

# THE JOURNEY

## DECEMBER 2016



### It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

The most wonderful? Maybe the most hectic, busy, crazy, budget-stretching time of the year is more appropriate! It seems that the calendar fills up quickly with competing demands. We find ourselves looking for a moment to catch our breath and remember why all this chaos emerges. Or maybe that's just me?

The season of Advent provides an unexpected blessing in the midst of our culture of busy. Advent is a time to pause and reflect, to watch and wait, to be renewed once more by the birth of Jesus. Advent can be a time of spiritual renewal on our journey of faith.

I invite you to live into the spirit of Advent with your friends and family at Zion. We will welcome you with familiar hymns and lively new songs; a memorable children's program that requires sun glasses; and an Advent calendar to bring joy into your homes. I hope to see you soon.

*Grace and peace on the journey,  
Rev. Nikki Woolsey*



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**ZION**  
United Church of Christ

1811 McFarland Rd  
Junction City, KS 66441

Sunday Worship 10:30 am  
zionuccjc@yahoo.com

## December Lectionary

### **December 4**

Isaiah 11:1-10  
Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19  
Romans 15:4-13  
Matthew 3:1-12  
*Vision of Peace*

### **December 11**

Isaiah 35:1-10  
Psalms 146:5-10  
Luke 1:47-55  
James 5:7-10  
Matthew 11:2-11  
*Heartbeat of Justice*

### **December 18**

Isaiah 7:10-16  
Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19  
Romans 1:1-7  
Matthew 1:18-25  
*God With Us*

### **December 24**

*Christmas Eve*  
Isaiah 62:6-12  
Psalms 97  
Titus 3:4-7  
Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20

### **December 25**

*Christmas*  
Isaiah 9:2-7  
Psalms 96  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)  
*A Great Light*

### **December 31**

*New Year's Eve*  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13  
Psalms 8  
Revelation 21:1-6  
Matthew 25:31-49  
*Watch Night*



Attendance YTD
48 Weeks
2016 - 3,361
2015 - 3,363
2014 - 2,664

*The Journey  
prints  
Dec. 23 for  
January*

## Consistory Highlights

Oct. 7, 2016

Treasurers and Financial secretary's reports page  
Memorial fund: 12,796.46 as of 9/16, The memorial fun check book will be handled in the office and Deniece Carlson with do the thank you notes.  
Pastors Report: Recognition Sunday for Harold and Venice, Cleo Jones will attend KO conference, Todd Moore guest minister on Oct. 23, Christmas Eve Service will be at 5 pm and Jan 1 service will be a member led service.  
Building Team: A huge thank you to the Jacobsens for painting the parking lot and getting the carpets cleaned  
Formation Team: Christmas pageant will be Dec. 18th  
New Business: Baptisms Oct. 30, Wedding Nov 12 and consistory nominating committee formed.  
Next meeting Nov 2

## Women's Fellowship

There were 7 members present for the Nov. 4 luncheon meeting. Sally Altwegg and Lane Bitterlin hosted. Judy Gardner read a poem by her mother.

December we will send out cards to the shut-ins.  
Fellowship hour is filled for the rest of the 2016. Jill will get a new signup sheet printed for 2017.

Discussion about the current purpose of Women's Fellowship. Lane made a motion to table the discussion until April and Sally 2nd.

Women's fellowship hosting potluck on Nov. 13.

Nov. 20 will help decorate the church for Advent.

The next meeting will be Dec. 2 at Lane Bitterlin's home. There will be car pooling from the church.

## Outreach

### Heifer International

The second Sunday of the month we collect quarters for Heifer International. The Children of Zion collected \$60.76 in Nov. YTD \$718.64

**THIS IS NO ORDINARY GIFT.**

### **BETTER FARMS MAKE BOUNTIFUL HARVESTS**

The goal of every Heifer project is to help farm families achieve self-reliance. We provide the training and livestock they need to build integrated farms. This means planting food for the family and fodder for the farm animals; keeping a sustainable operation by using the resources such as animal fertilizer and biogas stoves; and caring for the Earth by improving the soil and environment.

A Bountiful Harvest Gift can help lift a family out of a life of hunger and poverty. With the training provided by Heifer International, families who previously did not have enough to eat will have a steady supply of food, and even be able to sell the surpluses. And with that income, they will finally be able to send their children to school, afford medicine and have a chance at a more secure future.

### Fill the Hunger Cart

On the first Sunday of Nov. the Hunger Grocery cart was filled with **125 lbs.** of food for the Food Pantry. **YTD 619 lbs of food**

*I'd like to challenge Zion to bring an average of 100 pounds of food each month of 2016.*

*The shelves are getting bare at the Food Pantry, they really need our help!*

Please add a few items to your weekly shopping list.



### Helper Sunday

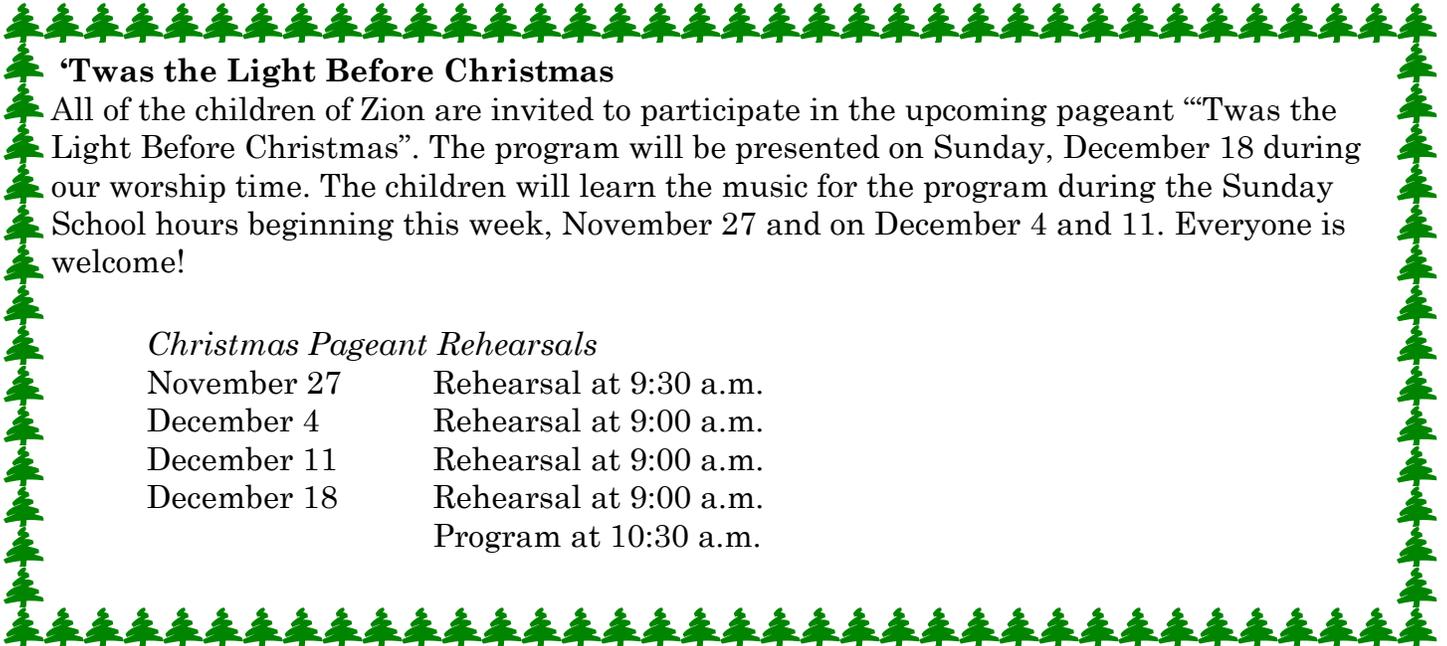
We collected boxes and cans of Chicken and/or Tuna Helper to support Wheels of Hope on Nov. 20 Our next date for Helper Sunday collection will be Sunday, Dec 18 so please remember to bring a box of Chicken and/or Tuna Helper with a can of chicken or tuna.



## Zion News

### **Kids Helping Kids: Zion's Sunday School Christmas Mission**

The Sunday School students at Zion have reached out to a local school district to find families who need help during the Christmas season. We are providing gifts for two families. Gift ideas can be found on the Kids Helping Kids Tree. You may purchase a new gift item or donate money to the cause. Please return any gift items wrapped with the original gift tag by Sunday, December 18.



#### **'Twas the Light Before Christmas**

All of the children of Zion are invited to participate in the upcoming pageant "'Twas the Light Before Christmas". The program will be presented on Sunday, December 18 during our worship time. The children will learn the music for the program during the Sunday School hours beginning this week, November 27 and on December 4 and 11. Everyone is welcome!

#### *Christmas Pageant Rehearsals*

November 27	Rehearsal at 9:30 a.m.
December 4	Rehearsal at 9:00 a.m.
December 11	Rehearsal at 9:00 a.m.
December 18	Rehearsal at 9:00 a.m. Program at 10:30 a.m.

### *Pastoral Visitation*

If you would like to request a home visit from Rev. Nikki Woolsey, please contact the church office to schedule a date. Also, please contact the church if you an upcoming scheduled hospitalization. You can also reach Nikki on her cell phone at 913-221-7700.

### *Thank You to Zion United Church of Christ*

Dear friends at Zion UCC,  
Thank you so much for your generous donation of clothes and supplies for our students in need. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and continued support of our students and school district! Thank you again for your generosity!

Sincerely,  
Tara Tiernan  
USD 473 Nurse

Thank you so very much for your continued support to Wheels of HOPE. Your most recent monetary donation and 15 pounds of food is greatly appreciated. Generous people like you help us continue to serve Geary County residents unable to make it all month.

With sincere appreciation,  
Wheels of HOPE board



**Zion News**

**Family Advent Calendars Available**

The observance of Advent as a season in our faith journey can follow us into our homes and places of work. To help you take a moment of pause each day during this time, the Formation Team is providing a set of Advent Calendar Cards to each family of the church. Calendar cards will be available to pick up on Sunday, November 27.

One  
*First Sunday of Advent*

Light: One candle

Meditate: Hope looked down and saw despair. "I will go there," said Hope.

Read: Isaiah 2:1-5

Pray: God, open our eyes to despair all around us, and fill us so full of hope that we can each be a light amid the shadows.



**Join the Zion Family for a Caroling Party on December 11**

A new tradition is growing at Zion as we gather to sing and fellowship with one another. A caroling party is planned for Sunday, December 11. We will gather at the church at 4:00 p.m. and visit several members and friends. When we have completed our rounds singing, we will meet up at the home of Ruth and Wayne Gfeller for a chili dinner. Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share at the meal.



**Zion at Work in the World: December Giving Opportunities**

Zion participates in several outreach opportunities throughout each month. Here are the ways you can make a difference during December.

- † All month: Bring a gift for the Sunday School mission tree "Kids Helping Kids."
- † December 4: Non-perishable food donations for the Food Bank of Geary County
- † December 11: Quarter donations for the Heifer Project
- † December 18: "Helper" Sunday for Wheels of HOPE

## Zion News

### **Coping with Grief during the Holidays and Special Days**

Homecare and Hospice in Manhattan is offering a bereavement session entitled *Coping with the Holidays and Special Days* for anyone who is grieving the loss of a loved one and is finding the upcoming holidays difficult. This free educational grief support group is open to all who want to receive support, and learn new coping skills. Choose to attend the session that is most convenient for you:

- ◆ Tuesday, December 6 from 12:00-1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Monday, December 12 from 5:00-6:00 p.m.

If you or someone you know would like to attend one of the group sessions, please email Judine Mecseri, [jmecseri@hcandh.org](mailto:jmecseri@hcandh.org) or Dan Clayton at [dclayton@hcandh.org](mailto:dclayton@hcandh.org) or call the Homecare and Hospice office at 785-537-0688. All sessions are held at the Homecare and Hospice Office at 3801 Vanesta Drive in Manhattan.

## News from K-O Conference

### **Bringing the KO Vision to Life**

From the Conference President, Rev. Nikki Woolsey

The Members of the KO Conference Council met in Wichita the first weekend of November to begin work on the new program year. A great deal of time was spent discussing how we will live into the new vision statement and governance model approved at annual meeting.

The Council now includes four representative positions: Kansas local church, Oklahoma local church, justice and witness, and ecumenical and interfaith. Our group discussed strategies and ideas of how best to use these positions to support the emphases of the vision statement—extravagant welcome, connecting local churches, and transforming lives. Throughout the conversation, we agreed that we wanted additional input from our members on how to best fulfill these roles. Thus, we are crafting a survey for the conference which will be available next week. We are most interested in knowing what your expectations are for the representative positions and the types of programming that would be most beneficial to your local church.

The members of the KO Conference Council include the following persons.

- Nikki Woolsey, President, Junction City, KS
- John Lord, Vice President, Lawrence, KS
- Debbie Rice, Secretary, Wichita, KS
- Kim Rix, Treasurer, Wichita, KS
- Mark Van Dorn, Past President and Chair of the Finance and Stewardship Commission, Oklahoma City, OK
- Dennis Ureche, Local Church Representative to Kansas, Inman, KS
- Sheridan Irick, Local Church Representative to Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK
- Jennifer Parson, Justice and Witness Representative, Lawrence, KS
- Heather Coates, Ecumenical and Interfaith Representative, Baldwin City, KS

Please be in touch if you have questions or news from your local church. You can reach me [via email](#).

## News from K-O Conference

### **Learning About Standing Rock**

By Rev. Rosemary McCombs Maxey

*Reverend Ms. Rosemary McCombs Maxey is a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma. She is a retired clergy person in the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference United Church of Christ, and a member at Fellowship Congregational United Church of Christ, Tulsa.*

### **Reprinted from the KO e-News**

Rev. McCombs Maxey, is well known throughout the UCC as she has served on many national boards and committees and has been a leading voice and member of the UCC Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Rosemary's insights and experiences are particularly helpful to those who wish to know more and support Standing Rock. Thank you, Rosemary for your willingness to share your story and experience of your visit to Standing Rock.

***"Uewv vcayecvlke ah cen sapaklēs! Uewv acaketos."***

**Water protectors we stand with you. Water is sacred.**

*– from the Mvskoke language*

The purpose of my recent visit to the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation near Cannon Ball, ND, for a brief moment in time, was to stand in solidarity with the water protectors of Standing Rock and to protest the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) from further encroachment onto reservation lands, disrupting sacred burial sites, and contaminating life-giving aquifers and waterways of the Missouri River.

My friend Sarah Deer, also a Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizen, and I rose in the predawn hour to drive across Cannon Ball River, a tributary to the Missouri River, where three camping groups were set up. In the dawn, we saw many teepees with campfires lit and smoke billowing skyward. People were already up and moving. The vista seemed timeless and it was breath-taking. The past was made present. Then, entering the Oceti Sakowin Camp (The Seven Council Fires) we saw interspersed with the teepees and campfires, dome tents, RV's, SUV's, and pickup trucks, heard the hum of portable generators — and observed the glow of Smartphones. The past and present together.

Sarah and I were directed toward the people who were going to the site in front of the DAPL equipment and workers. By this time State Highway 1806 was blocked on either side of the protector/protester activities. We stood between the road and the fence to the site where prayers and the water ceremony were offered. Instructions to be prayerful and non-violent were given. Those willing to possibly be arrested went over the fence onto the sacred site (a burial place) to the front of DAPL equipment. We opted to walk with witnesses carrying banners along the road before returning to camp. About 80 people were arrested that day.

Impressive numbers of flags representing more than 250 Indigenous Nations, tribes, and allies lined the road into camp and banners hung on the fences. We found our Muscogee Nation flag for a photo op. The Oceti Sakowin Camp had a community resource center where you could offer your talents or receive some information and assistance, a medic station, a school room, a clothing tent, and a midwifery yurt where counseling is provided. An old school bus painted in psychedelic colors with "Pastors for Peace" written on the front sat nearby with one lone pastor inside. A Two-Spirit Camp tent was not far away and a rainbow flag flew among the others. Sarah and I were able to deliver winter socks, hats, , and scarfs and a gift card from Church of the Open Arms, OKC, as well as our personal gifts and financial contributions.

Beyond Oceti Sakowin Camp were the Red Warrior Camp and the Sacred Stone Camp, each with a lot of activities going on. When not out protecting and protesting, preparation for winter seemed to be the order of the day. It was not hard to imagine what life may have been in 1868, except for the glow of smartphones on the hillside where the best signals could be found.

Much of native life and colonial rule is signified in such contradictions. The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 between the Great Sioux Nation and the United States, like most other treaties long ago has been abrogated, but

## *News from K-O Conference*

not in the hearts of The People. The Garrison Dam built in the early 1950's took the surrounding acres of reservation land belonging to the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara tribes as well as Standing Rock land. The land is controlled by the Corp of Engineers. And finally, DAPL had recently bought acreage to create a private place to dig the pipeline where it is projected that 500,000 barrels of oil a day will flow through the reservations and under the Missouri River leaving a giant carbon footprint and certain potential for pipeline breaks, leaks and explosions. Isn't it any wonder that the indigenous people have had to create the largest ever gathering of nations from around the world to stand in the face of complex madness and say, "No more!" "Protect the water."

"This is a prayerful, peaceful, non-violent protest for the sake of *wni-waconi*, (sacred water)," said the facilitator of the community meeting. Thus, prayers were offered and offerings of tobacco were burned on the camp fires. Traditional songs and Christian hymns were sung in native languages. Elder men and women solemnly spoke of their vision as their work, bringing the teachings of their forebears forward. They spoke words of hospitality, encouragement and offered prayers in the Lakota/Dakota languages. And, they told some good "NDN" stories and jokes, laughed and teased one another.

"What was your takeaway?" I was asked when my stories became too long to hear. My first takeaway is hope. I am hopeful at the sight of several hundred, if not a thousand, people living sustainably and creating community, even with the normal everyday tensions, and even in the face of a militarized zone with helicopters and small planes flying overhead, police in riot gear, and protectors and protestors being pepper sprayed, shot with rubber bullets, and arrested, hope is abundant/evident. With indigenous nations and people around the world standing in solidarity, that is hope-giving. When not able to be in North Dakota, groups of people gather in satellite demonstrations of support. United Nations representatives, Amnesty International, people of faith and people of goodwill gather to observe, investigate and protest injustice and to advocate for and support the Standing Rock people in their pursuit of justice and the right to clean water.

My second takeaway addresses the feeling of awesome responsibility and work that is before us as people of faith and good will. "What can I do?" is the general question. My concern would be that we would approach our support with humility and good information. It behooves us to study and know the issues that surround the native people of Standing Rock and appreciate their sacrifice, strength, vigilance, and fearlessness. Let their actions be our inspiration for action. Know that there could have been financial gain for them when oil companies drill through their land, but they turned that down when the elements of nature were threatened. It is important for all of us to know that we can't drink oil, and we need clean water and a hospitable climate in which to live. We who are from Oklahoma should understand very well the consequences of drilling and shipping our minerals elsewhere. Injection wells that cause fracking that results in earthquakes teach us that we too must protect our environment not just for us but our future generations. Where is our protest and who would we have to stand with us?

"Standing with Standing Rock" is a t-shirt slogan that reminds me of the past coming to the present to stand for the future.

As I write this, approximately 500 clergy of various denominations have met in Cannon Ball to prepare themselves to accompany the water protectors and protestors to the DAPL's work site. Several denominations including the United Church of Christ have passed resolutions and pronouncements repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery. Representatives asked the Standing Rock elders what they should do besides repent, and they said "burn the document." Perhaps that's a good place to begin. Perhaps reading the Fort Laramie Treaty would help us see the past, the present, and the future more clearly.

*Amen.*

*"Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.'"*

*Revelation 21:6*



**Poinsettias For Christmas**

If you would like to give a poinsettia to remember or honor a loved one or as a gift to the church to display in our Sanctuary this holiday season, please fill out the form below and return it to the church office.

The cost for each poinsettia is \$10.  
(Checks may be payable to: Zion United Church of Christ)

**Deadline for ordering poinsettias is Dec. 1st**

( ) In honor of            ( ) In memory of

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If not specified above, we'll list it as "To the Glory of God" from you.

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

Number of poinsettias ordered \_\_\_\_\_

**Poinsettias will be delivered to Zion**





## Online Giving at Zion UCC

Members of the congregation have the ability to donate online through a secure portal. Donating online eliminates the need to write a check to the church. Online giving is an easy process to establish, and gifts November be changed as desired. Online giving can be accomplished in single payments or as repeat scheduled payments. Below is the link

<https://smartpay.profitstars.com/express/zionuccpp>

If you have any questions or need the additional instructions, please contact the church office at 785-238-5732. Thank you for your ongoing support of Zion United Church of Christ!

- 3-Dec Karla Butler
- 5-Dec Angela Kruse
- 7-Dec Carl Ehlers
- 18-Dec Amanda Steffens-Beasley
- 22-Dec Caleb Snider
- 23-Dec Sally Altwegg

## B.O.B. 2016 Challenge

Birthday Offering Bonus:

**Oct. YTD \$ 1,036.00**

Comparison Oct. 2015 \$1,8,97.00

As of now we are behind in the BOB for the year and may not reach the goal.

**Can we do better?**

Harold and Venice Facklam are challenging all Zion members to give to B.O.B. This year the challenge is to meet \$2000. Also they will donate an additional 16% of the dollar amount over the \$2000.



- 6-Dec Wayne & Ruth Gfeller
- 23-Dec Vern & Doris Steffens
- 26-Dec Steve & Joyce Woodard
- 31-Dec Rod & Brenda Gfeller

*“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”*

*Titus 2:11-13*

# December

# 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Women's Fellowship 12:00 pm At Lane Bitterlin's	3
4 2nd Sunday of Advent Celebration of Holy Communion Food Pantry Sunday Christmas Pageant rehearsal, 9:00 am Sunday School, 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am #God Squad 4:00 pm	5	6 KO Council conference call 5:30 pm	7 Clergy community of practice, Council Grove Choir 6:00 pm Consistory 7:00 pm	8 Wheels of HOPE board meeting 12:00 pm	9	10
11 3rd Sunday of Advent Heifer International Sunday Christmas Pageant rehearsal, 9:00 am Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am Caroling Party 4:00 pm	12	13	14 Wheels of HOPE volunteer opportunities  Choir 6:00 pm	15 Wheels of HOPE volunteer opportunities	16	17
18 4th Sunday of Advent "Helper" Sunday for Wheels of HOPE Christmas Pageant rehearsal, 9:00 am Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am #God Squad 4:00 pm	19	20	21 Choir 6:00 pm	22 Articles due for the January Journey	23	24 Christmas Worship 5:00 pm  
25 Christmas Day-No Services  	26 Office Closed	27	28 Choir 6:00 pm	29	30	31  

## Serving Zion

\*\* Note the change in the layout\*\*

	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
Dec. 4	Harlan & Lane Bitterlin	Kasey & Lacey Fielder	Lyn Green
Dec. 11	Richard Hobaugh & Alex Lee	Karen & Mike Malec	Ruth Gfeller
Dec. 18	Vern & Doris Steffens	Dave Woolsey & Ray Kruse Jr.	Leona Garrison
Dec. 24	Jill & Gary Schmutz	Alex Lee & Doug Vogelsang	Christmas Eve

Deacon for December: Wayne Gfeller



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