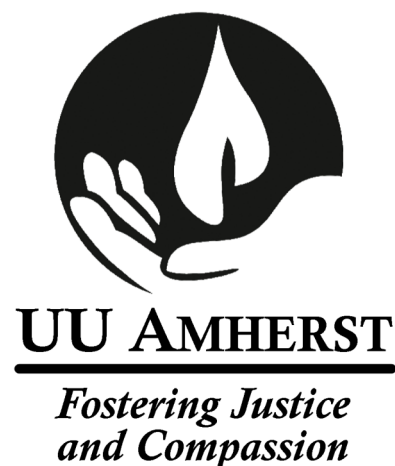


Issue
JULY 2025

The Foreword

The Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst
6320 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221
634-3010 (x101 for office)
Office Hours Tues.—Fri. 9am to 2pm www.uuamherst.org



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Oh, thank goodness! July!

The magical month of July will still contain plenty of work as I participate in the week-long Summer Institute as a member of the ministry team (worship and chaplaincy) and a week at Chautauqua Institution (July 19th-26th), preaching a UU Sunday service and being on site for conversations of theology. Clearly, I do not know the meaning of the word, “vacation.”

What makes the summer even more complicated is my body-memory of being a teen, with long bike rides around Chautauqua Lake (or cheating and taking the ferry when we made it to Stowe), hours spent at my friend’s family cottage on the lake, and sitting on car hoods and eating wings on starlit nights at the top of “Apple Hill.” (We thought the lights of Jamestown looked like the “Big Apple” from that hill - HA! - and I still don’t even know the real name of the road.)

My body refuses to acknowledge the decades that have passed; I suppose it was the rhythm of the school year and the freedom of summer break. Instead of two months, I’ll be taking one, and even that includes just two weeks of relatively unencumbered time. Riding a bike...well, probably not. I may just have to order some wings and sit on the swing out back, turning on the twinkle lights and swatting mosquitos. My body might remember all of the freedom of nearly 50 years ago, but I’m sensible enough to know my limits. I will bask in the memory of friends and freedom. I hope you will be able to find some time to do the same.

See you in August,
Rev. Michelle

Our Covenant

*Together we promise:
To gather in compassionate
community,
To celebrate diversity of thought and
unity of spirit;
And to seek wholeness for ourselves,
our children, and our world.*

JULY SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10:30 AM

There are some pretty terrific services planned for the summer, with speakers from within and outside the congregation. With no single overarching theme, there is a bit more variety of topics from week to week, but the friendly faces and atmosphere remain the same! Plan to not miss a moment!

7/6 When Pigs Fly

John Snodgrass

Why does the pig get such a bad reputation in religion? And how has this creature helped to shape human history?

John (lower case intentional) Snodgrass is a frequent and popular speaker at UU Amherst. An instructor in Religion at Canisius University, John is also a playwright and author of many books, the most recent being *Shakespeare's Goddess*.

7/13 Sacred Community: The Magic We Make Together

Kim Diana Connolly

What is the magic that keeps us coming back—to community, to commitment, to each other? Drawing on her experiences from the 2025 UUA General Assembly Covenant Team and the magic of the Central Eastern Region Summer Institute, Kim Diana will invite all of us to explore the connections, quiet joy, everyday wonder, and sometimes *very* challenging realities found in the magic that can emerge through our covenantal faith.

Kim Diana is a longtime member of UU Amherst. She adores her young-adult-children, Tayte and Siimon, as well as exploring the crossroads of justice and covenant (and Mahogany Mommy t-shirts!).

7/20 Bless This House

Rev. Bobby LaVallee

Religious communities create unique blessings that are hard to find in other places. As we face some truly terrible times ahead, how do we at the UU Church of Amherst bless each other and our community?

Rev. Bobby LaVallee recently returned to the city where he was born and raised after six years serving a congregation in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Talk about a change of scenery! He is now a Spiritual Care Counselor for Hospice and Palliative Care of Buffalo.

7/27 Adventures in Health: If I knew then what I know now...

Facilitated by Charlie d'Estries & Julie Marquis

HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT?

Email: administrator@uuamherst.org

For Newsletter: by 10:00 am on the 16th

For Website: two weeks prior to event

For All Church listserv: daily during the week.

For Weekly Update: Fridays by 10:00 am

Administrator/Office Hours:

Tuesday through Friday—9:00 am to 2:00 pm

CONTRIBUTING TO UU AMHERST

1. The **Giving** option on the church website (uuamherst.org)
2. A NEW phone app "**GivePlus+**" for your phone
3. Texting a donation to phone # **833 987 1968**
4. Mailing a check [remember to fill in the Memo]
5. There is the traditional Sunday Plate
6. Don't forget Legacy Giving – in your will

BOARD REPORT

In an effort to enhance coordination among our various groups, the Board is currently reviewing and crafting new policies including the previously announced grant coordination policy. To that end, the BoT is reviewing a policy that will require individuals or groups that wish to hold events at our campus, and especially those events open to the public or non-members, to seek authorization from the BoT. This will not affect rentals to members for events such as memorial services as procedures are already in place that provide adequate notice to the BoT and the Custodial Task Force, both of which need to be made aware of events taking place on our campus.



As noted in the weekly email from Friday, June 13th, our playground is being studied to determine if it meets NYS Safety Standards and until that is determined no one is to use the playground. Thank you for your cooperation.

The BoT has voted to accept the recommendation of the Safety Task Force to formally establish a group of our members who, instead of attending Sunday morning services in the chapel, will be monitoring our campus and tasked with contacting our local first responders in the case of emergencies, medical or otherwise. This is not a new practice; it was done informally both earlier in this century and currently as well, but we need more people to ensure we have the coverage we need. We expect that each individual will only have to serve one Sunday per month.

The Safety Task Force has been approaching members and we have a good number of volunteers to be Observers as we call them, but we would like more.

If you are interested please contact Elaine Harrigan, our Office Administrator, Lauraune Marcus, Marie Evans, or myself.

Randy Kent, Board Chair

Contributing Stocks & Securities

We are now able to accept stocks and securities.
If interested, contact Bruce Becker.

ADMINISTRATIVE & FINANCE OFFICES CLOSED JULY 4TH-14TH

Rev. Michelle and Katie will also be at CERSI July 5th-13th. The offices will remain locked during this time. If you need to use the copier or enter the building that week and you don't have a key fob, please contact Randy, Bruce, or your team lead if applicable. Deposits of checks and funds from plate collections (Sunday 7/6 and 7/13) as well as fulfillment of check requests will not be made until Tuesday, July 15th. If you need to enter the building that week and do not have a key fob, please contact a member of the Caretaking Team. For those who need to submit articles for the August newsletter, they are due by Wednesday, July 16th.

Coordination of Caretaker Duties — July

Sunday, June 22 - Saturday, June 28 - Randy Kent
Sunday, June 29 - Saturday, July 5 - Barry Kent
Sunday, July 6 - Saturday, July 12 - Bob Johnson
Sunday, July 13 - Saturday, July 19 - Bruce Becker
Sunday, July 20 - Saturday, July 26 - Dian & Don Tucker
Sunday, July 27 - Saturday, August 2 - Randy Kent

UU AMHERST BOOK CLUB

Book Club is on hiatus for the summer. We may have a weekday potluck luncheon with a read-along book, but scheduling has proven difficult. Watch for an All-Church email or see Wendy Scott.

—Marie Evans



AMHERST LITTLE FREE PANTRY

Most needed: Chef Boyardee, canned fruits, individually-wrapped toilet paper

We appreciate all our donors. Whether it's a few dollars or the occasional canned good, everything helps! If you're a gardener and have an unexpected abundance of some fresh seasonal produce, bring it to the table on the portico next to the cabinets. It's been a popular option. Usage of our pantry doesn't slow down in the warmer months. With school out for summer and no in-school meals available, parents are often looking for easy-to-prepare meals that youth can fix for themselves—think microwavable Chef Boyardee or mac & cheese.



Watch for upcoming FUNdraisers. Engaging events are our way of making it worthwhile for you to invest in our work. If you're interested in getting involved as a volunteer (even on a part-time basis), speak to one of our Directors - Marie Evans, Doreen Park, or Meg Sabella.

JUSTICE ADVOCACY TEAM

Karaoke/Open Mic Night
Friday, July 25 6:00 to 9:00 pm
Emerson Room

The Justice Advocacy Team invites you to join us in celebrating our first anniversary and all the great strides made. In one year, we have helped create the Firewall and have begun the Rainbow Café. We have rallied at the offices of Senators, Congresspeople, joined Town Halls. We have rallied, protested, performed guerilla warfare, had fun nights of creating posters together. We have helped raise funds and household goods to resettle refugees and victims of domestic violence. We have created coalitions and community networks to move justice work forward and strengthen the community. We have many great things planned for this next year: keep an eye on us at our community board in the welcome area, on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/uuamherst#), or the UU Amherst website (www.uuamherst.org).

—Peggy/Mark Cook





RAINBOW COALITION

A Proud Presence in the LBGTQIA2S Community

Twenty-three of us spent a beautiful day marching in the Buffalo Pride Parade on June 1st. Dressed in our brightest colors, carrying banners, waving Pride flags, and giving out hugs, we were proud to represent UU Amherst.



Poster Library

Thanks to all who have attended our poster making events. The Poster Library has created a special section for LBGTQ+ themed protest posters.

So if you are headed to a rally, protest, or Town Hall and want to support LBGTQ+ rights, stop in and borrow one.

The Rainbow Café

The Rainbow Café opened on June 21st with great excitement and fun. People felt free to come and go and enjoy snacks and drinks. A presentation on issues facing the Trans community was presented by Tee Douglas of GENY and was well received. Open to LBGTQ+ members and allies, the Rainbow Café will be open again on July 19th from 1:00-3:00 pm in the Murray Meeting Room. **Donations and volunteers to help the Café are always welcome.** Follow the Café's times and events at: <https://uuamherst.org/wp2/rainbow-cafe/>.

For more information on upcoming events of the Rainbow Coalition, see the Justice Advocacy Board in the lobby, check your weekly Justice Advocacy Call to Action email or visit the Justice Advocacy Team tab on the UU Amherst website: <https://uuamherst.org/wp2/justice-advocacy-team/>

If you have any questions regarding the events or would like to donate directly to our group, please contact Katie Cosgrove at: dfd@uuamherst.org.

Lending Library

New books have been added to the Lending Library Annex, located on the free-standing wood bookshelf in the Library/Living Room.

There are two books by Deepa Iyer, who leads a project on solidarity and social movements at the Building Movement Project. I was introduced to her work during UUA's "Green Sanctuary 2030" Community Meeting in September 2024, when her topic was "What do I have to offer?" and the Social Change Ecosystem Framework. One book is an adult leadership workbook, *Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection*. The other is a children's book, *We Are the Builders*, a rhyming story about finding your place and changing your community, inspired by the social change ecosystem framework.

We Can Do Hard Things: Answers to Life's 20 Questions by Glennon Doyle, Abby Wambach, and Amanda Doyle, was just released May 6. It's a curated collection of wisdom from "118 of the world's most brilliant wayfinders" who have been guests on their award-winning podcast of the same name.

Immigration Realities: Challenging Common Misperceptions by Ernesto Castenada, director of the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies, Immigration Lab, at American University in Washington, DC is an evidence-based examination of myths and false claims about immigrants. Barnes & Noble calls it "the reality check everyone in the country should read." You can view UUSJ's post-election conversation with him at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hU3c_Ygqd04.

—Marie Evans

JULY 2025 CALENDAR

PLEASE NOTE: Some meetings are virtual-only; others are dual platform (Zoom and in-person); and some in-person only. See the notation after the meeting. Zoom links are provided by the group hosts or by request from the Office Administrator. Zoom meetings taking place in the Zadmin room are identified with the abbreviation. **Zoom, only, indicates a private account; log in must be provided by the host.**

Room abbreviations: EM (Emerson Room); LR Living Room); Bul (Bulfinch-FD Wing); EC (Ecology Center); Murray Meeting Room (MMR)

Tuesday, July 1st

10:00 am: Leadership Dev & Nominating Comm EM
12:00 pm: Women's Group Lunch EM

Sunday, July 6th

12:00 pm: Amherst Little Free Pantry Meeting LR

Monday, July 7th-11th

OFFICES CLOSED

Rev. Michelle & Katie at CERSI

Tuesday, June 15th

6:30 pm: Lace Guild (rental) MMR

Wednesday, July 17th

6:00 pm: Finance Meeting MMR
7:30 pm: Board Meeting MMR

Saturday, July 19th

9:00 am: Firewall Meeting EM
1:00 pm: Rainbow Café MMR

Sunday, July 20th

12:00 pm: Justice Advocacy Meeting LR

Friday, July 25th

6:00 pm: Karaoke/Open Mic Night EM

RECURRING: SUNDAYS

Sundays, July 6th-27th

9:30 am: Church of the Wild

10:30 am: Sunday service—in-person and livestream; coffee hour following

RECURRING MEETINGS:

UU Universe-ity Sunrise Sessions

M-F 8:30 am on Zadmin

All "tree" names are for Village groups

Saturdays, July 5th-26th

9:30 am: Sharing Circle Zadmin

7:00 pm: Birch Bunch Zadmin

Mondays, July 7th-28th

7:00 pm: Tulip Crabapples Zadmin (weekly)

Tuesdays, July 1st-29th

12:30 pm: Women's Group Lunch EM (7/1)

Women's Group Zadmin (7/8, 7/15,
7/22, 7/29)

7/8 (2nd Tue)

7:00 pm: Marlana's Covenant Group LR

Wednesdays, July 2nd-30th

7/16 (3rd Wed)

1:30 pm: 3rd Wednesday Covenant Group Zoom

7:00 pm: Northtowns Village Zoom

Thursdays, July 3rd-31st

7/17 (3rd Thu)

10:00 am: Current Events Zadmin

Reminder: Groups, please restore rooms before leaving. Return chairs to their places and take any papers (etc) with you or dispose of them properly.

Kitchen Storage: All opened packages must be enclosed in plastic containers or Ziplock bags before placing in cupboards.

Kitchen Etiquette: To all groups and individuals that meet at church outside regular Sunday morning hours: Please tidy up and wash any dishes/cups you may have used. We need to keep our kitchen tidy and ready for use. Thanks for your help with this.

Ministry Train

Save the Date: Saturday, August 23rd

9:30 am—12:00 pm

The Ministry Train is a gathering of ministry team Leads and anyone who is interested in the activities of the congregation. We have good conversation while we build connections among those who are helping UU Amherst to fulfill our mission of challenging ourselves and the community to foster more justice and compassion in the world. It's a big task and coming together helps us to decide where to put our energies.

MINISTRY & MORE

Music at UU Amherst

Choir Call-Out & Rehearsals

If you are a singer in search of a song, join the choir! Questions? Contact Linda Delorey.

Instrumentalists Wanted

Do you play an instrument? Would you like to be part of a pick-up ensemble or even a soloist? Great! Contact Rev. Michelle (minister@uuamherst.org).

Tech Help Needed!

Are you someone for whom computers and technology are, if not easy-peasy, at least understandable? Have you been wondering how you can be part of the magic that is the wider (online) community of UU Amherst? Yay! This notice is for you!

Needed: Technical Assistant(s) to work with Les in the loft as we live stream and record our services on Sunday mornings. You still get to experience the service - just from an elevated point of view!

Respond to minister@uuamherst.org if you are interested.

Private, gender-neutral restrooms are available in the Administration Wing (through the doors in the main lobby) and on the second level of the house portion of our building. If you're offering a tour to a newcomer, be sure to mention that we have these accommodations.



Church of the Wild

Join us each Sunday at 9:30 am in the Debbie Waterhouse Ecology Center. Bring a chair, a poem, your wonder of nature. Lauraine Marcus will meet you at

the edge of the Ecology Center at 9:25 am, near the basketball court at the back of the parking lot. Church of the Wild is an all weather event (except a torrential downpour).

Tuesday Women's Group

This month our in-person meeting will be Tuesday, July 1st We will meet in the Emerson Room at 12:30 p.m. Bring your lunch and a beverage. Other meeting dates via Zoom are: July 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th. Zoom link provided by host Marge Marcille or Office Administrator.

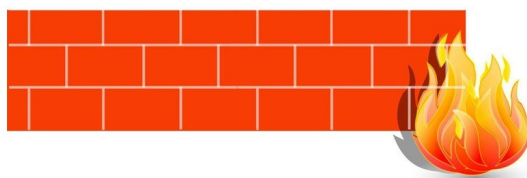
Current Events Zoom

The Current Events Zoom takes place the third Thursday of each month. This month's meeting will be on July 17th at 10:00 am on Zoom. Link provided by host Peggy/Mark Cook or request from the Office Administrator.

Firewall Meeting

Saturday July 19th @ 9:00 am

Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst



Firewall is a coalition of Concerned Citizens who support Democracy and the Rule of Law.

Please donate to the Amherst Little Free Pantry! Let's help our neighbors in need

Firewall is a Political Action Group that is not affiliated with the UU Church of Amherst.

FAITH DEVELOPMENT

This Month's Blessing:

Where I sit is holy,
holy is the ground.
Forest, mountain, river
listen to the sound.
Great Spirit, circle all around me.
—Blackfoot chant



Reminder: New Middle & High School Curriculum

In case you missed it, the Faith Development youth have been partaking in a fun beta testing of a new curriculum! The program, Journeys of Deeper Joy, is an ongoing role-playing game based on the UUA Deeper Joy enrichment activities. Weekly participation is not required as it involves standalone sessions so, please encourage your youth to come check it out! We also have donuts for the youth (but don't tell the littles that I said that).

We will be beta testing Journeys of Deeper Joy until August 1st. To learn more about this program and/or Deeper Joy, email Katie Cosgrove at: dfd@uuamherst.org.

Save the Date(s): Simply Family Series

We'll be offering a free 8-week program for families, designed to provide tools, community and compassion in the journey of raising children. Guided by the book, *The Gifts of Imperfect Parenting* by Brené Brown, we'll offer a safe space for parents and caregivers to explore the topics the book offers and more.

Sessions will run September 23rd through November 11th every Tuesday from 5:00-7:30pm. An inclusive meal and secular childcare will be provided. More info to be announced soon!

In community,
Katie Cosgrove she/her



ENDOWMENT TRUST

Please get in touch with any of the Endowment Trust Committee if you have questions regarding making a donation to the Endowment. Gifts can be made to mark a specific event or as a future gift from one's estate.

—Eric Groat, on behalf of the Endowment Trustees Barry Kent, Tamara Kofke, John Thompson, Dian Tucker

HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

This is a reminder that if you are experiencing financial hardship, you can reach out to Rev. Michelle, minister@uuamherst.org, for assistance from the Minister's Discretionary Fund. This Fund is made possible by the generosity of fellow congregants, and just one more way we demonstrate that no one is alone. We care for one another.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT & NOMINATING COMMITTEE (LD&NC)

The Leadership Development and Nominating Committee met on Tuesday, June 3rd in the Emerson Room. The Committee is still developing the slate of nominees for next February. In addition, we are continuing to work on the details for the September Leadership Lab.

—Julie Marquis, on behalf of Committee Members : Suzanne Christ, Chair; Jacqueline Babka; Ellen Moomaw; Ruth Bowen, BOT Liaison"

A Fun Time at the Annual UU Amherst Picnic!



UU Directory & Link List

The UU directory is available in digital version and hard copy to all UU members. If you need the link or an updated paper copy, call or email Elaine in the Administration Office, There is also a link list available with Zoom links for UU village and covenant groups on the Admin Zoom account and contacts for those groups using personal Zoom accounts. Request a link or PDF of the list from the UU Admin.

CONNECTIONS

Help Us Help You—Share Your Emergency Contact Information

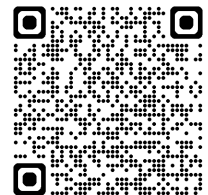
Your well-being is important to us, and having emergency contact details on file ensures we can provide swift assistance in urgent medical situations. We encourage all members of our congregation to consider submitting emergency contact information—while optional, it can be invaluable in times of need.

You can easily share your information by clicking this link <https://forms.gle/HhWFvgkTP6FwHJeU9>, typing it in your browser, or scanning the QR code, below, with your phone's camera app. Paper forms are also available at the Welcome Center, if preferred. Rest assured, your details will be kept strictly confidential. Contact Linda Joy Groat, uuamherstconnections@gmail.com or Laurie Kasnicki to learn more.



Looking for Caring Team Helpers

The Caring Team is looking for helpers to support new people, reach out to those who are homebound, and engage in other simple ways of support. You can easily share your information by using this URL: <https://forms.gle/N5E8X3cAdKBP3ZTKA> or scanning the QR code on the right with your phone's camera app. Paper forms are also available at the Welcome Center, if preferred.



UU AMHERST ONLINE STORE

Print Your Cause UU Amherst Merch Online Store

SHOP HERE

CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER RECIPES Provided by Christine Boczarska and Faith Pham

Christine Boczarska and Faith Pham are sisters and dedicated members of our Caring For One Another group. They provide occasional meals to UU Amherst members on an as-needed basis. With the meal they generally include a “goodie bag” and a card on behalf of the Caring Group. Each month you’ll find one of their healthy recipes here in *The Foreword* often incorporating fresh vegetables and even gluten-free. Summer weather is here now and with it is fresh seafood. This is the best recipe I have found for Maryland crab cakes. Simple ingredients that let the flavor of the crab prevail.

Maryland Crab Cakes

From Sugar Spun Run by Sam Merritt on line

Total time about 1/2 hour

450 degrees F

6 Tbsp mayonnaise

1 large egg

1/4 tsp pepper

1/4 tsp salt

1/2 cup Panko crumbs

1 tsp yellow prepared mustard

1 lb crabmeat, fresh if you can get it, or refrigerated canned

1 1/2 tsp fresh chopped parsley

1 tsp Old Bay seasoning

1 Tbsp lemon juice

1 Tbsp butter cut into 8 pieces

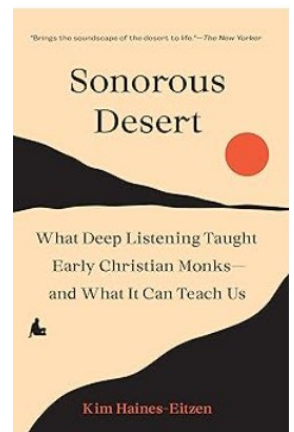


Grease a baking sheet. Mix mayonnaise, egg, mustard, lemon juice, Old Bay seasoning, parsley, salt and pepper in a bowl until well combined. Add crab and panko crumbs and gently mix with a spatula trying not to break up the crabmeat. Scoop 8 mounds (do not flatten) of crab mix onto the baking sheet. Put a piece of butter on top of each. Cover with plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes. Bake in the oven at 450 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes. Switch to broil to brown and cook for 2 more minutes. Serve with lemon wedges and hot sauce, adding coleslaw or a green salad, and enjoy.

A Little Inspiration at Chautauqua This Month

In addition to our own Rev. Michelle serving as minister-in-residence at the UU House (July 20th-26th), here’s one more reason you might want to visit the Chautauqua Institution this month.

Earlier in June, I posted a story on my Substack page titled *Nature’s Tonic for a Noisy World Isn’t Silence*. I was inspired to write the piece after reading the book *Sonorous Desert* by Kim Haines-Eitzen. A professor of Ancient Mediterranean Religions at Cornell University, Haines-Eitzen made the paradoxical discovery that remoteness is far from quiet while studying the places that drew the desert fathers and mother of early Christianity. In fact, she writes, it is the nature’s symphony of sounds that forces us to give attention to not only what is outside us, but what is within us,



Lucky us as Western New Yorkers! Haines-Eitzen will be speaking at the Chautauqua Institution this month—in fact, the week I will be vacationing there! If you’re able to catch her, she’ll be at the Hall of Philosophy on Monday, July 7th, at 2:00 pm. You’ll need to purchase an Afternoon Program Pass (\$19) that gives you access to the grounds from Noon to 8:00 pm. Parking is extra. Come early for lunch or stay for dinner—many new options are now available!

If you’d like to read my Substack story, go to livingwildwisdom.substack.com. Subscribers welcome!

—Elaine Harrigan, UU Administrator



UU AMHERST

Fostering Justice and Compassion

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