



Weekly Connector

For Sunday, February 7, 2021



Trotwood Church of the Brethren
208 East Main Street, Trotwood, Ohio 45426
937-837-6604

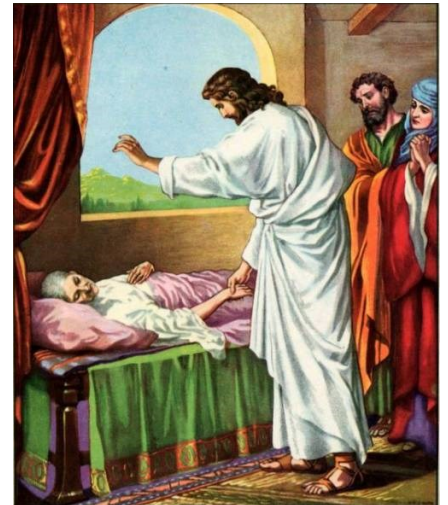
For those of you that do not have access to the internet, we will print Pastor Jen's sermons in the *Weekly Connector*. They will a week behind the YouTube services, but at least you will be able to read her message.

Mark 1:29-39 (NRSV)

²⁹ As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹ He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³² That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴ And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵ In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷ When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸ He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹ And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.



Sermon - "God will make us well" - Mark 1:21-28
Trotwood Church of the Brethren, 1.31.2021
Pastor Jennifer Keeney Scarr



Last week while I was on vacation, Jonathan and I sat down each day to watch through the epic journey of Peter Jackson's interpretation of Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings." In the beginning scenes of "The Fellowship of the Ring" the wise old wizard, Gandalf the Grey begins to suspect that his dear friend and hobbit - Bilbo Baggins is carrying something treacherous in his pocket.

A small golden ring.

Those of us familiar with this story know that this small golden ring carries within it an unclean spirit that given enough time will consume the one who bears it... but Bilbo doesn't know that.

Following some theatrics at Bilbo's birthday party caused in part by the ring, Gandalf confronts his friend. He counsels Bilbo to leave the ring behind. Bilbo doesn't take this counsel well. He frantically declares that the ring is his and accuses Gandalf of trying to steal it from him. Gandalf, being a wizard, shakes Bilbo from this panic with a booming voice and a presence that seems to stretch the walls of Bilbo's home. He declares, "Bilbo Baggins, I am not trying to rob you. I am trying to help you."

I wonder if Jesus of Nazareth would empathize with Gandalf the Gray in this moment.

For Jesus entered the synagogue at Capernaum on the Sabbath to teach those who gathered there in order to help them better understand the power and beauty of God. While Mark doesn't give us a transcript of what Jesus said, we know that those listening were "astounded at his teaching." This word "astounded" also translates as amazed, astonished or to strike with panic.

In the past, I've often believed that those who heard Jesus teach in the synagogue that day believed what he said, and their astonishment was the kind of astonishment or amazement one might feel listening to beautiful music or watching an excellent film - like Lord of the Rings. But now that I've learned the fuller meaning of this word - I am wondering if what Jesus said didn't rattle those folks to their core.

We hear the crowd reflect that Jesus taught as one with authority, meaning that he taught more like a prophet who speaks on God's behalf than like a scribe who depended on training and knowledge to teach.

So whatever Jesus said, he said it as if God were the one speaking.
And we know from the creation story a few weeks ago that when God speaks...

Whoosh - watch out!

When God speaks mountains are born,

When God speaks oceans are formed,

When God speaks birds take flight,

When God speaks humans are made.

That kind of power is breath-taking.

That kind of power will rock your world, recreate your mind, and change your life.

It's no wonder that Jesus' teaching struck the people with a bit of panic.

God was speaking to them.

God in Jesus sweeps through the world with a mind and the power to change things.
To bust through barriers and break down walls, to confront all that threatens our wellbeing so that we all can be made well.

Even if that which threatens our well-being is ourselves.
Jesus is not afraid to confront us.

In the midst of Jesus' teaching on the Sabbath, we encounter the unnamed man with an unclean spirit. "Unclean" in this context signifies that this spirit is set against the spirit of God... for as much as the people were astonished or panicked by the teaching of Jesus, this man with his unclean spirit was threatened by it.

Like Bilbo trying to defend himself against Gandalf,
this man rises up and confronts Jesus.

This man tries to brush Jesus and his powerful teaching aside saying,
"What have you got to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?"

Good night, that question is so familiar.

What does loving our neighbor have to do with me?

What does undoing racism or poverty or sexism have to do with me?

This man in the synagogue is trying to show the people gathered that Jesus actually isn't relevant to them.

They don't have to listen to him...because what Jesus is saying doesn't matter.

He then tries to make Jesus out to be a threat saying,
"Have you come to destroy us?"

In asking this question, this man plants the same question in the minds of all those gathered. Suddenly the whole synagogue is wondering if Jesus is a false prophet who would threaten how they live their lives and seek to tear them apart. Has he come to destroy us?

And to round off the attack, the man declares boldly, "I know who you are.
The holy one of God."

Now to understand why this unclean spirit would say such a thing - we have to pause for a moment to talk about what it means to name something. In the context of Judaism in Jesus time, to name something is to take power over it.

Remember how Adam named all the creatures in the garden of Eden? And God gave Adam power over the creatures? Remember how God renames the patriarchs of the first testament? Abram into Abraham, Jacob into Israel?

Declaring that they now have new names, and new purpose in the story of God?

To name is to claim power.

And so, this man with his unclean spirit is trying to claim power over Jesus by naming him. I know who you are, the holy one of God - I have power over you.

What is so frustrating about this man, is that there is cornel of truth is each of his questions and statements.

What does Jesus of Nazareth have to do with us? Everything. His teaching, his life, his example saves us from ourselves and brings wellness to all people.

Has Jesus come to destroy us? No, but he has come to destroy everything that would keep us from being truly and completely well.

Is Jesus the Holy One of God - absolutely! That's why he speaks as if God were speaking through him. Because God is.

But this man with his unclean spirit paints all this truth to be an awful thing and uses it out of fear to try and control the God of the universe.

He's fooled himself into believing that the unclean spirit is right, that fear and pride and human power have the final say.

I fear there is an unclean spirit in all of us who tricks us into believing the same thing.

It doesn't matter that Jesus teaches us to love our neighbor, because Jesus hasn't met my neighbor and they are just the worst.

Jesus' teachings on peace and justice are irrelevant because war and violence are the only ways to capture the attention of local and global bullies.

In fact, Jesus looks exactly like me. Jesus loves the same people I love, and hates the same people I hate, agrees with my theology and disagrees with their theology. I know who Jesus is - the holy one of God.

Collectively we shake our fists at the God who created us, claiming that God's teaching is irrelevant, dangerous, and worth nothing unless we have power over it.

That man with the unclean spirit isn't named, because he is the everyman. He could be any one of us on our worst day.

But then there's Jesus. And Jesus loves this man as deeply as he loves any one of us... and he could not leave him like that, poisoning himself and his community with such treachery.

Jesus confronts this everyman in his fear and his panic and shuts that ugliness down. This man and his unclean spirit does not get to speak anymore.

Jesus commands the unclean spirit to get gone as God was commanding it. We know Jesus was no wizard... but holy goodness... I wonder if Jesus had the same booming voice as Gandalf the Grey, maybe the walls creaked as his presence filled the room.... or maybe Jesus whispered it to a room so silent you could have heard a pin drop.

But the man and his unclean spirit screamed.

There is quote by David Foster Wallace in his book *Infinite Jest* that says, “Everything I’ve ever let go has claw marks on it.”

And there are claw marks all over this moment.

I don’t know if the man is having a hard time letting go of the unclean spirit or if the unclean spirit is having a hard time letting go of the man - but either way... it’s a rough go.

The word “convulsing” here is the same word used at Jesus baptism to describe the heavens being torn open and it is the same word used at the end of Mark to describe the temple curtain being torn in half.

Convulsed. Torn. Ripped.

This is the boundary breaking work of God.

Boundary breaking work on our behalf to restore us to wellness.

This unclean spirit is ripped from this man as the boundary between the man and the heart of God is torn to shreds.

And the man, is saved. His spiritual well-being is restored after who knows how long of living with that bitterness, fear, and violence. What. a. thing.

Like so many of the people Jesus encounters within the gospels, we don’t get to know what happens to this man after this experience. Still I can’t help but wonder.

What would you do, if you were him?

If the fear you carry, was pulled from you?

If your shame evaporated and your burdens were rent from your heart?

What would you do, if suddenly and finally... your complete well-being was restored and you were free?

That’s the power of God in Jesus - to confront all that threatens our well-being and liberate us into wellness.

God will stop at nothing to see this done.

Grace&Peace,
Pastor Jen

IS.41:13
FOR I THE LORD
WILL HOLD YOUR GOD
RIGHT HAND
SAYING UNTO YOU
FEAR NOT
I WILL HELP
YOU

I thought everyone would like to see this picture! A few months ago a lady called the church saying that she found it in a box of things in her attic and she wanted to know if we would like to have it. Of course, I said "YES!" She said she would drop it off at the church. I told her that I was only in the building on Tuesdays and if it was easier for her, she could drop it off at my house. A couple of weeks ago she dropped it off when I wasn't home so I didn't get a chance to talk to her or even get her name.

Judy Gainey



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

February 6 - Denise Hull
February 11 - Naomi Burkett
February 12 - Annette Sommer

Upcoming Scriptures for Worship:



February 7 - Mark 1:29-39

February 14 - Mark 9:2-9



Nancy Marino

March 30, 1929 - January 24, 2021



I will miss my friend Nancy Marino. She has been a unique Trotwood citizen active in her community attending city council meetings regularly and serving on the Trotwood Civil Service Committee. She passed away at her home on Sunday, January 24, 2021.

I thought she would live forever. I first met her attending the Women's Trotwood Democratic Club in the late 1980s. Since then, it has been my honor to work with Nancy Marino to campaign for high quality candidates. Nancy always wore political earrings that she made from the candidates' campaign buttons to support worthy candidates.

Nancy joined me in 2005 at a We Are Ohio Rally at the state capital. It was an honor to work with her to repeal SB5 ensuring that Ohio workers have a voice in their working conditions. She has served as long as I remember as a treasurer for the Trotwood/Northwest Montgomery County Democratic Club. She served persistently and consistently insisted for strict adherence to all the rules.

When I first knew Nancy, she wore a bright red wig. After her husband passed, the wig was gone, exchanged for a bright bow, often red, white, and blue, accenting her hair now pulled back in a bun. I asked her why she stopped wearing the wig. She explained that Charlie, her husband, had terrible sight and she wore the wig so he would see her as she looked as a young woman. Now that he was gone, she no longer needed to wear the wig.

A member of the Trotwood United Church of Christ which closed just a few years ago, she was known as one of the "Basement Christians" who studied scripture in the Fellowship Hall. Her faith was the basis for her activism.

Joyful to have worked with her and missing her presence,

Dawn Wojcik



Super Bowl Word Search

Find the hidden words going up, down, left and right.

L L D B C N J Z V N W F U O S R B
U U H M H K W Z U H Y Z D U U P L
M D A R E P U S U U T M T J N C B
Y B T V E F P G U D O K P Q D A L
J A C V R F I A G X Y J N Q A R P
F F R I L O G O R B S B Z M Y Z Y
P D I U E K S K Y D D T Z U I Q J
E C U T A C K P O L B Z H J H U Y
I X M Z D I I D B W H Z Y Q F A T
N K L P E K N G N I N N U R I R R
N D X Q R Q E X I T H E L M E T A
J O V M S H R M M N G B O W L E P
C Q W G A M E R V D R K I R D R W
X X K A B E Z P O S E S D E B B I
C P P B X S M U I D A T S K H A K
U E L I N E M A N G O U E K V C W
L L A B T O O F T B K L K E E K Z



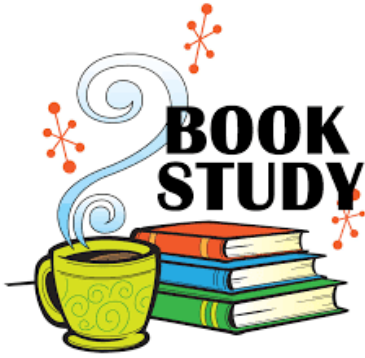
FOOTBALL
FIELD
QUARTERBACK
GAME
SUPER

SUNDAY
HELMET
STADIUM
LINEMAN
BOWL



CHEERLEADERS
PIGSKIN
RUNNING
KICKOFF
PARTY





Please join us for a book discussion of *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo led by Dawn Wojcik and Roxie Ballard.

This book which challenges white society to understand the structural nature of racism and the resulting effects was one of the resources suggested after our Sermon Talk Back after the killing of George Floyd. We hope by discussing this book we can explore issues that are affecting our neighbors and help us to better engage in issues of race.

Saturday mornings
at 10:30 via Zoom

If by computer:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82501371536?
pwd=WnE2WUNQQ2IHMjZHOTNzd1YrTzBpZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82501371536?pwd=WnE2WUNQQ2IHMjZHOTNzd1YrTzBpZz09)

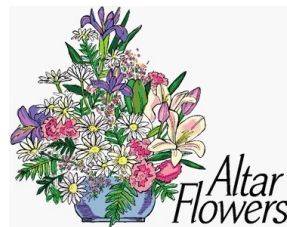
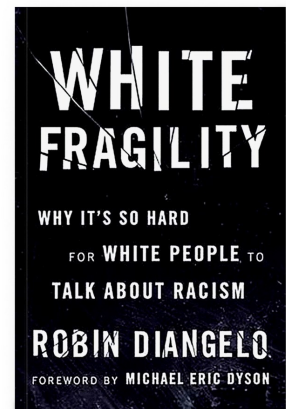
If by Phone: 1-646-558-8656
Meeting ID: 825 0137 1536
Password: 968698

The book is available from the library and many other places including Brethren Press:

[https://www.brethrenpress.com/SearchResults.asp?
Search=White+Fragility&Submit=GO](https://www.brethrenpress.com/SearchResults.asp?Search=White+Fragility&Submit=GO)

The price for an individual book is \$12.60 plus shipping.
Choose USPS shipping for only \$8.70.

The price of the book with shipping is still a very fair price.



Although everyone isn't worshipping together in the sanctuary of the church on Sunday mornings, we are giving everyone the opportunity to place a bouquet of real flowers on the altar or virtual flowers in the Weekly Connector. They can be placed in memory of a loved one, in honor of an event, or to the glory of God.

There is no charge for the virtual altar flowers, but if you choose to have real flowers on the altar, make a check out to the church for \$25 with "altar flowers" written in the memo line.

You will be able to take those flowers home with you after the worship service that Sunday.

Please contact Judy in the church office at 937-837-6604 or office@trotwoodcob.com to sign up on the flower calendar.

Friends who would love to hear from you!

Eddie Morgan,
Friendship Village, Room 340
5790 Denlinger Road
Trotwood, Ohio 45426
937-469-0806



Stephanie Wright
Frontier Valley
1001 South Kingston Street, #56
Aurora, Colorado 80012
937-272-9451

Karleen King
(c/o Susie Rose)
3094 Louise Avenue
Grove City, Ohio 43123
937-681-5228

Carol Armstrong
507 Newport Drive
Lompoc, California 93436
530-592-5387

Johnny Perdue,
442 Waynoka Drive
Lake Waynoka, Ohio 45171
937-776-0758



Join us in a Zoom meeting!



Lunch Time Lectio! Tuesday mornings at 11:00

If by computer:

<https://zoom.us/j/957454887pwd=ZjNGU2RBLzFTby95Ri9RMmt6eWN4dz09>

If by Phone: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 957 454 887 Password: 912426

TCoB Social Hour Every Wednesday evening at 6:30

If by computer:

<https://zoom.us/j/458797909?pwd=dHNLdmNKb25wbm5iVkhOTTRodm90UT09>

If by Phone: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 458 797 909 Password: 766312

TCoB Book Study Saturday morning at 10:30

If by computer:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82501371536?pwd=WnE2WUNQQ2lHMjZHOTNzd1YrTzBpZz09>

If by Phone: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 825 0137 1536 Password: 968698

TCoB Sunday Morning Worship Every Sunday morning at 10:45

If by computer:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85614137540?pwd=R2x3VlV1aWJrZzI0blJhN2h5b1hrQT09>

If by Phone: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 856 1413 7540 Passcode: 338158



Homefull Mobile Grocery will be taking the Grocery Store off the road for the month of February. Unfortunately, the cold weather has been harsh on the employees and has also led to a large dip in customers for our area.

They are going to reassess and release a new schedule in March when the weather will hopefully be a bit warmer!



You have three options to worship with us at Trotwood Church of the Brethren

1. You can view Pastor Jen's online YouTube service at your convenience. (This link is emailed out on Sunday morning).
2. You can join a Zoom worship group at 10:45 on Sunday morning with Pastor Jen to watch the service together and discuss it afterwards. (Check on the "Join us in a Zoom meeting" section of this *Weekly Connector* for the link)
3. Join us in the sanctuary for in-person worship which will include live music, shared joys and concerns, Pastor Jen's YouTube video presented on the large screen, etc. Masks and social distancing are required.

You can choose any option, any week, to match your comfort level!



**REQUESTS
FOR
PRAYER**

Our prayer list has gotten rather long with many names having been listed for an extended period of time without updates.

We will gladly keep the names of those still in need of prayers on the list, so we ask that the office be notified of any names which need to stay on the list.

You can call the office at 937-837-6604
or send an email to office@trotwoodcob.com

Going forward, names will remain listed for three weeks before being removed, unless otherwise notified. Of course, names may be put back on at any time.

Thank you for helping our prayer requests stay up to date!



Lord, Hear our Prayers



for the week of Sunday, February 7, 2021

Seeking health and hope:

- *Rick Ney (Betty James' son, who is awaiting surgery to remove a large mass on his brain)
- *Jazmine Phillips (has been diagnosed with diabetes)
- *Doug Medlar (Tom & Alice's son who is recovering from knee surgery)
- *Shellie Miller (friend of Rich & Annette Sommer who is struggling with advanced breast cancer)
- *Karen Burgess (suffering from shoulder pain)
- *Melanie (Marvin Erbaugh's ex-wife who fell and broke her ankle)
- *Ashley (Ken & Gloria Landis' grandson's wife who had an appendectomy)
- *Carol (Nancy Flory's sister who broke her thigh)
- *Tremon (Nancy Flory's brother-in-law who is in the hospital for dehydration)
- *Alexander (Nancy Flory's grandson who was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes)
- *Cynda Hayney (friend of Rex & Peggy Miller who has been diagnosed with breast cancer)
- *Mary Haldeman (Pastor Jen's grandmother who is recovering from a stroke)
- *Melissa Phillips (suffering from digestive issues)
- *Lynn Lawson (recently diagnosed with esophageal cancer)
- *Frances (Marvin Erbaugh's cousin who suffered a mini stroke)
- *Mr. Phillips (Marisha Randolph's teacher's husband)
- *Terrilyn's mother (from Lower Miami CoB who is recovering from a recent stroke)
- *Miss Lacey (Jill Jackson's para who is recovering from a recent stroke)
- *Chris Parris (friend of Roxie Ballard)
- *Marge (Karen Burgess' mother)
- *Nathan Tincher (relative of Gloria Landis)
- *Phyllis Wood
- *Yvonne Wages (Glenn Timmons' sister, who is struggling with covid)
- *Clark Pleasant (Pam Jones' brother, who is struggling with covid)

Salem Church of the Brethren

is the congregation to pray for this week.

Praising God for:

- *Robin Bohannon (wife of former TCoB pastor, Ron Bohannon, is almost done with treatment and feels she has kicked her cancer)
- *Doug Reiter (relative of Laura Phillips, who is recovering from covid)
- *Ed Snyder (Laura Phillips' brother-in-law, who is recovering from covid)
- *Doug Snyder (Laura Phillips' nephew, who is recovering from covid)
- *Chip Baker (Laura Phillip's great-nephew, who is recovering from covid)
- *Donetta Clay (recovering from pneumonia)

Condolences for the families of:

- *Dr. Judy Royer
- *Gene Bashor
- *Murl Huffman
- *Jim King

Continuing prayers for:

- *Mike Gallon
- *Denise Hull
- *Sally Frigo
- *Bill Landis
- *Lynne Brumbaugh (Jonathan Scarr's mom)
- *Chris Collins, Sr.
- *Stephanie Wright
- *Karleen King

Those serving our country:

- *Health Care workers
- *Christian Peacemaker Teams
- *Brethren Volunteer Service volunteers
- *Jared Bush, serving in the US Army
- *Everyone serving in the military

For Our Community:

- *Those who are hungry and lonely
- *Trotwood Neighborhood Transformation (TNT)
- *Neighborhood Watch groups
- *Our First Responders
- *City Council

If you have requested for a person to be placed on the prayer list, and their prayers have been answered, please let the church office know so they can be removed them from the list.

Are you missing the message on the back of our bulletins? We thought so!

Well, you're in luck! It will now be in the Weekly Connector for you to enjoy!

Soaring

Some years ago, I had the pleasure of vacationing in Florida with my husband and close friends. We visited Walt Disney World's Epcot Center and went on the *Soarin'* attraction. It was a full-body sensory experience! I felt as if I was being lifted above the ground, feet dangling and breeze embracing my body. The sights seemed to suddenly appear as I glided deep into canyons, over mountains, meadows, and seas. My tummy fluttered as I swooped low and rose again. All of this as I was safely buckled into my seat in an IMAX-style theater. It was a simple joy granted by our Creator!

The New International Version translates verse 31 with these words: "But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." This illustrates that we can delight in this blessing received from God.

When we are on a service project, we don't always know what we will be doing, and we have questions: "Will it be hot or cold? Is it dirty, heavy work? Will I be among friends or strangers?" But this is the question I get asked most often: "Why do you do this?" And this is my most concise answer: "Because I get to soar!"

Soaring is the simple joy of seeing happiness, relief, or unexpected comfort from the people we serve. It's the one thing that never fails on a service project. When we are moved to tears, by watching a joyful mother show her children their new home, we are indeed soaring with God. We connect with others through compassionate acts and empathy - experiencing their happiness and joy with them. It is not new to us, but it does keep volunteers soaring.

~ Barbara Siney
Warrensburg, Missouri

Text for today: "To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? Says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all my name: because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, 'My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God'? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, *they shall mount up with wings like eagles*, they shall run and not we weary, they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:25-31, *NRSV*)

Bible Readings for today: Isaiah 40:21-31 (31); Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39.

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Church of the Brethren*

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*We are a church,
celebrating diversity,
transformed by the Holy Spirit,
to serve and unify
in the name of Jesus.*

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