please contact the church office.

Celebrations!

January Birthdays

Andrew Harrison	1/2
George Stephenson	1/2
Michael Mapes Jr.	1/3
Robyne Patterson	1/9
Davis Conner	1/10
Tracy Hill	1/12
Clifford Winbush IV	1/12
Joseph Rohde	1/13
Savannah Soult	1/13
Pete Hartman	1/14
Preston Guin	1/15
Owen Keller	1/16
Daniel Martin	1/16
Crystal Thomas	1/16
Trevor Capps	1/19
Robin Tuck	1/20
Sherry Wornom	1/21
Audrey Miller	1/22
Zetie Damron	1/23
Erica Davenport-Goon	1/24
Claire Gordon	1/26
Janet Hoffman	1/27
Carol Ann Davis	1/28

February Birthdays

Clarence Westcott	2/1
Anne Conner	2/3
Dylan Thomas	2/3
Megan Wroten	2/5
Sandra Emerson	2/6
Deborah Harris	2/10
Mary Boyd	2/11
James Flowers	2/12
Wesley Collier	2/15
Virginia Braswell	2/16
Phyllis Teel	2/16
Amanda Doggett	2/17
Brenton Robinson	2/17
Joan White	2/18
Patricia Williams	2/19
Andrew Collins	2/20
Julie Booth	2/21
Chip Rowley	2/21
Donald Teel	2/23
Reginald Moore	2/24
Joyce Adams	2/25
Caroline Carden	2/25
Michael Crockett	2/25
Sam Stratton	2/25
Rhonda Difulvio	2/26
Karen Wood	2/26
Caitlin Carden	2/27
Wayne Appleton	2/28

January Anniversaries

James & Julie Gordon	1/7
Chris & Anna Hopkins	1/8
Zetie & Irene Damron	1/23
Richard & Rebecca White, Sr.	1/27
Thomas & Margaret Hogge	1/28



ASH Wednesday

Wednesday, February 18

5:30 pm Pancake Dinner

7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service



SHROVE WEDNESDAY

Wi-Fi Access
Connect to: Zion Guest
Password: zion1822

OUR WEEKLY COUNTERS!

January: Gayle White & Sherry Wornom

February: Jessie Raymer & Bonnie Bennett

If you do not see your birthday or anniversary listed throughout the year, please call the office or send an email to the church office at office@zionseaford.church so we can update our database.

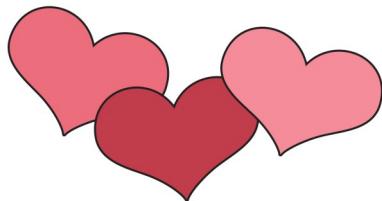
Zion's email addresses:

Pastor David: pastor@zionseaford.church **Office/Sherry:** office@zionseaford.church



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Seaford, Virginia 23696
January - February 2026

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
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Zion's Staff

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