***The Messenger***

***A newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church ~ Ottawa Lake, MI***

***December 2022***

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***Advent Worship Services***

Our Advent services will begin on November 30 and continue on December 7,14. We will begin with a meal at 6:15 p.m. and our worship will be at 7:00 p.m.

Text, logo, company name

Description automatically generatedOur theme this year is: What Child Is This? Here is some information about our theme: The angel answers the question this way in the presence of the shepherds: “a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11). The hymnwriter answers it this way: “This, this is Christ the King” (LSB 370:1). They both want to leave us with no doubt regarding the identity of this Child.

Every component of this series reflects on the Scriptures and the beloved hymn to proclaim the story of the little human Child who is also fully God, who took on human flesh so that “Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you” (st. 2). He is the Lord in human flesh, our Savior, the joyous answer to the question What Child Is This?

**Christmas Worship Services**

*Please plan to join us for the Celebration of Christ’s birth this Christmas. We will have two services on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas Day. Our Christmas Eve services will have communion and candlelight.*

*Please invite your loved ones, friends, and neighbors to join us in this wonderful celebration.*

***Early Service will be at 4:00 p.m.***

***Evening Service will be at 6:30 p.m.***

***Christmas Day Service will be at 10:00 a.m.***

A picture containing text, kitchenware, pot, porcelain

Description automatically generated**Christmas Open House at the Parsonage on December 18th.**

Pastor Jeff and Jacob would like to invite you to stop by their home between 2-5 p.m. on Sunday, December 18th.

Pastor and Jacob would love to have you stop by!

**A picture containing diagram

Description automatically generatedChristmas Festival and Cookie Walk**

Women of Zion invite you to join them on December 10 from 9-1 p.m. for their *Christmas Festival with booths from various crafts and specialty vendors.*

We will also have a Cookie Walk for you to purchase a great variety of Christmas cookies.

We will have tickets for special prize baskets.

*We will once again have a raffle for a La-Z-Boy Chair*

***Lutheran Men ~Monthly Breakfast***

On December 10, 2022, we will have our Lutheran Men Monthly breakfast at the parsonage. Breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. We will have a hot breakfast, devotion, and a Bible study. **Please come and feel free to invite a friend or neighbor.**

**Congregational Meeting:**

A close up of a sign

Description automatically generatedOur Congregational Meeting will be held on December 11th following the worship service. Our meeting will be to approve the budget ~ Mission and Ministry Plan for 2023. There will also be election of officers. Please pray and be willing to serve our congregation.

***Women of Zion ~ Meeting***

There will be no meeting on December 26, 2022. Their next meeting will be on March 27 at 2:00 p.m. They will have a meeting and discuss various mission projects to support. They will also continue their Bible study on the book of Revelations. All Women are invited and encouraged to attend.

*** WORSHIP WITH US EACH WEEK!***

***Join us for worship on Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and***

***Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m.***

***Sunday School and Bible Study***

***Please plan to join us at 9:00 a.m. Sunday School at 9:15 a.m.***

**Zion Church Choir**

Zion's choir is led by Joseph Extejt. All are welcome to join in. Practice is usually held after Sunday worship service. They practice after church in the choir room in the basement. For more information, please speak with Joseph Extejt.

***A picture containing drawing

Description automatically generated***

***HANDBELL CHOIR ~*** It is time to make a joyful noise to the Lord.   Come join the bell choir.  They practice on Saturdays at 3:00 P.M. for 45 minutes.  Don’t know how?  Happy to teach you.  Come join the fun!

For more information, please speak to Karen Vollmer 419-841-6782.

**Staff Christmas Gifts**

This Christmas, we would like to show our appreciation to our staff. Please consider placing a gift in the offering plate. Please mark your envelope and/or check with the words “Staff Gift” or you can use the envelopes provided on the table. Your kindness to our staff is greatly appreciated. Please give your gift by December 19th so that a check can be given to them on Christmas Eve.

**A close up of a sign

Description automatically generatedZION Lutheran Church**

**LCMC ~ Lutheran congregations in mission for Christ**

8307 Memorial Hwy. Ottawa Lake, MI 49267 ·

(734) 856-2921

**Pastor ∙ Jeffrey Geske**

(785) 340-5635

[**zlcolmpastor@gmail.com**](mailto:zlcolmpastor@gmail.com)

[**www.zionlutheranottawalakemi.com**](http://www.zionlutheranottawalakemi.com)

**Secretary ~ Sandy brady**

**(419) 410-9380**

[**skwiles2000@gmail.com**](mailto:skwiles2000@gmail.com)

**custodian and organist~ Joseph extejt**

**For Your Information**

Text

Description automatically generatedThe following members give of their time to the leadership of this congregation. Please keep them in your prayers. If you have any questions, comments, or offers of help, please contact them.

**hairman:** Ron Vincent

**Secretary:** Connie Sieler

**Treasurer:** Brian Gilliland

**Financial:** Sandy Bondy

**Recording:** MaryJo Price

**Elders:** Ron Clark and Lee Edignton

**Deacons:** Dwight Gilliland and Jim Hredzak

**Committees:**

Trust Fund: Connie Sieler, Alan Ahleman, Delores Ostrander, Sandy Brady and Gilbert Olrich

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**LCMC ~ WHO WE ARE**

**Free in Christ + Accountable to One Another + Rooted in Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions + Committed to the Great Commission**

**Prayers Are Important**

If you have an occasion to request a prayer, please call the church office. If you would like your request to be on our prayer chain, please call Sandy Brady (419) 410-9380 or Pastor Jeff at the church or on his cell phone (785)340-5635.

**Please Inform the Church Office. . .**

\*when a member of your family is ill or hospitalized or if they are discharged or moved to another facility.

\*when your address changes.

***A blue and white sign

Description automatically generated***\*when a new baby arrives.

\*when a family member marries or leaves home for college, or military.

\*when planning a wedding to be conducted at Zion.

\*when a new family moves into your neighborhood.

\*when you are planning to be out of town.

\*when a brother or sister in Christ needs a visit from Pastor.

***Salvation ~ God’s Gift to All People***

Greetings in the name of Christ. As you celebrate this Christmas, may you be reminded and encouraged in the fact that Jesus came as a baby in Bethlehem, who made a journey to the cross of calvary to die for your sin, my sin and the sin of all people. God’s plan is for all to be saved. St. Paul wrote, “ **3**This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, **4**who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. “ (1 Timothy 2:3-4 ESV) Unfortunately not all will be saved and this reality is not the wish for God but because of unbelief, unrepentance, or apathy. There will be people who will spend eternity away from God and from us who believe. The church exists to help people grow in a relationship with God and with brothers and sisters in Christ. It is a place to be fed, nurtured, and encouraged. The purpose is always to worship and then to go and witness.

We witness by sharing our lips and our lives telling the hope that we know to be true in Jesus Christ. Always remembering that God is at work through us causing the growth. People always need to be reminded of who Jesus is and what He has done for them and for us. They need to be reminded and encouraged in the SALVATION OUTLINE. I came across these words in a catechism. I hope that they can be helpful to you as you share our Savior Jesus with others.

**Salvation Outline**

The following seven points summarize basic information about the human condition and God’s saving grace. You may want to memorize these points so that you can share them with someone who does not yet believe in Jesus as his or her Savior.

1. God loves you! “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

2. You are a sinner. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

3. God punishes sin. “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

4. Jesus took our punishment. “But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

5. Jesus rose from the dead. “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3–4).

6. Jesus offers forgiveness of sins and eternal life to those who believe in Him. “Then he brought them out and said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ And they said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household’ ” (Acts 16:30–31).

7. Salvation is free—a gift from God. “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9).

Luther, Martin. Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation - 2017 Edition (p. 362). Concordia Publishing House. Kindle Edition.

As we seek to share the love of Jesus, we want people to know Jesus and we want them to join us in making Jesus known to the world. At this Christmas, I encourage you to speak up and speak out by encouraging and inviting those you know and love to join us for worship and growing in God’s Word and love. **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

In Christ,  
Pastor Jeff Geske

**Sunday Morning Bible Class**

***Please come and join our study of the Word of God!***

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Description automatically generatedEach study in the *God’s Word for Today* series provides an in-depth exploration of a book of the Bible. Each session includes:

* background information on the book of the Bible, its author, audience, occasion, and purpose;
* learning experiences that promote exciting and challenging discussions;
* notes for leaders that answer questions, suggest a learning process, and provide additional information;
* discussion starters that help participants apply God’s Word to their daily lives.

(13 sessions) Paul’s letter to the Ephesians is about the church and about the fellowship of believers who make up the church. It is about us, for by faith we are the church in our time and place. We, by God’s grace, are part of God’s family – a family united in Christ and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

**Newsletter Article – December 2022**

*(--From the LCMS website)*

**Anxiety vs. Trust**

Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, teaches those who follow Him that worrying about the necessities of life is idolatry: worshipping a false god. Worry and anxiety show what we care about. Our anxiety reveals what we love and what we’re devoted to. It reveals what we trust in.

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This is why our Lord begins this section with an overarching principle: “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money” (Matt. 6:24).

But you say: “I must eat and drink. I must have clothing to wear and have a home in which to dwell.” Yes, all these things you need. And Jesus says that your Father in heaven will ensure that you have them. He demonstrates this with a simple argument: your Father in heaven feeds the birds of the air, who neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. He clothes the lilies of the field, who neither toil nor spin but are arrayed more luxuriously than Solomon in all his glory. If, then, your Father in heaven feeds the birds, if He clothes the lilies, how will He not also feed and clothe you, when you are worth more than they are? (Matt 6:25–33).

Do you know that you are worth more than them? You are worth infinitely more. You are worth the price of the eternal Son of God. Did the Son of God come down from heaven and become a lily? Did he descend and take on the form of a bird? No! He came down from heaven and became a man: flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone (Gen. 2:23). He is one of us, our brother. And what did He do when He became flesh to dwell among us? He gave His holy, precious blood, through His innocent suffering and death, that you might be His own and live under Him in His kingdom forever.

A picture containing text, flower, plant

Description automatically generatedGod became man in Christ Jesus. He lived the life we failed to live, and He died the death we deserved. He was raised again on the third day overcoming sin and death ... for us. He was crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification. So, if your Father in heaven has given His Son to die for us in order that we might live with Him eternally, how will He not also give us all things to support this body and life?

To be anxious about the necessities of life, to devote yourself to food and clothing, to care about these things and find security in them, is to serve another god. It is to deny that you will live forever because Jesus, the Son of God, is risen from the dead and lives and reigns for all eternity. It is to believe that the God who created you, redeemed you by the death and resurrection of His Son and sanctified you by His Spirit, will not keep His promise to sustain you in this life.

Jesus says, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (Matt. 6:33). God’s kingdom is His rule among us. His rule among us comes when our Father in heaven gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His Holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity. This is what we ask God to do for us in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

Your Father in heaven knows what you need — food and clothing, house and home — and He promises to give it to you. Chief of the things you need is His grace and mercy in His Son, Jesus Christ. So, seek after that. And those who seek will find. And all the necessities of life, our Lord says, will be added to you

**WE BELIEVE, TEACH, AND CONFESS**

***From Luther’s Small Catechism ~***

**134. From what has Christ redeemed you?**

He has redeemed me “from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil.”

463 **John 1:29** Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

464 **Heb. 2:14–15, 17** Since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.… For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people.

**Merry Christmas!**

It is that time of year again that we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. As you celebrate Christmas, may you be reminded once again of how God loves you so much that He sent His Son to be your Savior. We wish you a very Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year!

Your staff,

Pastor Geske, Joseph Extejt and Sandy Brady

A close up of a sign

Description automatically generated**What is a Thrivent Action Team?** **Thrivent Action Teams** make it easy to live generously. **Thrivent** provides promotional resources and seed money to jump-start your fundraiser, educational event or service project. Your **team** provides the people power to bring it to life.

**A picture containing text, clipart

Description automatically generatedTHRIVENT NEWS . . .**

If you would like more information about Thrivent, its products, or its fraternal functions, please contact our area representative Greg Durivage in Maumee, OH at (419)-740-4193.

Logo

Description automatically generatedOur Church Directory is Online!

View our church directory online or via the FREE mobile app today. To view the directory online, go to **members.InstantChurchDirectory.com** and follow the prompts under “Sign In” to “Create a login now.” Please remember, you must confirm your email address before you can sign in.  You will need to use your email address as listed in our directory to create a log-in the first time you use the directory online and via the mobile app.

Need help or have questions? Please contact Pastor Jeff.

Logo, company name

Description automatically generated**Community Rewards Program**

Do you shop at Kroger? If you do, you can sign up for their Community Rewards Program and Kroger will give back to Zion money every quarter. Go on Kroger's website and sign up under Community Rewards. If you need help or do not have an email address, check with Pastor Jeff. *(Our code is NC512)*

**Steps for Linking your Kroger card to help our ministry ~**

**1. Sign into your account at** [**www.kroger.com**](http://www.kroger.com) **or create an account.**

**2. Click on the NAME.**

**3. Scroll down to MY ACCOUNT and Click on it,**

**4. Scroll down to COMMUNITY REWARDS. Click on COMMUNITY REWARDS.**

**5. Enter Zion Lutheran Church Ottawa Lake MI (NC512)**

**Food Bank~ Thank you for your generous help** with our Food Bank. If you have any questions or would like to help in any way, please contact Rick Keck at (734) 854-4710. The Food Bank serves families and individuals on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 10:00 a.m. until noon.

Graphical user interface, text, application, chat or text message

Description automatically generated

**To Join our Text alerts visit: Text the message @jgesk to the number 81010. If you’re having trouble with 81010, try texting @jgesk to (517) 682-0429. This is a free service ~ You are only charged if your cellphone charges per text**

***BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES***

We would like to wish Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary to the following individuals who are celebrating this month. If you are not listed or you know someone not listed, please contact Sandy Brady or Pastor Jeff.

**Flowers on the Altar** ~ If you would like to place flowers, please sign up in the hallway by the restroom.

The cost is $25.00

Please consider signing up for some time this coming year.

***December Birthdays***

***6 Jean Gilliland***

***8 Eileen Schmidt***

***10 Cheri Hand***

***11 Duane Holtz***

***14 Dylan Baumgartner***

***20 Callie Schmidt***

***30 Mary Dellabona***

**A picture containing text, clipart, vector graphics

Description automatically generated**

**We wish the following couples a very Happy Anniversary!**

***20 ~ Jeff and Candy Gorr***

***22~ Jim and Darla Hredzak***

*****Bringing Christ to the Nations and* the Nations to the Church**

"The Lutheran Hour," which began in 1930, is now heard on more than 1,300 radio stations around the world. "The Lutheran Hour," hosted by Dr. Rev. Michael Zeigler, is the world's oldest continually-broadcast Gospel radio program. This weekly half-hour program proclaims the message of Jesus Christ to all people and serves as a bridge, linking them to the Church. Listen to the Lutheran Hour on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. or at AM 1560 WWYC or anytime at [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org)

**December 2022**

December 4  
**"Paradise Restored"**  
Lutheran Hour Speaker: [Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler](https://www.lhm.org/about/zeigler-bio.asp)  
If God is love, what are we to make of His wrath?  
(Isaiah 11:1-10)

December 11  
**"Beauty We Can't See"**  
Lutheran Hour Speaker: [Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler](https://www.lhm.org/about/zeigler-bio.asp)  
We often feel our need for God's presence only when we see what it looks like when He's absent.  
(Isaiah 28:5)

December 18  
**"Gestures of Hope"**  
Lutheran Hour Speaker: [Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler](https://www.lhm.org/about/zeigler-bio.asp)  
Dr. Michael Zeigler shows how even the smallest acts of kindness can go a long way, by God's grace.  
(Isaiah 7:14)

December 25  
**"A Shoot from the Stump"**  
Lutheran Hour Speaker: [Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler](https://www.lhm.org/about/zeigler-bio.asp)  
A shoot springs forth from the stump of Jesse. Is it a sign of hope--or a threat?  
(Isaiah 11:1)

COUNCIL MEETING

NOVEMBER 20, 2022

Member Present:  Pastor Jeff, Ron Vincent, Connie Sieler, Ron Clark, Dwight Gilliland, Sandy Bondy,  Mary Jo Price and Lee Edington.  Connie left the meeting at 11:45.

Absent:  Jim Hredzak    Guests:  Roger Smith and Joseph Exject

Meeting called to order by Ron Vincent @11:16. Pastor opened with a prayer.

Motion made by Ron and 2nd by Lee to dispense with reading of minutes.  Carried

Motion made by Ron Clark and 2nd by Lee to approve October’s minutes.  Carried

Pastor:  Bible classes, visiting shut-ins and confirmation class.  Pastor read a letter stating that he received a call from church in Texas and is asking for time to pray on this situation.  Pastor asked that he like to be here for Christmas, and it would be a peaceful transition if he accepts call from Texas.  Pastor also recommended that Council pass the proposed budget for Year 2023. A discussion was held by Council with Pastor about their concerns. Roger also expressed his surprise and concern about Pastor’s call.

President:  We need someone to volunteer to do audit for Year 2021 and 2022.  Please contact council member if interested.  At this time, we also need candidates for Secretary and Deacon.  If anyone is interested,  please contact a Council member.

Treasurer: Brian presented the discussed proposed budget.  Council members discussed revisions.  Ron Clark made a motion to  move to publish the proposed budget for the congregation’s review prior to the Congregational Meeting.    Motion 2nd by Lee to accept Treasurer report.  Carried

Deacons:  Dwight Gilliland thanked Jim Hredzak and Bob Decator for finishing the painting of the ramp. The council noted how nice it looked.  Pastor offered that we should check the salt barrel to see if we have enough for the season and the deacons should watch the weather to see if someone should be there early to shovel and/or salt.

New Business:

•    Need candidates for secretary and another deacon.

•    Staff Gift:  Council members agree that we should announce that we are doing the staff gift donation again this year.

•    The water heater is leaking and should be replaced.  Ron Clark noted that we still have the tankless water heater that Gale Vaughan donated  He will check and see if Thompson Plumbing will install.  Pastor noted that he should verify that it would be sufficient for the health department.

•    Snow removal:  Pastor noted that John Castel has done it in the past.  Dwight Gilliland said he would try to contact John and see if he is interested in doing it another year.

Lee Edington  made a motion to adjourn 2nd by Mary Jo Price  at 12:50.  Carried

Closed with Lord’s Prayer

Respectfully Submitted

Connie Sieler/Dwight Gilliland

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Zion Lutheran Church ~ Ottawa Lake MI** | | |  |  |
| **Mission and Ministry Plan 2021 and 2022 Budget and 2023 Proposal** | | | | |
| **Missions** |  | 2021 | 2022 | PROPOSED 2023 |
| 1 | LCMC | 1,000.00 | $1,000.00 | $1,000.00 |
| 2 | Other |  |  |  |
|  | Yearly | **1,000.00** | **1,000.00** | **1,000.00** |
| **Pastoral Support** | |  |  |  |
| 3 | Salary | $24,000.00 | $26,000.00 | $33,000.00 |
| 4 | Housing | $10,625.00 | $11,000.00 | $11,000.00 |
| 5 | Mileage | $2,400.00 | $2,400.00 | $2,400.00 |
| 6 | Cell | $600.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 |
| 7 | Health | $6,000.00 | $9,900.00 | $6,000.00 |
|  |  | **$43,625.00** | **$49,900.00** | **$53,000.00** |
| **Support Staff** | |  |  |  |
| 8 | Organist | $5,370.72 | $5,952.00 | $5,952.00 |
| 9 | Custodian |  | $2,400.00 | $2,400.00 |
| 10 | Secretary | $2,400.00 | $2,700.00 | $2,700.00 |
| 11 | Taxes All Emp. | $750.00 | $2,000.00 | $845.00 |
|  |  | **$8,520.72** | **$13,052.00** | **$11,897.00** |
| **Facilities** |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Chur. Elect | $4,800.00 | $7,800.00 | $9,800.00 |
| 13 | Chur. Water | $600.00 | $738.00 | $779.00 |
| 14 | Comm Tel | $2,500.00 | $1,800.00 | $1,800.00 |
| 15 | Insurance | $3,900.00 | $5,160.00 | $5,160.00 |
| 16 | Maintenace | $3,500.00 | $4,000.00 | $1,000.00 |
| 17 | Misc | $500.00 | $500.00 | $500.00 |
| 18 | Office | $4,500.00 | $4,400.00 | $2,700.00 |
| 19 | Par. Elect | $5,700.00 | $4,400.00 | $5,000.00 |
| 20 | Par. Water | $1,200.00 | $3,358.00 | $3,358.00 |
| 21 | Supplies | $500.00 | $500.00 | $500.00 |
| 22 | Professional Sv |  |  | $300.00 |
| 23 | Lease (Copier |  |  | $3,180.00 |
| 24 | Trash Serv | $1,000.00 | $1,060.00 | $1,500.00 |
|  | Yearly | **$28,700.00** | **$33,716.00** | **$35,577.00** |
| **Ministry Support** | |  |  |  |
| 25 | Altar Guild | $800.00 | $1,000.00 | $500.00 |
| 26 | Conf/Retreat | $500.00 | $1,000.00 | $4,000.00 |
| 27 | Educ | $150.00 | $250.00 | $250.00 |
| 28 | Elders | $150.00 | $150.00 | $150.00 |
| 29 | Evangelism | $500.00 | $1,000.00 | $1,000.00 |
| 30 | Music | $100.00 | $200.00 | $200.00 |
| 31 | Stewardship | $150.00 | $200.00 | $200.00 |
| 32 | Worship | $600.00 | $1,102.00 | $1,000.00 |
|  | Yearly | **$2,950.00** | **$4,902.00** | **$7,300.00** |
| Total Yearly | | **$86,170.72** | **$102,570.00** | **$108,774.00** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday Weekly | | $1,657.13 | $1,972.50 | $2,091.81 |

Calendar

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Text

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