APOSTLES LUTHERAII CHURCH

THE REVEREND JAY SERAFIN

7092 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061 (804) 693-9098 | apostles-elca.org | facebook.com/ApostlesELCA



TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, 2025 | 10:00 AM

Our Mission is to be a Caring Inclusive Christian Community responding to God's grace through Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel.





WELCOME TO APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH!

It is an honor to worship God with you this morning. We pray you experience the Spirit's loving presence as we share our words, our actions, and the Holy Meal.

If this is your first time worshipping with us, please fill out a card in the pew rack with your contact info. A restroom can be found by exiting the rear door of the worship space. It is directly in front of you to the right. Additional restrooms can be found in the back corner of the fellowship area, near the Pastor's office.

RECONCILING in CHRIST

We, the people of Apostles Lutheran Church, follow Paul's message to the Galatians (3:28): "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Believing that because we are all one in Christ, and created in God's image, all are welcome as beloved children of God. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. **Rejoicing in God's amazing diversity, we welcome people of all ages, races, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, and physical and mental abilities.** Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to racial equity, breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are beloved.

FOR PASTORAL CARE

The Reverend Jay Serafin is our pastor. Pastor Jay's **schedule is noted in the calendar on the back of this bulletin.** Call Pastor Jay at 570-205-7506 or email him at <u>j80j84@msn.com</u> (preferred) or <u>pastor.apostles@gmail.com</u>. Messages can also be left on the Apostles answering machine 804-693-9098.

PRAYGROUND

Welcome to our youngest members! The area in the front of our sanctuary is for families and young children. There are quiet toys, books and drawing materials. We ask two things:

1) sit in the front pews near your children and 2) please sit with your children in the pews during the sermon. They may return immediately after. Thank you and welcome!

NAME TAGS

Please wear your nametag! Guests: please fill out and put on a name tag before worship today. Blank nametags are in the baskets located in the pews.

GATHERING

Invited and inviting—that is the nature of the church. By God's grace in holy baptism we have a place at Christ's banquet table. When, by the power of that same Spirit, humility and mutual love continue among us, the church can be more inviting still.

PRELUDE AND SILENT PRAYER

Martin Luther said of music: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Please take a moment to **silence all cell phones.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please rise in body or in spirit. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

you free us to love others, but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way. You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace, but we turn away from the abundant life you offer. You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity, but we grow weary in doing what is right. In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us. Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life. Amen.

You belong to Christ Jesus and you are God's children through faith. In the cross of + Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

ELW #526

"God Is Here!"



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APOSTOLIC GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE



CANTICLE OF PRAISE





PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God, you resist those who are proud and give grace to those who are humble. Give us the humility of your Son, that we may embody the generosity of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Sit

FIRST READING

Proverbs 25:6-7A

The book of Proverbs is part of a collection of writings known as wisdom literature. Wisdom literature gave directions to Israel's leaders and people for the conduct of daily life. Today's reading is about humility.

⁶ Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence or stand in the place of the great,

^{7a} for it is better to be told, "Come up here," than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

Response after the First Reading
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 112

- ¹ Hallelujah! Happy are they who [|] fear the LORD and have great delight in [|] God's commandments!
- ²Their descendants will be mighty | in the land; the generation of the upright | will be blessed. R
- ³ Wealth and riches will be ¹ in their house, and their righteousness will ¹ last forever.
- ⁴ Light shines in the darkness | for the upright; the righteous are merciful and full | of compassion.
- ⁵ It is good for them to be gener- ¹ ous in lending and to manage their af- ¹ fairs with justice.
- ⁶ For they will nev- | er be shaken; the righteous will be kept in everlast- | ing remembrance. R
- ⁷They will not be afraid of any [|] evil rumors; their heart is steadfast, trusting [|] in the LORD.
- 8 Their heart is established and | will not shrink, until they see their desire up- | on their enemies.
- ⁹ They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands ¹ fast forever; they will hold up their ¹ head with honor.
- ¹⁰ The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth and ¹ pine away; the desires of the wick- ¹ ed will perish. R

SECOND READING

HEBREWS 13:1-8, 15-16

The conclusion of the letter to the Hebrews contains suggestions for the conduct of a holy life, all of which are shaped by God's love toward us in Jesus Christ.

¹Let mutual affection continue. ²Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. ³Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them, those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. ⁴Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers. ⁵Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for he himself has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." ⁶So we can say with confidence,

"The Lord is my helper;

I will not be afraid.

What can anyone do to me?"

⁷Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. ¹⁵Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. ¹⁶Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Response after the Second Reading
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The gospel is announced.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the 14th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL LUKE 14:1, 7-14

Jesus observes guests jockeying for position at the table. He uses the opportunity to teach his hearers to choose humility rather than self-exaltation. Jesus also makes an appeal for hosts to imitate God's gracious hospitality to those in need.

¹ On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they were watching him closely.

⁷When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. ⁸ "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host, ⁹ and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. ¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. ¹¹ For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

¹² He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers and sisters or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. ¹³ But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴ And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

The gospel concludes:

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

PASTOR JAY SERAFIN

Silence is kept after the reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY

ACS #977

"Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table"



Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945

Music: COPELAND, Michael Corzine, b. 1947 Text © 2002 Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

Music © 2000 Michael Corzine, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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APOSTLES CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles Creed.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray for the church, the creation, and the whole people of God, for God is near.

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words: Hear us O God,

your mercy is great.

Confident in God's presence and promise, we entrust our prayers to the one who always receives them; through Jesus Christ, our wisdom and companion.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

We share a sign of Peace with our neighbors saying **Peace be with you** to which we respond **And also with you**. Please know that it is fine if you do not want to shake hands but would rather just share a sign of peace.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

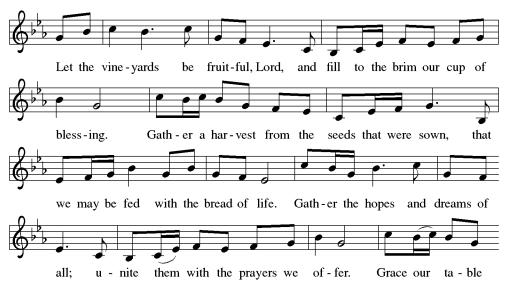
Sit

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. To give online:

- + Visit <u>apostles-elca.org/contributions</u>
- \pm From your mobile phone, text the word GIVE to 844-215-5453

OFFERTORY HYMN ELW #184





Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980 Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927 Text and music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Please rise in body or in spirit

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Creator God, in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good and the harvest is plentiful. Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor, that we may work for the good of all; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

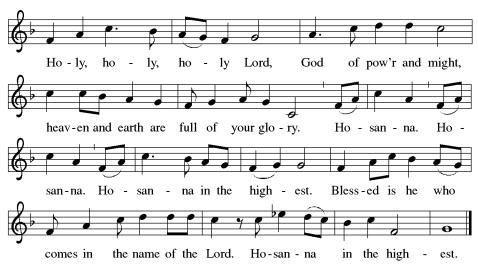
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The great thanksgiving continues.

... with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... into the future

We bless you, O God.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... with us now.

We thank you, O God.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

The great thanksgiving concludes.

... in your church without end.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

but deliver us from evil.

Invitation to Communion

The kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice.

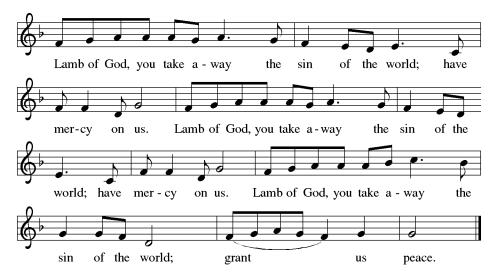
Sit

COMMUNION

All are invited to join us at the Lord's table to receive the presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. Jesus himself invites you and Jesus turns no one away.

You will be invited to come forward either to receive the elements or to receive a blessing. For those receiving the elements, after receiving the bread, please take a glass from the tray held by the acolyte. There are pre-filled glasses of grape juice in the tray for those who do not drink wine. Gluten free wafers are also available upon request.

LAMB OF GOD



HYMN DURING COMMUNION

ELW #462

"Now We Join in Celebration"



- 1 Now we join in cel e bra tion at our Sav ior's in vi ta tion,
- 2 Lord, as round this feast we gath er, fill our hearts with ho ly rap ture!
- 3 Lord, we share in this com-mu-nion as one fam-'ly of God's chil-dren,



dressed no more in spir-it som-ber, clothed in-stead in joy and won - der; For this bread and cup of bless-ing are for us the sure pos-sess - ing rec - on-ciled through you, our broth-er, one in you with God our Fa - ther.



for the Lord of all ex-is-tence, put-ting off di-vine tran-scen-dence, of your lov-ing deed on Cal-v'ry, of your liv-ing self, our vic-t'ry, Give us grace to live for oth-ers, serv-ing all, both friends and strang-ers,



stoops a - gain in love to meet us, with his ver - y life to feed us. pledge of your un - fail-ing pres-ence, fore-taste here of heav'n-ly glad - ness. seek - ing jus-tice, love, and mer - cy till you come in fi - nal glo - ry.

Text: Joel W. Lundeen, 1918-1990

Music: SCHMÜCKE DICH, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662 Text © Joel W. Lundeen, admin. Augsburg Fortress

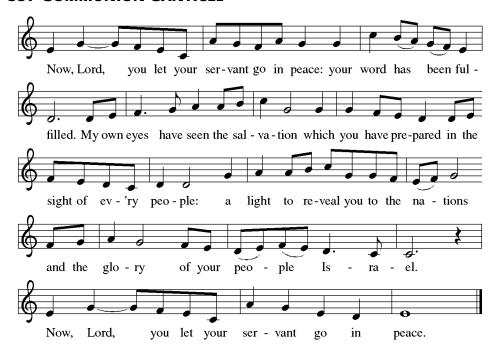
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After all have returned to their places, all rise in body or in spirit.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Mothering God, you gathered us to your table and we drank deeply of your grace. Send us out by your Spirit to love our neighbors as ourselves and proclaim your love in Jesus' name.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission back into the world.

BLESSING

The love of God abound in you; the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ fill your hearts; and the life of the Spirit

→ bless you and give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN ELW #769

"If You But Trust in God to Guide You"



Text: Georg Neumark, 1621-1681; tr. composite

Music: WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT, Georg Neumark Text © 1978, 2006 Augsburg Fortress

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERS

	Serving Today	Serving Next Week
Worship Leader/Preacher	Pastor Jay Serafin	Pastor Jay Serafin
Lay Assisting Minister	Pete Liljeberg	Sue Turner
Lector	Sue Turner	Doug Dalager
Acolyte	Ray Scholz	Chase Ambrose
Accompanist	Janet Gomez	Janet Gomez
Altar Care	Betsy Liljeberg	Janet Gomez
Communion Bread	Betsy Liljeberg	Janet Gomez
Greeter/Usher	Betsy Liljeberg	Karen Johnston
Technology	Doug Dalager	Chris Hawkins

SERVANTS FOR THE WEEK

	Serving This Week	Serving Next Week
Cleaning Team	Gomez/Grimes	Liljebergs
Tellers	Ray Scholz/Ben Grimes	Linda Hodges/Chris Hawkins
Fellowship Set Up	Ray Scholz	Worship in the Park
Fellowship Food	Nancy Wagner/Ellen Quirk	Worship in the Park
Fellowship Clean Up	Scholzs	Worship in the Park

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY

First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20 *Walk in the way of life and hold fast to God*

Psalm 1

They are like trees planted by streams of water

Second Reading: Philemon 1-21

Paul says: Receive Onesimus as a coworker

Gospel: Luke 14:25-33

Jesus says: Disciples, give up your possessions and carry the cross

THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

For most of human history wisdom was largely part of an oral tradition. From one generation to the next, wisdom was passed down. These days it sometimes seems that technology has replaced that tradition of shared wisdom. Rather than ask a trusted elder the temptation is to pull out a smartphone and do a quick Internet search. Next thing you know, there it is, wisdom at your fingertips—maybe. Could it be that something is lost in the process? We can find facts online, but virtues like humility, respect of elders, hospitality, servanthood, and peacemaking do not seem to translate as easily in the electronic age. In the gospel reading Jesus takes the time to pass on some ancient-yet-prudent wisdom from the proverbs of Solomon to a crowd of social climbers who obviously were not familiar with such prudence or wisdom. More significantly Jesus lifts up the mysteriously gracious and lifetransforming values of the kingdom of God. Jesus lifts up the humility required to take the lowest seat at the table, never hoping to be invited to a place of greater honor or status. Jesus invites his followers to practice the hospitality that offers a banquet of the finest of foods for people who cannot repay. Jesus invites his followers to embody the kind of radical-yet-relational love of Jesus himself. This radical love is taught by both individuals and congregations. Communities of faith by their practices of generosity and compassion embody the love of Jesus in their communities.

Although Labor Day is not a church holiday and sometimes seems to mark the end of summer more than recognition of workers, the theme of recognizing labor pairs well with Jesus' story about who we honor and how, and with the Hebrews text about service that pleases God. This national holiday was begun by nineteenth-century labor activists and may prompt us to consider which kinds of work we dismiss today as lower-status, lower-value, or invisible.

APOSTLES LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Today we gather on the original and ancestral homelands of the Pamunkey, Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Rappahannock, and Nansemond peoples and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

NEW MEMBERS

We will be taking in new members in the near future – if you are interested in becoming a member of Apostles Lutheran Church, please talk to Pastor Jay.

CHURCH MORTGAGE PAYOFF

If you would like to contribute to our mortgage payoff plan, you can (1) place your contribution in an envelope and mark the envelope with the words "mortgage payoff", (2) use one of the envelopes found in our narthex entrance already noted as "mortgage payoff campaign", or (3) if you contribute electronically, make a note on the annotation line directing the contribution to the "mortgage payoff fund."

WORSHIP IN THE PARK - NEXT SUNDAY

Please make plans to join us for our annual "Worship in the Park" at the beautiful Beaverdam Park (Whitcomb Lodge) next Sunday at 10:00 AM. We are changing things up a bit this year – we will worship outside (weather permitting) so please bring a lawn chair. After worship, we will enjoy a meal together – please bring a dish to share. We hope you can join us as we worship in God's beautiful creation!!

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Rich Bitting, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Ellen Kendzierski, Doug Leip, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, Keith & Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel

Thomas, Lena Woodlief, and Nancy Wagner

OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Patricia Armentor, Paul Bauer, Karen Bell (Pam Moore's sister), Bob & Dixie, Calli Bonfey, Patricia Boyd & Brad Zelmer, Amanda Brown, David Brown, Dennis & Dorothy Brown, Sally Burkholder, Amy Carter, Laura Clodfelter, Jackie Collier, Ben Davis (friend of Donna Ambrose), Tommy & Kathie Davis, Jenny DeSha, Al DeWitt, Linda Edwards, Colton Elliot (Michael Schlemmer's cousin), Laura Fleige (Janet Gomez's sister), Teresa Floersheim-Miller (Ingrid Peterson's mother), Suzanne and Frank Gibson, Steven Godwin (Juanita Sturdy's grandson), Jimmy & Fay Gray (Chris Hawkins' family), Karen Guire, Mike Hall, Melvin Hawkins (Chris Hawkins' father), Chaneice Hayden (Daniel Hayden), Rosie Heins, Carl & Kaleb Hess, Aris Hibbs (friend of Ray Scholz), Spencer Hodges, Ray Hughes, Wendy Isernia (Heinz and Irene's daughter), Suzanne Kinkade (friend of Ellen Quirk), Legend, the Little Family, Marion Lucier, Manuel, Lotte Mathias, Wayne Mathews, Wayne McCormick, Michael, Sylvia Midgette (Krystle McMahan's grandmother), Debbie Minteins, Keith Morgan, Gary Mowery, Jamie Mullaney, Carol Pascale (Lynn Jaeger's mother), Chastity Perkins (co-worker and friend of Donna Ambrose), Brad Person (Lilly Frost's uncle), Dick Peterson & his brother, the Prusa Family, Joan Ritter, Glen Robertson, Carol Schlemmer, Daniel Schmidt, James Schollian (friend of Nancy Wagner), Michael Scholz (Ray Scholz's nephew), Joseph Serafin (Pastor Jay's father), Kathy Shackleford, Elana Sierson, Fred Smith, Tammy Smith, Jean Sterling, Dave Wagner (Nancy's husband), Wayne McCormick, Chuck Webb (Tina Britt's father), Makenzie Webb (Tina Britt's niece), Elizabeth & Steven White, Vicki Williams, Cory Woodlief, Jim Wright (Judy Wright's husband), Logan & Shannon Wymer, Greg **Yvonovich** (friend of Margaret & Ben Grimes), **Derek Zwiers** (friend of CK Ambrose)

OUR SPONSORED CHILDREN IN GUATEMALA Amayra, Hugolino, Manuela, and Pablo

PRAYER REQUESTS

There is a book located at the rear of the worship space for you to write any prayer requests you have for today. Fill out a "Prayer Request" (on the back of each pew) and place it in the offering plate to add a prayer request to the "Prayer List" included in the bulletin and the newsletter. **Please print legibly!**

THIS WEEK AT APOSTLES

AUGUST 31, 2025 - SEPTEMBER 7, 2025

TODAY 10:00 AM Worship Service

11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship

MONDAY 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Pastor Jay in the office

7:00 PM AA

TUESDAY 7:00 PM Al-Anon/AA

WEDNESDAY 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Pastor Jay in the office

FRIDAY Girl Scouts

SATURDAY 6:30 PM Young and Sober

SUNDAY 10:00 AM Worship in the Park

HAPPY BIRTHDAY To ...

Lorna Hanson – September 3rd | **Jason Lowe** and **Nancy Wagner** – September 7th

HAPPY BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAY To ...

Doug Dalager – September 3rd

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