

Trinity Tidings

December 2017

**Trinity Church is a fellowship seeking to share the love and word of Jesus Christ
with all.**



**Longest Night Service
Martha Friendship Circle Annual Christmas Luncheon
Christmas Worship Services
New Year's Eve Prayer Vigil
Christmas Pageant**

From the Pastor

Pre-Christmas Anxiety?

A psychologist once commented, “America has become so nervous, tense and anxious that people don’t even sleep in church anymore.” Well, I think I could document a few exceptions, but his point is very accurate. We’re an increasingly anxious people.

On one of my recent radio interviews, a counselor noted that anxiety has replaced depression as the number one mental health challenge in our country. I see that. I hear that.

Many people with whom I talk are very fearful about ____ fill in the blank. Yet anxiety, worry and fear are directly opposite to faith and trust. So in this month of increased busyness and activity, I encourage you to slow down.

We’re preparing to celebrate the birthday of the prince of peace, so how ironic is it that many Christians become overly strained and anxious in the weeks and days before.

I urge you to do one of the following in order to keep your Advent weeks calm and peaceful:

- Take 15 minutes each morning to pray and meditate.
- Choose to forego some activity of the month and guide your children to do so, as well.
- Set boundaries on your Christmas preparations — boundaries of time and money — and keep them.
- Make worship a priority, that you might have a weekly rest stop of faith.
- Take care of yourself physically by not overeating or overdrinking.
- Before you go to bed, pray for peace of mind and heart.

This is a beautiful season. Let’s not detract from it with unnecessary worry or anxiety.

Be at peace friends,

Frank

The Bulletin Board

Martha Friendship Circle: Monday, December 4th

Martha Friendship Circle will gather on Monday, December 4th in the Heath Room in Heath Village at our earlier start time of 12:30 p.m. for our Annual Christmas Luncheon. As usual, we'll have a delicious meal served to us by the lovely kitchen staff. Pastor Paul Wells and his beautiful wife, Jan, will provide us with a wonderful Christmas program with stories and inspirational music. This is one meeting you do not want to miss. Please bring friends and family. We love to have extra guests. **Call Janet Moss at 908-269-6048 to make reservations** if you didn't make them at our last meeting. Thank you, Janet, for helping us with attendance and reservations. A big thank you to Essie Cox, who has agreed to select our menu once again. So as you can see we're all prepared for our Christmas celebration and all we need is YOU!! Hope to see you on the 4th. Until then, be well and God Bless you all, Ginny and Lauren. If you have any questions, call 908-852-6431.

Trinity UMM Fellowship Breakfast: Saturday, December 9th

The breakfast is 8 - 9:30 a.m. in Starr Hall (7:45 a.m. coffee for early arrivals). All are welcome.

New Members Reception: Sunday, December 3rd

The process includes a dinner on Saturday, December 2nd, and on the 3rd, a class at 9:15 a.m. and reception into the fellowship of the church during the 10:45 a.m. worship service. If you find Trinity is a good place for you to worship and serve, please consider joining. For more information or to join, let one of the pastors know, call the church office at 908-852-3020, or indicate your interest on the *Just Say Yes* form in the worship bulletin or on the fellowship sheet.

Baptism: Sunday, January 21st

The sacrament of baptism for babies, youth and adults is during the 10:45 a.m. worship service. For information, call the church office at 908-852-3020 or see the application online at our website.

Interfaith Hospitality Network: December 10th – 17th

Safe Harbor Ministry: Saturday, December 23rd

Midnight Run: Saturday, December 16th Breakfast Run

Longest Night Service

Sunday, December 17th, 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary

For those struggling with loss, loneliness, worry and pain this Christmas season.

When you just aren't able to feel the joy of the season, it can feel as though you're the only one struggling this time of year. And it can feel as though you should just be able to turn off the grief, the struggle, the worry and the loneliness you're experiencing and be happy. But you can't. It might feel as though the world doesn't get it or even that there's something wrong with you as you wish you could just skip over this season altogether.

It can be difficult to hold together the pain we might be experiencing with the Christmas season. And that's what this service is for. It's a sacred space to be real with what's happening in life right now, to acknowledge it, honor it and discover the ways that Advent and Christmas are actually meant to speak directly into that which you're experiencing. It's an opportunity to experience the hope and love of our compassionate God, and at the same time, be real about our experiences. So come, if you're grieving, lonely, worried, struggling, fearful, experiencing a loss (job, health, financial, independence, relationship, etc.), anticipating a loss, hurting, in need of a word of comfort and hope or wanting to know you aren't alone.

All are welcome to this service, and you're encouraged to invite friends and neighbors and loved ones from the community. As an offering of love, offer to attend with those you invite! Contact Pastor Jenny at jsmithwalz@catchthespirit.org or 908-852-3020, ext. 13 if you have questions.

Holy Communion in December

We'll share in the sacrament of Holy Communion at all worship services on Saturday, December 2nd and Sunday, December 3rd. The sacrament can also be taken to those who are shut in and can't get out. Let a pastor know if you would like this opportunity.

Methodist Hospital Gifts Due by December 2nd

Unwrapped gifts for children ages birth to teenage in the Methodist Hospital are due by December 2nd. There are decorated collection boxes at the entrance to Trinity Church and the KidVenture headquarters in which to place your gift. Attach a tag to note the appropriate age of the intended recipient and if the gift is for a boy or girl. Thanks for helping to brighten a sick child's Christmas!



Christmas-Eve Eve Service December 23rd in the Sanctuary at 7:30 p.m.

This is a traditional worship service for those who may be traveling on Christmas Eve or unable to come out to worship on the 24th.

Christmas Eve Services

Join us in Trinity's Sanctuary on December 24th to celebrate the birth of Christ in one of our five beautiful worship services.

- 3:30 p.m.** A high-energy service with joyful music especially for children provided by the Peace Ringers, Littlest Angels and Christmas Chimers.
- 5:30 p.m.** A service for children, youth and families, with music provided by the Music Makers, Trinity Singers and Trinity Ringers. Helping us celebrate at a special children's time will be Hamel the Camel.
- 7:30 p.m.** A traditional service of carols and scripture telling the Christmas story with music by the Agape Ringers, Brick Church Ringers and Chancel Choir with brass accompaniment.
- 9:30 p.m.** A traditional service of carols and scripture with special music by the Colofonia String Ensemble.
- 11 p.m.** Welcome Christmas morning with our lovely midnight service with Holy Communion.

All are welcome to any worship service. All services conclude in beautiful candlelight as we sing Silent Night together. Invite family and friends to worship with you. Watch for a special mailing just before Christmas with more details about each service.

New Year's Eve Prayer Vigil

For the 10th year, we're offering a very special New Year's Eve prayer vigil. The Sanctuary will be open for prayer from 1 p.m., December 31st to 1 p.m., January 1st. When you come to the Sanctuary, you'll hear quiet music, see twinkling candles and find printed prayer materials to read if you wish. This is a beautiful and meditative way to close out the old year and mark the beginning of a new year in your spiritual journey. If you can volunteer to be a host for one hour, please sign up during December on Sundays in Starr Hall. Thanks for your help.



It's not too late to submit your commitment cards.

We're grateful for the many parishioners who submitted their 2018 commitment cards on Commitment Weekend. If you haven't done so, please bring or mail your card to the church office or put them in the worship service collection plate as soon as possible. Our finance and ministry leaders will be making final plans for our ministry and mission for next year throughout December. Your pledge helps us do God's work.

Thank You Christine

We recently received word that Trinity member Christine Schullian, who died in October, had made a lovely decision. She chose to include Trinity in her last will and testament. In due time, her financial gift to the church will be received and used under the care of the Trustees to accomplish projects and ministries that we might not otherwise have been able to afford. We're very grateful for Christine's generous act. Have you considered including Trinity in your final estate plans? Christine's name will be added to the Fellowship for our Future plaque that is in our main church foyer.

UMM Matters

Bill Blaskopf

Our November 11th breakfast featured Dr. Howard Burrell. Dr. Burrell spoke on the topic, *Our Spiritual and Mental Attitudes – Why They Are So Important to the Quality of the Life We Live*. Dr. Burrell's presentation was very informative and well received. November also saw UMM recognize our veterans who were able to attend. Boy Scout Troop #416 provided the Honor Guard for the meeting.

December 9th we'll have our own Mike Galley leading us in a celebration of Advent through the singing of Christmas carols. Whether you can sing or not, this will be a joyous celebration.

We continue to make plans for our February 10th breakfast. Bishop John Schol will be here. The breakfast will be held at the Centenary University Dining Hall. We're inviting all the churches in our Skylands District to attend. We hope to have the registration forms available soon, so please look for them and register early.

The March 10th program is also set. The Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA) will speak to us about its ongoing efforts to clean up the Musconetcong River. Then, on April 14th after our breakfast meeting, all attendees are invited to join the MWA on its annual cleanup of the river here in Hackettstown.

Finally, please remember UMM is not just for men. We invite all members of Trinity to attend. Our goals are to provide a sense of community, a meaningful presentation and a fantastic breakfast. Blessing to you all.

Greetings Ministry ~ December 10th

Come to the Greetings Ministry table in Starr Hall on Sunday, December 10th. We have cards, envelopes, stamps and the names of people who need a friendly, caring greeting from Trinity. All YOU need to do is just sit down for a few minutes and write a note of care, compassion and hope. Or you may know someone who would enjoy receiving a greeting. We also want to send mail to service men and women to let them know we remember. Send name and current mailing address for any military folks to Edna Barrier at nebarrier@aol.com or Sue Bernard at bernards1963@aol.com. Each month we send between 25 and 40 cards.

Thrift Shop News

Maureen Storey

Welcome to the season of giving and receiving! In this month when we once again tell the story of a family who has little and travels far to bring hope to the world, think of all you have received and what you have to share.

As a ministry that receives so much, we at the Thrift Shop, have much to feel blessed for. Our bounty from our incredibly generous donors often overflows. Our donors are individuals, families, businesses and our retail neighbors. Thank you, thank you and thank you.

We also give from what we receive. We share our abundance with Midnight Run, the Haiti and Peru missions, as well as the Lord's Pantry, Prayer Shawl Ministry, VBS, the church building and offices, and a variety of other missions which we donate to from our mission jars. We share our overflowing basket bonanza with a variety of services that run fundraisers and need to make their offerings look even more special. We also share items with no-kill animal rescue shelters, and linens with Simple Quilts, who create new quilts for the homeless out of old, unsalable items.

We have the most remarkable volunteers who give from their hearts, as well as their hands and spirits, because, as so many have said to me, they have felt called to the work of ministry through the Thrift Shop. I'd like to make a few shout-outs about our volunteer corps. We have individuals who have taken on specific tasks as a labor of love that make our shops even more exciting.

Jewelry Team: Sue Kenney, Mimi Gulick and Gladys Hoffler meet weekly to sort, clean, appraise, price and display the vast quantity of jewelry that is donated to us. It helps the rest of us sparkle and shine.

The Craft Center: Andrea English weekly sorts, prices, repairs and merchandises the growing crafting area. Andrea also appraises the many collectible dolls we receive.

Fabric Team: Gail Howell, Joanne Heembrock and Fran Blaskopf meet monthly to measure, wrap and price fabric that is donated to the shop. Sewers, quilters and crafters are delighted.

Cards and Stationary: Donna Bellody has the magic of organization and keeps our cards looking great.

Book Sorter extraordinaire: Doug Scott makes it possible for us to find anything in the ocean of books we receive by organizing and labeling bins and bins of books.

Drivers & Movers: Bruce Howell and Andy Hibler and the young volunteer Mormon Elders are our movers and lifters that make our Furniture Gallery thrive by being the backbone of our pickup and delivery service for donors and customers. They can definitely use more help as our calls for pickups have increased. Fridays are prime time, but we're looking to expand to other days. Volunteer through the *Just Say Yes* form in the worship bulletin for one morning a week!

EBay: Ryan Herbert keeps our higher-end goods flowing over the internet to places far and wide!

Data Collection: Edna Burton monthly tabulates all the hours worked by our volunteers.

All of our volunteers together donate over 1,000 hours a month to making this ministry shine. Thank you all for your *many* hours of service and willingness to go the extra mile. You make a difference to people you have never met and will probably never know, as well as to those you do. God bless you everyone for your outstanding efforts.

Thank s to all of you for supporting the Thrift Shop in all that we attempt to do. Come in and see what fabulous things we have going on for the holiday season.

So, in this season of giving and receiving, go forth, do good every chance you get, practice random acts of kindness — you never know whose day you will save with a smile, an open door or open heart, and know the promise of Christmas is coming. Choose joy in the meanwhile. Have a most blessed Christmas.

With Our Sympathy

- ❖ Family and friends of Rev. Renee McCleary
- ❖ Family and friends of Charlotte Lewis
- ❖ Holly Law, on the death of her father
- ❖ Dennis Huff, on the death of his aunt, Jean Huff
- ❖ Family and friends of Debbie Kling
- ❖ Ginny Leveto-Dozier, on the death of her son, William Roach



Thank You

On behalf of the In His Steps Ministry team, many thanks to the volunteers who helped us throughout September and October to stuff, affix address labels and sort our stewardship mailings. Special kudos to Dale Hart and Jan Wells who performed some preliminary work that enabled us to have a smoother and faster assembly line. Also, my compliments to Nancy Dean and the Service Club from the Good Shepherd Christian Academy in Washington who provided us with their time to give us a head start to our final mailing. Thank you again, everyone.

Karen Riccobono

Dear Trinity Family,

Thank you for all that prayed and are continuing to pray for Braxton. He goes back to the brain surgeon in two weeks. His fever broke and he's active, thank God, like every other 13 month old. Love to everyone and thank you so much for continued prayers and love.

Linda & Julie Santoro, Sayj Foca and Braxton Chacon

Thank you so very much for being an Angel to a child of a prison inmate by purchasing a gift or delivering a gift on behalf of the incarcerated parent. This ministry of showing love from an incarcerated parent to their child is so very important. Thank you for helping 28 children receive love from their parent.

Love and blessings, Liz Falco

Family Ministry Small Groups

Monday Dec. 4, 18	High School Fellowship Meets 1 st and 3 rd Mondays	7 – 8:30 p.m. Pami residence
Wednesday Dec. 13	High School Girls Meets 2 nd and 4 th Wednesdays	6:30 – 8 p.m. Upper Room
Wednesday TBD	High School Boys' Group Meets 2 nd and 4 th Wednesdays	TBD
Wednesday Dec. 13	Jr. Prayer Shawl Small Group (Ages 8 & older) Meets 2 nd Wednesday of the month	4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Room 104

Middle School Ministry December Events

Friday, December 1st - Saturday, December 2nd

Winter Lock-In!

Cost: Free!

Come to the church at 6:30 p.m. for a night of community and retreat. We'll share in discussion, music, games and quiet time. Pick up is on Saturday at the church at 10 a.m.

Sunday, December 10th

Christmas Par-tay!

More details to come as the party planners work their holiday magic!

Sunday, December 17th

Christmas Caroling!

This is an entire family event, so grab your relatives and some friends and come sing with us at various nursing homes in the area. The best way to spread Christmas cheer is to sing loud for all to hear! Come meet us at 12 p.m. in Starr Hall to form our groups before we set out. Feel free to bake and bring cookies to share with the staff at the nursing homes!

Thursday, December 21st

Holiday De-Stress Night

We'll meet in our Middle School room to catch up and catch our breaths to help us remember the true meaning of Christmas, 7 -8:30 p.m.

Christmas Pageant Fellowship Group

December 4th The dress rehearsal for "Double Take, A Christmas Pageant as Told by Matthew and Luke" will take place 5 -7 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

December 9th Christmas Pageant Fellowship lunch, set-up and rehearsal from 12 -3 p.m. in Starr Hall and the Sanctuary.

Date to be determined Trip to see "The Star" at Cinepolis Mansfield Movie Theater.

For questions about the Christmas Pageant Fellowship Group please contact Danielle Witt at dwitt@catchthespirit.org or 570-977-5050.

KidVenture Happenings

- December 3rd The children in KidVenture will be rehearsing their songs for the upcoming Christmas pageant.
- December 10th The children of KidVenture (3 year olds - 5th grade), along with the Christmas Pageant Fellowship Group, will celebrate the birth of Christ with "Double Take, A Christmas Pageant as Told by Matthew and Luke" during the 9:15 a.m. worship service.
- December 17th The homerooms of KidVenture will be having class Christmas parties. A small gift will be given to each child to help him/her remember the true meaning of the season.
- December 24th KidVenture will not be held on Christmas Eve. Children are encouraged to come to worship for the 4th Sunday of Advent with their families. Creative Activities will be offered. A special Children's Christmas Eve service will be held at 3:30 p.m.in the Sanctuary.

For questions about KidVenture, please contact Danielle Witt at dwitt@catchthespirit.org or 570-977-5050.

The Lord's Pantry

Kellie Pennington

Thanks to all who helped during our annual Thanksgiving food distribution. We handed out complete dinners, including turkeys and pies to hundreds of families on the Friday before Thanksgiving. We're very happy that we could make the holidays a little brighter for so many people, and appreciate the assistance from our Trinity family.

As we enter December, we're still asking that you consider sponsoring a food drive or making a donation of food or funds. This tends to be a very busy month at the Pantry, and we also give our clients a few extra items to celebrate the Christmas season. It's not too late to make someone's holiday a little better!

From all of us at the Lord's Pantry, we wish you a very blessed and Merry Christmas!

In October, we served 1,392 people (468 families): 434 children, 811 adults and 147 seniors.

Donate to the Pantry on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday,
9 a.m. – 12 noon, or take donations to the church office when it's open.

Missions

Midnight Run

We travel to New York City to distribute food, clothing and toiletries to the homeless in several designated locations. Donate large or extra-large men's jeans, coats, hooded sweatshirts, shirts, gloves and jackets; blankets and wash cloths; men's shoes (all sizes, esp. 10 - 12); new men's underwear and socks; travel-sized shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, disposable razors, shaving cream and deodorant; tote bags; gallon-sized Ziploc® bags. Monetary donations accepted. Charlie Mule' (rivendellatlv@earthlink.net).

Interfaith Hospitality Network

Our guests are Warren County homeless in the process of seeking a place to live. We need people to help set up and break down, make meals and act as hosts. Hosting shifts are 5 – 9 p.m. and overnight at the church, 9 p.m. – 6:30 a.m. If you're a new host, we'll give you a short training session and you'll be paired with a veteran host. There's always two people hosting at a time. Mary Kashmanian (908-684-5362); Carol Munro (908-892-6536); Linda Gonia for food donations (908-813-3865).

The Thrift Shop

Donate clothes and household items in good condition. Hours for shopping are Tuesday – Saturday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday, 5 – 7 p.m. Donations can be dropped off Tuesday – Saturday, 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. at the Barn.

Coupons for Community

The Lord's Pantry uses coupons from weekly newspaper fliers and magazines to help purchase much-needed items, including many that are free. One coupon from a weekly flier can translate into hundreds of items if enough folks bring it in. Place your unused coupons in the marked boxes located in the Rotunda, Trinity House and the Pantry.

Safe Harbor Ministry

The fourth Saturday of every month, we take a meal to residents of a homeless shelter in Easton, PA. We meet at Trinity's kitchen at 3 p.m., prepare the meal, depart for Safe Harbor at 5, serve dinner and eat with the residents, and then depart for home by 7 p.m. The cost is a share of the dinner expenses, depending on how many adults participate in the trip. Children are welcome to come with their parents. Sarah Hergert (908-850-1458).

Bread of Life Mission

Students in grades 6 – 12, their friends and families go to Newton to serve the homeless a meal. Cheryl Pami (732-735-0916 or cpami@catchthespirit.org).

Trinity's Prison Ministry

In-Prison Ministry: We offer 12-week classes at Northern State Prison, a men's institution.

Backpack Ministry: This ministry provides released prisoners a few days' worth of essential items, including toiletries, clothing, food and a bible. **Correspondence Ministry:** Correspond with an inmate who's seeking to know Christ. Contact Peter Smith at psmithtrc@gmail.com.

The View from Here

Since I'm immersed in the business of moving and wrapping my arms around all sorts of change, I'm having a guest author this month. Madeleine L'Engle has long been a favorite writer and inspiring guide.

The Nativity is a time to take courage. How brave am I? Can I bear, without breaking apart, this extraordinary birth?

Christmas evoked in me that response which makes me continue to struggle to understand, with the mind in the heart, the love of God for his creation, a love which expressed itself in the Incarnation. That tiny, helpless baby whose birth we honor contained the Power behind the universe, helpless, at the mercy of its own creation.

Cribb'd, cabined, and confined within the contours of a human infant. The infinite defined by the finite? The Creator of all life thirsty and abandoned? Why would he do such a thing? Aren't there easier and better ways for God to redeem his fallen creatures?

I live by the impossible. How dull the world would be if we limited ourselves to the possible. The only God who seems to me to be worth believing in is impossible for mortal man to understand.

His coming to us as a human child, in total weakness, was the greatest act of warfare against the power of hate and chaos that I know.

I wish you all a most joyous Christmas. And a big thank you for your continuing support of our newsletter.

Be well and God bless, Carol



Serving God with Us in December

Chapel Ushers

Dec. 3 Dennis & Pattie Huff
 Dec. 10 Darryl & Debbie Tuxhorn
 Dec. 17 Bonnie Palma & Betty Cyphers
 Dec. 24 Dennis & Pattie Huff
 Dec. 31 Linda Feula & Sally Hahnes

Scripture Readers – 9:15

Dec. 3 Don Harris
 Dec. 10 Church School Pageant
 Dec. 17 Mary Beth DiBernard
 Dec. 24 Tony Albanese
 Dec. 31 Children's Sabbath

Greeters - 9:15

TBD

Greeters - 10:45

TBD

Ushers – 9:15

Dec. 3 Donna Re, Amanda and Paul Cummings, Becky Illnick, Muslin Chiwanza, Dave Wahl, Bill Bippus, Bette & Dave Sprandel
 Dec. 10 Curt Peirson, Becky Illnick, Dave Wahl, Bill Bippus, Bette & Dave Sprandel, Tony Albanese, Edna Burton
 Dec. 17 Rich Bonte, Dave Wahl, Bill Bippus, Leslie Mule, Carol Theys, Christina Gleason, Tony Albanese, Doug Powell
 Dec. 24 Curt Peirson, Dave Wahl, Rob DeVos, Carol Theys, Tony Albanese, Marie Cenophat, Sharon Roff, Gary Droppa
 Dec. 31 Rich Bonte, Dave Wahl, Bill Bippus, Bette & Dave Sprandel, Carol Theys, Tony Albanese, Doug Powell

Ushers – 10:45

Dec. 3 Hank & Nancy Snover, Pat Mullen, Maureen Boer, Kathryn Twaddell, Joan Crouse, Bill Blaine, Joan Roehrich, Faydeanne Henkel, Mary Brigode
 Dec. 10 John Torkos, Pat Mullen, Joan Crouse, Bill Blaine, Joan Roehrich, Faydeanne Henkel, Gean Gallagher, Roger Hammond, Scott Matthews, Donald Guelich
 Dec. 17 Hank & Nancy Snover, Pat Mullen, Kathryn Twaddell, Claude Buchman, Joan Crouse, Vernon Kilkenny, Bill Blaine, Joan Roehrich, Roger Hammond
 Dec. 24 Hank & Nancy Snover, Pat Mullen, Kathryn Twaddell, Bill Blaine, Joan Roehrich, Scott Matthews, Dana Keys, Joan & Bill Caldwell
 Dec. 31 Kathryn Twaddell, Pat Mullen, Nancy Soleau, Claude Buchman, Joan Crouse, Bill Blaine, Joan Roehrich, Scott Matthews, Rey & Bob Benanti

Welcome Center – 9:15

Dec. 3 Deb Fisher
 Dec. 10 Sarah Hergert
 Dec. 17 Ann Jobbins
 Dec. 24 Dottie Stearns
 Dec. 31 TBD

Welcome Center – 10:45

Mike White & Cheryl Ferguson
 Mike White & Cheryl Ferguson
 Don & Helen Guelich
 Dottie Stearns
 TBD

Audio – 9:15

Dec. 3 Keith Ryan
 Dec. 10 Keith Ryan
 Dec. 17 Joe Racz
 Dec. 24 Julie Ryan
 Dec. 31 Sandy Miko-Philhower

Audio – 10:45

Lori DeLorenzo
 Steve Blazier
 Janice Paulussen
 TBD
 TBD

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December 2017

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