

Westminster Baptist Church

THE WITNESS

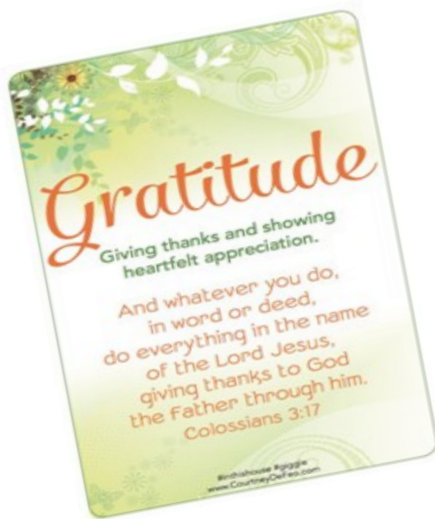
May & June 2017

Volume 44 Issue 3



Mosaic Worship Concert
May 20, 2017 7:00 pm
benefit
Haiti Missions

Pastor Vernon Appreciation Sunday



Please join us on Father's Day, Sunday, June 18th for breakfast at 9:00 am and then 11:00 Worship. We want to give Pastor Vernon a special Appreciation Sunday for all his years serving Westminster Baptist Church. Please help us make his last Sunday a special one.

Galatians 6:9 "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."



We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. - (Thessalonians 1:3)

A grateful heart is one that finds the countless blessings of God in the seemingly mundane everyday life.

herChristianHome.com

PROFILE OF SERVICE

In the process of editing some of your testimonies, I “accidentally” found some of our members ministering to exciting select populations. Our W.B.C. volunteers asked me to follow Psalm 115:1 which says, “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.” (NIV). Therefore I have chosen to describe their activities, and some of the results in the hope that you may be encouraged and possibly want to support or join them.



KAIROS PRISON MINISTRY



Like many of you, I had not heard of this ministry before talking to Earl Miller, our 5 year team member who described a recent bi-annual weekend retreat he and 26 other team members spent ministering to 42 inmates at the Roxbury Correctional Institution in Hagerstown, Md. While the team spent the nights in a nearby motel (at their own expense) where they enjoyed a good breakfast, they invested most of their waking time for the next 4 days in the prison library, and ate the (not so good) prison food for lunch and dinner.

Volunteers begin arriving at the prison library around noon on Thursday. The inmates came at 6:00 P.M. thus giving the team time to set up their sound system, band stand, arrange seven tables (seven in Biblical numeracy stands for complete) and chairs in such a way as to give some privacy to participants during their sharing times. Each table had an ordained pastor, and two discussion leaders who would introduce themselves and share their testimony. Team members then selected one or two inmate names to sponsor, i.e. introduce to the whole group, listen to, support, encourage and write to during the weekend. After the introductions, the spokesperson for Kairos Ministry shared the agenda for the weekend. Next, everyone participated in the first of 9 “Chapel Times” where they worshipped in music and heard an ordained pastor’s message. The evening ended around 8:30 P. M.

Friday and Saturday were long days beginning at 7:00 A.M. and continued until 8:30 P.M. that evening. There were 4 Chapel Times per day interspersed with discussions and testimonies. It should be noted that as the weekend progressed, both prisoners and volunteers prayed for each other before they gave their testimonies. As bonding grew, relationships began to develop. Kairos motto became apparent, “love them, love them, listen, and listen.” On Saturday afternoon, each volunteer wrote 2 encouraging, uplifting letters to “his” inmate(s).

Sunday afternoon was feedback time for the team when the inmates get a chance (and microphone) to share what they got out of the weekend -with one caveat- don’t thank Kairos members. If anything good came out of the time spent together, give God the Glory (see Psalm 115:1).

The inmates had to deal with some difficult questions.

What brought you to this weekend?

What was your condition when you came to the workshop?

What are you leaving with?



When words failed these hardened prisoners, their tears spoke for them.

While their responses varied, their thankfulness to God and to the volunteers was moving. Some accepted Christ, others became leaders in the prison ministry program.

This sounds fine, but what about follow up? The team returns each Monday evening to follow up on their prisoner’s progress.

Was the weekend “cost effective?” You can answer that question. It costs about \$6,000.00 each weekend. This includes motel costs, a Bible, a Cross for each prisoner plus printed materials. Each volunteer has to raise his share or pay out of his own pocket.

What about quantifiable results? Let’s let Warden Miller answer this query. The prison’s return rate is 50%. The return rate for men who attends Kairos workshops is 10-15%. Violence in the prison has been drastically reduced. “As long as I am warden, Kairos programs will remain a part of the prison’s rehabilitation programs,” he said.

If you want more information or would like to contribute, please call Earl Miller at 443-605-9838.

Alex Jones

"I am the luckiest man on the face of the earth."

(Lou Gehrig's farewell speech)

A few weeks ago, in the Community Bible Study lesson book, there was a question, ***"Have you ever experienced God comforting you, not by relieving your situation, but by doing something for you while you remained in it?"*** That is exactly what God did!

About 12:30 am on the morning of February 3rd, I awoke with a sharp pain radiating across my abdomen that got progressively worse. About an hour later, I was in Carroll County Hospital's Emergency Room.

Bottom line, I was diagnosed with acute pancreatitis and spent the next six days in the hospital. For the first four days, the pain was excruciating and while painkillers did give me some relief, the pain never went away. It was during that time that I came face-to-face with my mortality. *"How could this be happening to me?"* I wondered. Even though God's word tells us that life is fleeting, sometimes we need reminding about how fragile life really is.

God did not take the pain away, but He did something even better by reminding me about how blessed I am. As I reflected on His insight, a tidal wave of gratitude and praise washed over me for the many ways God had blessed me throughout my life. God has blessed me by more than meeting my material needs. He took a kid from very humble beginnings and blessed him with a great education and two fulfilling careers. But even more importantly, He has blessed me with relationships with the most significant being my wife. God led me to a Godly woman to marry. She is, without a doubt, the Godliest woman I know. On April 6th, Julia and I celebrated our 49th wedding anniversary. I am so blessed to have her as my partner!

The biggest blessing of all, is that Jesus Christ has been a part of my life for over 50 years. I came to know Him as a teenager and one of the things that led me to the Lord was a fear of death. He has brought my life such meaning and fulfillment and lavished such spiritual blessings on me - and yet I know the best is yet to come. I have unshakeable faith that I will be with Him for eternity. That is why I was able to pray, *"Lord I don't know what Your plans are for me, but may Your will be done."*

Jesus is my Savior and Lord and if you have that relationship with Him, you, too, can say, ***"I am the luckiest person on the face of the earth."***



Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who finds great delight in His commands."

Psalm 112:1 (NIV)

P.S. What caused the attack? While the doctors were ruling out every known cause, being human I suspected the worse - cancer. The blessing is that the biopsy came back negative! Praise God! Bottom line - I am among the 30% who will never know the cause. But, look at how God used this event!

Buddy Landrum

318 Men's Ministry

The 318 Men's Ministry volunteered with Habitat for Humanity. In their quarterly Newsletter for Spring, 2017, they put a write up about our church. Please see below.

Faith in Action



Within a short 3 month window in 2016, Habitat for Humanity partnered with donors, volunteers, house sponsors, friends and family to build alongside Zoe Dorsey. A story written for the storybooks, Zoe and her kids were able to move in right before the Christmas holiday. Zoe's accomplishment of homeownership is a true gift that we celebrated during the holiday season.

Westminster Baptist Church is a bright example of a faith community that stepped up to support the Habitat mission. From volunteering on site to feeding volunteers to carol singers at Zoe's dedication, this church was a true partner in our building efforts. To learn about how your house of worship can build with us in 2017, call us at [410-751-7722](tel:410-751-7722) or email our Director of Development, Phil York, at pyork@cchabitat.org.

WMU Ministries

Our Mission Friends last meeting will be May 17th until September. A big thank you to the boys and girls for their gift to the Indian children of Pine Ridge, SD for their family day. WOM is on break until September. During the summer months watch for sales for the items we need for our Fall ministries. Some needs are shampoo, toothpaste, white towels, wash cloths, deodorant, bar soap and canned goods for our Pantry.

We will start a new ministry for those who can knit or crotchet. It is called "Prayer Shawl." The shawls made will be used to give to people who need prayer for many reasons. If you would like to help make the shawls, please let me know.

Mary Reeb

FREE PIANO - you haul. Mary Reeb 410-848-5652

A Message from the 318 Ministry



Many of you have heard about this ministry called the “318 Ministry”. It is our men’s group which uses scripture verses to develop our mission and vision:

Genesis 14:14 – When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out **the 318** trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan

Proverbs 27:17 – As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

James 1:22 – Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

Titus 2:1-2 – You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance.

Titus 2:6-8 – Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

1 Timothy 4:12 – Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity.

These scriptures motivate us to be “Kingdom Men”. Men that will be spiritual leaders of our homes, our churches, our work and our communities. We meet on Thursday nights for a bible study. Our average attendance is about 8 to 10 men, however, 4 of those men are from the community and are not members of our Church. So when you hear that we have a men’s ministry, it is 6 men. But we realize that not all men are interested in coming to a bible study. Some men would like to do work projects and we try and advertise as much as possible but we always seem to leave a few men out. Well, here is your chance to be a part of the 318 Ministry without attending one of our studies.

The ministry seeks to: Disciple men, take care of the elderly, with first priority to the widows, and to feed the poor. Our newest project is called “Feeding the 5,000”. We want to be like Jesus and meet the needs of the poor in our community. Here is how it will work: We identify a housing area where the residents are in need; we then pray; then we advertise to the church as a whole to help in collecting food; we then package up the food in boxes and then once we get a certain amount of boxes, we then deliver to their door. We present the resident with a gift box of food. No strings attached. This is meeting the basic needs, 1 family at a time. The goal is to eventually feed 5,000 homes. This project may take 10 years, 5 years, 1 year or just a few months. God is in control and we want to be obedient.

So how can you be a part of the 318 Ministry? Just contact Don Klapka at 410-259-8951 or by email at theklapkas@msn.com and provide your contact info. You will then be put on our email distribution list and you can assist in any way you would like.

The 318 Ministry will begin advertising events for work projects, prayer breakfasts, and even a men’s retreat on October 21, 2017. We are praying for you and your decision to join this ministry and become a Kingdom Man. Our challenge to you is to:

1. Reject passivity
2. Accept responsibility
3. Lead courageously
4. Invest eternally

With Christ’s love,
318 Ministry

Women's Prayer Group



God longs to hear from us. Our lives are so busy doing things for ourselves, for others, even for God, that we miss discovering who He really is. Prayer leads us to the heart of God; it is the way we find intimacy with Him. He desires our worship, praise, and thanksgiving. God yearns for our confessions and petitions for He longs to be gracious to us. So let us come and pray boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (*Hebrews 4:16*)

We had a wonderful time at our April get-together praising God and lifting up in prayer our families, church, community, and missions around the world. Afterwards, at one special lady's suggestion, we sang songs of worship as God brought them to mind. It was so uplifting! Wouldn't you like to join us next time?

Our women's prayer group meets on the **1st Friday of the month** at 10:00-11:30 am at Ninette LeGates' home. Her address is 663 Rising Dr. in Westminster. All women of our church are invited to attend any gathering. For more information, please contact Ninette at 410 848-1636.

Summer Scripture Refreshment

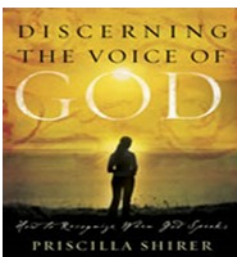
The Women of Grace small group, Sisters in Scripture, invites the women of our church to participate in Summer Scripture Refreshment. We've really enjoyed this activity the past few summers! Now is your chance to write down those Bible verses you've wanted to learn for so long and either commit them to memory or at least know where to find them. Are you thinking you can't possibly do that? Be encouraged! Philippians 4:13 reminds us that WE CAN do all things through Christ who strengthens us. Ask the Lord to help you hide His Word in your heart. If you cannot memorize verses, meditating on God's Word is always time well spent!



You select the Bible verses you would like to focus on in whichever version you prefer; it can be one, several, or an entire passage. Choose Scripture that is meaningful to you or truths that will strengthen your spiritual walk with the Lord. We'll get together at Birdie's Café on 233 E. Main St. in downtown Westminster to share our verses and talk about why these Scriptures are significant to us. We'll meet the third Thursday morning in June, July, and August at 10:00-11:30 am.

God's Word has the power to transform our lives. It frees us from sin's dominion over us that we might have fullness of joy and the assurance of eternal life. If you're interested in joining us, please contact Cindy Bryson (cindybryson@comcast.net).

Home Bible Studies







Ladies, are there Bible studies we've held in the past that interested you, but you were unable to attend? Consider hosting a Bible study in your home this summer and inviting your family, friends, and neighbors. Some women prefer the relaxed, casual atmosphere of a home study. It's a great way to build relationships and share your faith with others. Please contact Nancy Rictor or Cindy Bryson to discuss available studies and obtaining needed study materials.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7:00pm Praise Team	7:00pm Deacon's Meeting	6:00pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Youth 6:45pm AWANA; Preschool Choir 7:30pm Mission Friends	12:00pm Silver Sages Luncheon (Bullock's) 7:00pm 318 Men's Bible Study	10:00am WOG Prayer Ministry	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:30am Traditional 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am MOSAIC 11:10am Sanctuary Singers	7:00pm Praise Team	8:30am Silver Sages' Breakfast (Baughers')	6:00pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Youth 6:45pm AWANA; Preschool Choir 7:30pm Mission Friends	7:00pm 318 Men's Bible Study	7:00 pm New Life for Girls	2:00 pm Sarah Knorr Baby Shower (FH)
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
 Mother's Day 8:30am Traditional 9:45am Sunday School 10:45 am BP Screening Parent/Infant Dedication 11:00am MOSAIC	7:00pm Praise Team	10:00am Women on Mission 7:00pm Administrative Team Meeting 7:00 pm Children's Sunday School Mtg. (107)	6:00pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Youth 6:45pm AWANA; Preschool Choir 7:30pm Mission Friends	7:00pm 318 Men's Bible Study		7:00 pm Mosaic Worship Concert (MP)
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
8:30am Traditional 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am MOSAIC 11:10pm Sanctuary Singers	7:00pm Praise Team	10:00am Heart to Heart 7:00 pm Haiti Team Mtg.	6:00pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Youth 6:45pm AWANA; Preschool Choir 7:30pm Mission Friends	7:00pm 318 Men's Bible Study		
28	29	30	31			
8:30am Traditional 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am MOSAIC	Office Closed 					





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 12:00pm Silver Sages Luncheon (Bullock's)	2	3 9:00am - 1:30 pm New Members Class (FH)
4 8:30am Traditional 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am MOSAIC	5	6 7:00pm Deacon's Meeting (104)	7	8	9  7:00 pm New Life for Girls	10
11  8:30am Traditional 9:45am Sunday School 10:45am BP Screening 11:00am MOSAIC Youth Graduation Recognition	12 7:00 - 8:30 pm VBS Mtg. (107) 7:00pm MOSAIC Praise Team	13 8:30am Silver Sages' Breakfast 10:00 am Women on Mission	14	15	16 Shepherd's Table 10:30 am Soup Kitchen	17
18  9:00 am Breakfast 11:00am Combined Worship Pastor Vernon Appreciation	19 7:00pm MOSAIC Praise Team	20 7:00pm Admin Team Meeting	21	22	23	24
25 8:30am Traditional 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am MOSAIC	26  1-6 pm Red Cross Blood Drive (MP) 7:00pm MOSAIC Praise Team	27 10:00 am Heart to Heart	28	29	30	
Youth Skycroft Camp June 25th - June 30th						



Shepherding Our Children by Protecting Them

In our church tradition the spiritual leaders of a church are typically called pastors. Pastor is a very appropriate word to describe not only the spiritual leader in church along with the spiritual leaders of a family. The word pastor for those unaware is actually a Latin word that means a sheep herder that leads his sheep to pasture but far before the Latin term was coined Jesus himself compared church leaders to shepherds. The shepherd analogy for spiritual leaders means many things but I think one of the primary meanings behind the metaphor is often forgotten. Shepherds were chiefly responsible to keep their vulnerable flock safe even at risk of their own peril and so likewise spiritual leaders protect those in their charge. For those who shepherd children, protection is one of the most pivotal ways we act as their pastors and we must do everything it takes to ensure children are safe.

By best government estimates at least 20% of the US population has been or will be sexually abused before their eighteenth birthday. Sexual abuse happens every day and Christian kids are certainly not exempt from this danger as even one of the most Gospel centered churches in our state was recently rocked with allegations of child abuse to our children but to our communities when created our children and He cares for their else possibly could. Both parents and called to go to great lengths to ensure child safety and well being far greater than anyone church leaders as shepherds over children are logical issue, churches and parents that are dren are not only loved but safe. This is a theological issue, churches and parents that are demonstrate ignorance about the God who



least 20% of the US population has been or will be sexually abused before their eighteenth birthday. This statistic should shake us to our day and Christian kids are certainly not exempt from this danger as even one of the most Gospel centered churches in our state was recently rocked with allegations of child abuse to our children but to our communities when created our children and He cares for their else possibly could. Both parents and called to go to great lengths to ensure child safety and well being far greater than anyone church leaders as shepherds over children are dren are not only loved but safe. This is a theological issue, churches and parents that are demonstrate ignorance about the God who

Church leaders shepherd the children in their congregation and in their care when they ensure children are safe and protected from dangers every second they are in their care. Child safety measures in churches sometimes come across as an inconvenience or as unduly rigid, but churches that shepherd children well will be willing to receive such labels. Much has been written both by Christian and secular leaders about the various protocols churches should require to keep children safe but here is not the place to flesh those out. The reality is many church policies pertaining to child safety will be entirely dependent upon such particular situations as the church's layout and even the service structure. No two churches should have the same child protection policies but every church should nonetheless take seriously their child protection policy. If we shepherd children in our care well children will be intentionally shielded from any situation where they could be abused and we will guard their safety as vigorously as we guard their theology. Keeping kids safe will inevitably be an inconvenience and may even involve reallocation of church revenue but if we know children are created in the image of God we will see the inconvenience as worthwhile and the expenses as vital ministry.

I often say parents are the primary pastors of their children and such is certainly the case with this call to protect children. Too many parents have a laze faire attitude towards their child's safety even while taking great measures to disciple them in the faith. Parents shepherd their children well by being careful about who has access to their children and educating their own children about their God given rights to guard their bodies and say no to any kind of physical touch. Explaining boundaries to children and ensuring those boundaries are upheld is part and parcel to shepherding our own children.

It is a great blessing when we can claim children as part of our flock but with it comes the responsibility of protecting these vulnerable little ones that God has put in our care. If we understand being spiritual leaders is acting as a shepherd we must make every effort to ensure our families and our churches make every effort to be safe places for children.

Pastor Tony

Open Doors of Opportunity in Haiti

In March, Pastor Glen, Pastor Larry, and Don Klapka traveled to Cap Hatien, Haiti to preach and teach at a 4 day Pastors Conference. We experienced many blessings and answers to our prayers on this trip.



We toured an orphanage 15 minutes from the village of Macaty that is called Idadee. They have a guest house called The Joshua House for mission teams to stay. Rooms include their own facilities and a dining hall provides meals for the team, and they will pack lunches for us to go offsite for mission projects.

Idadee currently meets the needs of 35 orphans with room for 10 more. Located also on the 15 acre property is a school, agricultural projects, a hospital, and an outdoor chapel.

The orphanage is supported by a larger organization in PA called The Pittsburgh Kids Foundation. They help organize and raise funds for projects that we can be a part of such as clean water, latrine construction, home construction, agricultural projects and much more. They also offer child sponsorship on their website to help support the needs of each child there.

The Pastors Conference was very impacting to the 35 pastors as well. The potential for an even bigger conference next year is very possible. We were part of 2 services Sunday and had time to prayer walk through Macaty, witnessing and sharing prayers for healing and encouragement.

God answered our prayers and opened up the door for every concern we had for Haiti. Our next steps now are to organize a Haiti team to delegate responsibilities and then begin to select projects and mobilize teams to advance our Kingdom work in Macaty, Haiti.

John 15:7 says "If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you." We truly saw this unfold with our very own eyes. All glory to God for what He is doing for us and what he has in store for our future in Haiti.

Pastor Glen Willet

Pastor's COLUMN

I was looking over some Pastor's Paragraphs from years past, and I figured in this, my last year at Westminster, a couple of my favorites might be worth a repeat. So here is one from 2008.

I had an unusual experience a few weeks back as I was driving into church. Down the road and at the bottom of the hill from my house lies a sheep farm. As I was driving by, I noticed a lone sheep in the pasture, just standing there with a plastic feed bag over her head and down around her neck. How in the world does that happen? I assumed the sheep's appetite got the better of her and her head and neck just followed her mouth into the bag! Almost simultaneously there was another realization, "That poor animal is going to suffocate in that plastic feed bag!"

Well, I couldn't let that happen, so I turned my car around, and drove into the driveway of the farmhouse, behind another vehicle. The lady in the car ahead of me saw the sheep as well and was there to help if she could. We knocked on the door of the farm house and no one was home. The poor sheep in the field was without a shepherd!

So, there was only one thing to do - hop the fence and see if I could help the poor critter. (After all the root meaning of "pastor" is "shepherd" so now was my chance to literally take up my vocation!)

Now you must realize I did not grow up on a farm, but rather grew up in suburban Baltimore. I did not think about carefully watching my step as I walked across the pasture. My poor dress shoes - EEEEEEEEEewww! Not only that, I was not real sure how to approach a sheep. Do I talk to it? "Nice little sheepy, just stand still, I'm trying to help you..." or, since it was not only suffocating but blindfolded by the feed bag, do I just sneak up to it and grab the bag? I chose the former. "Nice little sheepy..." The poor thing stood still and didn't move. I was amazed that the sheep was not shaking her head trying to get the bag off. Suffocating and blinded, she could not seem to save herself. She was probably exhausted having tried this and that and now was just in a stupor with a "What should I try next?" kind of puzzlement.

I grabbed the bag. The sheep abruptly pulled away six or eight feet and the bag tore free from my hand - it was still firmly around the sheep's head and neck. Fortunately the sheep did not run far away - blindfolded by the bag, it would have no idea where it was running. I approached again and grabbed the bag firmly with two hands. Again the sheep promptly pulled away and this time I held on to the bag and the sheep was free!

Now I don't know what I expected next - some sign of appreciation perhaps - a thankful nod, a lick of the hand, an appreciative "Baa-aa-aa"? So what did that sheep do? It just wandered off without giving me a second look - the ungrateful wretch!

Now as I thought about this incident, I figured, there has got to be a sermon in this *somewhere*! How about,

"Chasing Your Appetites Can Get You in Trouble", or,

"How Do You Care for a Lost Sheep?" or,

"The Perils of a Being a Sheep without a Shepherd" or,

"Blinded and Suffocating in Sin" or,

"Unable to Save Yourself?" or,

"How Do You Talk to a Lost Sheep?" or,

"Are You Ungrateful for Your Blessings?"

Yep, there's a sermon in there somewhere, but I just can't figure out which one! Then I realized, man I could milk this incident for a whole series of sermons! Or at least one good Pastor's Paragraph article!

-Pastor Larry



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