

The Window

The Newsletter of Fort Hill Presbyterian Church

April 2025

Message From the Pastor

We are Easter People! Alleluia! is Our Song!

We are a few weeks from celebrating the resurrection. Before we get to the empty tomb, we have to go through some hard days with Jesus. The second Sunday of Lent, we heard Jesus compare himself to a mother hen who wanted to gather her chicks under her wings and protect them from difficulty. But every mother hen knows that chicks are vulnerable and sometimes go their own way. Wayward chicks are endangered by foxes lurking. This empty breasted mother hen is bereft and grieving because her chicks are scattered and in danger. Read Luke 13:31-35 again.

This is a season where we come close to our vulnerability and our mortality. We begin crossed in ashes hearing "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." We return to the Mother Hen who gathers us and shelters us. In life and in death, we belong to this God, a tender and fierce God. Returning again to God is an act of faith we repeat over and over. God in Jesus shows us the way of humility and strength, compassion, and sorrow. In our loss and struggle, the Holy Spirit will make us more aware of our need for God and for each other.

I hope that as we enter the story of our faith each week and in the season ahead, we read our script for how we are to live. Too many scripts have been offered to us, and we sometimes willingly play our parts. Too many times, rather than the Scripture being our lens by which we view the world, we bring the day's news, our own agendas, to the Bible. Stories of pastors preaching on the Sermon on the Mount and getting thrown off a cliff for it because their people do not like what Jesus has to say, are living by their party's script or some other script.

We read the world through the lens of Scripture and let the witness of God's work shape us first as people of faith. Then we are sent back into the world to infect the world like salt, light, yeast. Because we know the journey of the cross and our role in it, we repent and are set free to live as people of the resurrection. We participate in the crucifixion when we bring harm to innocent people, do not defend the truth, and do not live with fiercely tender love and compassion towards our neighbors. We follow a mother hen who suffers and weeps over us when we lose our way, but that mother hen loves us so much, that she provides a new way of life, defeating death, so we can live fully in the Risen Life of Christ Jesus, here and now. Saved by grace, we serve with that same fierce tenderness in this world.

Friends, we are Easter people and Alleluia! is our song. Keep going and keep singing.

Together in Faith,

Laura Conrad, Pastor

Joining together on a journey of Christian faith, we seek to be Disciples of Christ and to share God's love in our community and around the world.

We do this as we Glorify God, Grow Disciples, Meet Human Needs.

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Fort Hill Presbyterian Church

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Jacob Kennedy, AP for Congregational Life
Colin Pettigrew, AP for University Ministry
Pat Rabun, Associate for Cong. Care
Preston Shealy, Parish Associate
Kelly McCord, Faith Formation Coordinator
Judy Bonham, Organist/Handbell Dir.
Lori Houck, Administrator
Morgan Bryant, Administrative Assistant
Scott Thraikill, Facilities Manager

Weekly Lectionary Scriptures

4/6 5th Sunday in Lent

Isa. 43:16-21; Ps. 126;
Phil. 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

4/13 Palm Sunday

Luke 19:28-40; Ps. 118:1-2, 19-29

4/20 Resurrection of the Lord/ Easter Day

Acts 10:34-43; Isa. 65:17-25;
1Cor. 15:19-26; Luke 24:1-12

4/27 2nd Sunday of Easter

Acts 5:27-32; Ps. 118:14-29; Ps. 150;
2 Kings 7:1-16; Ps. 2; Rev. 1:4-8;
John 20:19-31

May 2025

The Window Deadline

The deadline for articles, announcements, and features for the **May** issue of *The Window* is **Tuesday, April 15.**

Please email your item as a Microsoft Word document to the church office at window@forthillchurch.org or type the item directly into your email and send. If possible, please keep your articles to 500 words or less.

Discovering Faith Sunday, April 13

Interested in Learning More About Joining Fort Hill Church?

Our next Discovering Faith Lunch for those interested in exploring membership at Fort Hill will be held after the 10:45 worship service in the Club Room.

Please contact the church office at communications@forthillchurch.org if you would like to attend and if you need childcare.

Lent & Easter



Palm Sunday Worship Services

Sunday, April 13 at 8:30 am in Tartan Hall
& 10:45 am in the Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday Worship Service

Thursday, April 17 at 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary

Easter Sunday Worship Services - April 20

7:00 am at the Old Stone Church

10:45 am in the Sanctuary

(There will be no 8:30 worship)

Welcome Eric Meincke!

The search committee for our Music & Worship Arts Director position has been completed. The search committee consisted of Mark Stokes, Julianne Wenner, Chip Egan, Caroline Thomas, Lisa Britt, Wayne Madison, Scott Dillon, and Harrison Steele. Pastor Laura acted as our staff liaison and was instrumental in guiding us through our search and evaluations.

The committee vetted 12 candidates and in February made the unanimous decision to offer the position to Eric Meincke. Eric will begin his ministry with Fort Hill in May. We look forward to welcoming Eric on his first Sunday, May 18. Eric is currently serving as Music Director at First United Church in Bloomington, Indiana while working on his doctorate. His faith and love of music were nurtured by his home congregation, Second Presbyterian of Little Rock, Arkansas.



Eric Douglas Meincke will complete his course work in May as he pursues a Doctor of Music in Conducting degree and the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music in Bloomington, Indiana. During his musical career, Meincke has studied with renowned musicians such as Christoph Eschenbach, James Ross, Bevan Keating, Betsy Burleigh, Dominick DiOrio, Walter Huff, and William Weinert.

Eric has years of experience conducting various ensembles around the world, including as Assistant Conductor of the Second Presbyterian Church Adult Choir in Little Rock, Arkansas, and guest conducting appearances in London, Montreal, and Barcelona. Meincke also has numerous immersive experiences conducting ensembles like the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America, and Cantores Musicae Antiquae at Florida State University.

Eric graduated with a Master of Music in Conducting from the Eastman school of Music and a Bachelor of Music Education from Florida State University (*summa cum laude*).

Meincke is also the recipient of multiple awards like the Career Encouragement Certificate from the American Prize in Conducting, the Arkansas Governor's Award for Musical Excellence, and the John Phillip Sousa Award.

Discipleship Ministry Update

The Discipleship Ministry has been busy at work discussing, discerning, and developing the new Curriculum Theme for the “church year” 2025-2026. You will remember that the idea of a Curriculum Theme was something new for us at FHPC that we began in the Fall of 2023, where all Faith Formation classes, from children through adults, use a unified theme in their studying and learning. It will be meaningful as we all continue to study together. Stay tuned and watch for the announcement soon of what our new Curriculum Theme will be!

The Discipleship Sub-Ministries have also been busy. Here are a few highlights of what they have been doing recently:

After the February 16th Worship Service, the Adult Ministry Team facilitated and provided refreshments for a conversation with the Rev. Dr. Grady Butler and Dr. Vernon Burton. There were 68 people in attendance both from FHPC and the Clemson community. The Adult Ministry Team is also working to develop Faith Formation Class offerings and Bible Studies beginning in the Fall of 2025.

The Youth Ministry Team is working on plans for Confirmation Sunday and hosting a breakfast for Graduation Sunday. Additionally, they have interviewed and hired a Summer Youth Intern.

The Children’s Ministry Team has had some great fellowship events for the children at Fort Hill recently with a day spent snow-tubing and another day rock climbing. They are currently working on the plans for the annual Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt.

We are so blessed here at Fort Hill to have so many opportunities to learn and fellowship together. The Discipleship Ministry invites you to watch for exciting opportunities to participate in current and upcoming events and Faith Formation offerings.

Unity in All Communities

Fellowship, Fun, Food!

Fort Hill Presbyterian is partnering with a number of Clemson-area churches to host a day of fun and friendship to foster greater connections with our neighbors. At the invitation of Abel Baptist, representatives from the churches and faith organizations listed below have been meeting regularly to plan lots of activities for families and individuals of all ages. There will be food, music, and entertainment including the games bus, a balloon twisting artist, and a jump castle, supported in part by the generosity of the City of Clemson. The event is free and open to the public. Consider joining in, bringing a friend, and supporting the goals of unity and community.

Each sponsoring church is asked to supply two cakes for the dessert table as well as two adult-appropriate game prizes and two child-appropriate game prizes. (Something small like a coffee gift card or packet of markers.) If you have questions or wish to donate a cake or prize, please contact Carolyn Newton at carolynnewtonauthor@gmail.com or 843.209.4853.

Abel Baptist Church

April 26, 2025

1:30-6:30 pm

Sponsors:

Abel Baptist, Clemson First Baptist, University Lutheran, Peace Church, Fort Hill Presbyterian, Holy Trinity Episcopal, Littlejohn Community Center, Golden View Baptist Church, Greater Faith Baptist, New Hope Baptist, Poplar Springs Baptist, and the City of Clemson.

Sunday Servants

Pastor on Call—864.654.2065

4/6	Laura Conrad
4/13	Pat Rabun
4/20	Colin Pettigrew
4/27	Pat Rabun

Elder of the Day

4/6	Gary Clary (8:30) Grady Jordan (10:45)
4/13	Sue Limber (8:30) Don Ridgell (10:45)
4/20	Helen Steele
4/27	Helen Adams (8:30) Joan Dixon (10:45)

Christian Sympathy is extended to:



- **June & Mike Roof** on the death of June’s mother Betty Jo Rainey on February 12 in Columbia, SC.
- **Elaine Rogers** on the death of her husband **Clarence Rogers** on March 21 in Clemson.



Thank You Scouts!

Thank you to **Troop 235/7235** for helping us spread pine straw around Fort Hill.



Church Mouse

March 2 Communion was coordinated by **Beth Chapman** and prepared by **Lauren Young**. The servers were **Diane Carnes, Donna Crader, Nancy Hutson, Rodney Johnson, Donna McCubbin, Carolyn Newton, Don & Holly Ridgell, Cathy Spragins,** and **Helen Wooten**.

The Home-based communion was served by **Nancy Hutson, Nancy Oates,** and **Holly Ridgell**.

We certainly need to thank Porter Stokes as the interim choir director for the excellent job he did. Many thanks to the Music Director Search Committee: **Mark Stokes, Lisa Britt, Scott Dillon, Chip Egan, Wayne Madison, Harrison Steele, Caroline Thomas,** and **Julianne Wenner,** with **Pastor Laura** as the staff liaison. We will look forward to **Eric Meincke** coming and assuming this role as choir director.

Be sure to thank the outgoing Deacons and Elders for their great work. Deacons: **Leanne Broome** (Moderator), **Beth Chapman, Jenifer Griffis, Charlotte Gruosso, Sally Martin, Cathy Morton, Michael Steele,** and **Helen Wooten**. Elders: **Donna Crader, Diane Egan, Rick Hegenberger, Ben Sill, Hugh Spitler, Jim Thomas,** and **Mason Young**.

The incoming officers who are Deacons: **Susan Best, Mary Beth Clanton, Becky Fant, Lanie Hedrick, Barbara Madison, Debbie Miles, Stephanie Scott, Carolyn Stroup,** and **Karen Ware**. Elders are: **Helen Adams, Tom Arthur, Carol Austin, Brian Baker, Joan Dixon, David Durham, Debbie Durland, Charlie Pratt, Ben Trammell,** and **Spencer Wright**.

Many thanks to all who make Fort Hill a center of worship.



Fort Hill Youth Ministry Update

March was a month filled with joy and great stewardship of our wonderful spaces at Fort Hill! We started with our "Mystery Night" and had the WORLD'S GREATEST YOUTH GROUP PARTY! Then we learned about our spaces at Fort Hill, and ensured that we were great stewards of our space by cleaning and preparing for a great summer at Fort Hill! We also had youth participate in sports, plays, dance, and so many other activities! It's hard to believe that summer is right around the corner! Please be praying for us as we finish our school year and continue to enjoy all aspects of Youth Ministry at Fort Hill!



News from Presbyterian Women

One Trinity Circle meets **Monday, April 7 at 9:30 am** in the FHPC Club Room. Meeting starts at 10:00 am.

2nd Tuesday Evening Circle meets **Tuesday, April 8 at 6:00 pm** in the Church Library.

The Circle of Hope meets **Thursday, April 3 at 2:00 pm** in the Corley building on the campus of Clemson Downs.

The PW Coordinating Team Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 3 at 9:30 am in the Club Room. Plans for the 2025-2026 Circle Year will be addressed.

The Presbyterian Women are holding their **spring clothing drive** in the month of April. Gently used spring and summer clothes are welcomed, and donations may be dropped off in the collection room. The clothes will be donated to Safe Harbor.

Helping Hands monthly collections will concentrate on paper goods i.e. paper towels, toilet paper, Kleenex, napkins, etc. Please leave your donations in the collections room below the FHOG office or bring them to your Circle meetings.

Thank You

Harold and Arlene and their family want to thank the congregation of Fort Hill for the sympathy and support shown to their family after the loss of their son Mark on December 31. We are forever grateful.

Harold & Arlene Cheatham



Fellowship Ministry Update

Ash Wednesday Service with the Maryville College Choir

What a great turnout we had for the BBQ dinner and Ash Wednesday service. Over 200 people joined in Tartan Hall for a night of good food and conversations and then worship in the Sanctuary. The Maryville College Choir from Maryville, TN helped enhance our worship and shared their talents with us. Our own children's choir sang with the college choir and performed beautifully! The college students slept at the homes of church members, ate breakfast with them, and then returned in the morning to continue on their spring break choir tour.



Book Club meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 pm in the Den, downstairs. All are welcome!!

- On April 14 we will discuss The Tannery by Michael Almond.
- On May 12 we will discuss Go as a River by Shelley Read.

Craft Connection meets on the fourth Sunday after the 10:45 service in the Conference Room. Our next Craft Connection will be on **April 27**. Bring a craft you are working on, a lunch if you like, and join in the fun conversations and fellowship!

Supper Club met the weekend of **March 21-23** and the groups had an awesome time fellowshiping with new and old friends over a meal. Supper Club is made up of small groups who meet for a meal and conversation quarterly at someone's house or at a chosen restaurant. This is a great way to meet new friends or join with old friends as you have time to fellowship, eat new food, relax, and LAUGH!! Email Holly Ridgell at hridgell@gmail.com to join in the fun the weekend of **June 6-8**.

Annual Church Picnic

Put **Sunday, May 4** on your calendar for our annual picnic out at the Clemson Outdoor Lab. We will meet at the Clemson Outdoor Lab after the 10:45 service. Chicken will be cooked on the grill by our own Ralph Ricks. Please bring a potluck dish to share based on your last name:

A-D: Appetizers

E-R: Sides

S-Z: Dessert

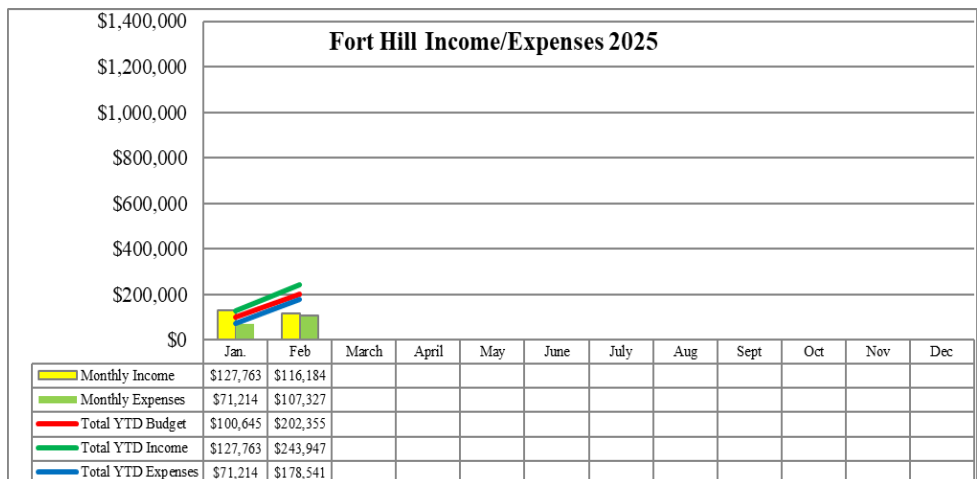
From the Finance Ministry

The Finance Ministry would like to once again **thank you** for making 2024 financially successful. The 2025 budget was approved by Session in their January 2025 meeting. Income was budgeted at \$1,198,000 while expenses were budgeted at \$1,219,547 creating a deficit of \$21,547. As of February 2025, total income was \$243,947 while expenses totaled \$202,355. Your ongoing financial support is much appreciated so that Fort Hill can continue ministries to its members, the community, and missions around the world.

Bridging Generations II Update:

As of February 2025, total income was \$316,128 out of \$409,994 in total pledges. We spent approximately \$180,000 of those funds to pay off the Building Fund loan with the final payment made in June 2024. The remaining balance will be used for projects which include replacing the sanctuary's 33-year-old lighting system, upgrading the dimmer switch station, and creating the ability to control lighting from the balcony to improve the worship experience.

Another project is the development of the outdoor space in the "backyard" that all ministries of the church can use to support their specific activities.



April Fort Hill Church Activities

Tuesday, April 1

- 8:30 am Men's Church Breakfast — Egg's Up (Clemson)
- 3:30 pm Personnel & Program Support — Library
- 5:00 pm University Ministry — PSA Student Center
- 6:00 pm Adult Ministry Team Meeting — Conference Rm.
Christian Action Ministry Meeting — Club Room
- 7:00 pm Youth Ministry Team Meeting — Den

Thursday, April 3

- 9:30 am PW Coordinating Team Meeting — Conference Rm.
- 2:00 pm PW Circle of Hope — Downs Corley Center

Sunday, April 6

CU Presbyterian Student Association (PSA) Sunday

Monday, April 7

- 8:30 am Building & Grounds Meeting — Library
- 9:30 am PW One Trinity Circle — Club Room

Tuesday, April 8

- 10:00 am Men's Study Group (Ben Sill) — Library
- 2:00 pm Planning Meeting — Conference Room
- 4:00 pm Finance Ministry Meeting — Library
- 5:00 pm Worship Ministry Meeting — Conference Room
- 6:00 pm Christian Action Ministry Meeting — Club Room
PW Circle 2 Meeting — Library

Sunday, April 13

- 9:30 am Seekers Class — E209
- 12:00 pm Discovering Faith for Potential New Members —
Club Room
- 6:00 pm PSA Lake Day — Ridgell Home

Monday, April 14

- 7:00 pm Book Club — the Den

Tuesday, April 15

- 7:00 pm Session Meeting — Club Room

Thursday, April 17

- 11:45 am Pastoral Lunch — Clemson Downs Dining Room
- 7:30 pm Maundy Thursday Worship — Sanctuary

Sunday, April 20

Confirmation Sunday

- 7:00 am Sunrise Service — Old Stone Church
- 9:30 am Children's Ministry Easter Egg Hunt — the Nest
- 12:00 pm Deacons Meeting — Tartan Hall
Discovering Faith

Monday, April 21

Pastors & Scott Off for Good Friday holiday

- 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry — Hazel Sparks' home
- 4:00 pm Mental Health Awareness Meeting — Conf. Rm.

Tuesday, April 22

- 10:00 am Men's Study Group (Ben Sill) — Library
- 5:30 pm Membership Ministry Meeting — Conf. Room
- 7:00 pm Fellowship Ministry Meeting — Club Room

Thursday, April 24

- 5:00 pm He-Brews — The Mexican (Central)

Sunday, April 27

- 9:30 am Seekers Class — E209
- 10:25 am Special Session to Receive New Members — TH
- 12:00 pm Craft Connections — Conference Room
Deacon Meeting — Club Room
- 2:00 pm Last Youth Group — Meet at the church
- 6:00 pm PSA Pre-Exam Communion — Old Stone Church



Recurring Weekly Activities

Sunday

- 9:30 am Colors & Conversations — The Nest
Sojourners Class — Library
Kindred Spirits Class — Club Room
- 10:45 am Worship/Livestream — Sanctuary/Online
Nursery (birth-walkers) — Nursery Room
Toddler Time (walkers-K2) — Turtle Room
Bible Fun (K3-K4) — Honeybee Room
WeeKirk (children's worship K5-1st gr.) — following
Children's story in worship — Owl Room
WOW (worship education 2nd-4th gr) — The Nest
- 2:30 pm Cub Scouts — Ed. Building (2nd & 4th Sundays)
- 5:00 pm Youth Group — the Den & Tartan Hall
- 6:00 pm PSA College Dinner/Program — PSA Student Center

Monday

- 9:30 am Preschool Chapel — Sanctuary
- 11:00 am Organ Lessons — Sanctuary
- 2:00 pm Clemson Downs Bible Study — Corley Center
- 6:30 pm Scouts BSA Troops 235 Boys/7235 Girls — CI Rm/TH

Tuesday

- 9:30 am Staff Meeting — Conference Room
- 4:00 pm Folk Dancing — Tartan Hall

Wednesday

- 10:00 am Morning Bible Study — Club Room
- 5:30 pm Wednesdays @ The Fort — Nest/E-208
Children's Choir — E209
- 6:00 pm Evening Bible Study — Club Room
- 7:00 pm PSA Bible Study — PSA Student Center
- 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal — Choir Room

Thursday

- 9:15 am The Glenn Men's Group — Library
- 5:00 pm Organ Lessons — Sanctuary



Weekly AA Meetings

Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings at 8:00 pm and Friday afternoons at 12:30 pm in Room E205 of the Education Building.

April Birthdays & Anniversaries



April BIRTHDAYS

4/1 Mandy Hays
Benja Mohr

4/2 Will Gregory

4/3 Jason Hudak
Natalie Turner
Nedra Ulrich

4/5 LeAnne Greene
Kathy Moore
Sherri Smith

4/6 Michael Bailey

4/8 Hugh Garner
Lisa Gilstrap
Miller Gregory
Rees Gregory
Jake McKinney

4/8 Carolyn Stroup

4/9 Jody Nicholson-Bell
Gene Goodwyn

4/10 Austin Dickerson
Nathan Ewoldt
Benton Halbig
Margaret Ann Rodgers
Pat Street

4/11 Dick Shick
Ally Young

4/12 Jeff Gilstrap
Pat Rabun

4/13 Elizabeth
Hawthorne-Martin
Lynn Hipp

4/14 Chris Bandy

4/15 Mary J Barron
Vernon Burton
Leslie Callison

4/16 Megan Chavis
Katherine Sosebee

4/17 Janet Bean
Hannah Sawyer

4/18 Charles Barron
Michael Steele

4/19 Olivia Bajoczky
Colin Pettigrew
Suzan Simmons
Mark Sublette

4/20 John Martin
Charlie Kreidler
Karen Ware

4/21 Betty Cornwell
Luke Poetz
Karen Sawyer
Carol Walling

4/22 Janna McKale
Joanne Trenholm

4/23 Dave Harvey

4/24 Addie Nihoul
Michael Van Daele
Gensie Waldrop

4/25 Lee Allman
Karen Daniels
Beth Gregory
Wade Job

4/26 Doug Carlson
Jerry Greene

4/28 Nancy Brown
Hannah Job
Steve Lefevre

4/29 Ford Hedrick
Mac Martin

4/30 Mary Coronato
Helen Steele



April ANNIVERSARIES

4/2 Don & Holly Ridgell
Jim & Caroline Thomas

4/6 Paul & Joan Borick

4/17 Denny & Laurie Sherrod

4/18 McClure & Jennifer Dickerson
Rob & Marsha Griffin

4/18 John & Amanda Stevenson

4/19 Keith & Terri Smith

4/20 Mark & Lisa Burns

4/21 Colin & Emily Pettigrew

4/24 Jay & Tommi Jones
Bill & Tina Mostertz

4/28 Preston & Debbie Shealy

4/29 Jeremy & Heather Wright

Children's Ministry Corner

Children's Ministry went rock climbing on March 8, taking their faith to new heights!



ITALY PILGRIMAGE: ITALIAN RIVIERA, FLORENCE, & ROME

October 6th-16th, 2026

There are still **SIX** openings for the Pilgrimage! Contact Chuck Conrad at chuckconrad@pickens.k12.sc.us

today to see sights like the Vatican City and the Ponte Vecchio!



Fort Hill Children's Ministry is hosting a breakfast & Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Sunday, April 20

breakfast at 9:30
egg hunt at 10:00
Bring a dish to share!





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