

THE MESSENGER

Christopher's Corner

Most people don't answer the phone anymore and I can't say that I blame them. Telemarketers and scammers have taken over this once revolutionary technology and rendered it nearly useless. And so we have stopped paying attention, many folks even permanently keep their phones on silent. When we do happen to notice that we are receiving a call, we check to see if we know the number, but even this has become unreliable as now caller ID systems can be tricked into thinking that the phone number is different than what it actually is. Between spoofing, as it is called, scams and spam, we don't pick up the phone anymore.

Calls are sent directly to voicemail, often to be forgotten in the wasteland of notifications that modern smartphones have become. We have become so connected, now with text messages, email, and social media that we rarely ever really connect at all. Because of the great cacophony of noise created by everyone trying to get our attention all the time all at once, we have learned to tune it all out for the sake of our sanity.

Whether we like it or not we are social animals, we have to connect or we languish. And with so many means of communication now rendered harmful or unusable, our world is struggling with a loneliness crisis. We have become so inundated by the din and clamor, we now hear nothing at all – a deafening babble, endless noise without substance.

Our broken communication has led to missed connections. We don't bother to call, or text, or email. We assume that our reaching out will be swept away. And when this does happen, we give up and withdraw back into the safety of our lonely wastelands of mindless entertainment and parasocial relationships.

When the prophet Elijah fled to the wilderness it was with the intention to wither and die. He

was done trying to resist King Ahab and Queen Jezebel and their mission to lead the people away from the One True God. He felt that he had lost the battle, that he could not overcome the tidal wave of sinfulness that stood in opposition to him.

But God was not done with Elijah and sent him to the top of a mountain where God would pass by. In 1 Kings 19 we read, "Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a sound of sheer silence."

And God was in the silence. For God is an endless substance without noise. And it is our job to be constantly listening. We might be tempted to tune out the world, but we must not tune out God. It is our task to listen for God at work in the even midst of human shouting. It is our task to seek connection with one another even when we feel like we have been defeated by the endless torrent of brokenness.

Most people don't answer the phone anymore and I can't say that I blame them. But we cannot stop listening, we cannot risk not picking up when God comes calling. And God will come calling. Not in a great wind, not in an earthquake or in a fire, but in small moments of connection, compassion and care. In a smile or a hug, God will be there.

In our world so full of noise, do not stop listening for God. Don't just hear – listen. Too many people accidentally send God to voicemail or leave God's messages unread. I pray that God will continue to fill you with strength, courage and hope as you listen for God's still small voice calling out to you in love.

~Pastor Christopher

Celebration Coffee Hour:



On Sunday, June 18 we have much to celebrate!

In January, 2022, during our church's time of transition, we needed a caring and qualified person to assist Pastor Jason in various roles. Dr. Lou Smith, an ordained Preaching Elder, answered our call. Dr. Lou has been leading worship services about once a month and has assisted in exceptional ways with Pastor Jason the past year and now with Pastor Christopher during his orientation here. Her visits to hospitals and to shut-ins and nursing home residents have also involved sharing communion with them. Her gentle ways and listening ear have been appreciated by many and has helped them in their transition in life. Now we have an opportunity to honor and thank her. Dr. Lou will preach the last time here on Sunday, June 4th, and we will celebrate her time with us on Sunday, June 18th during the coffee hour. We hope to see you there, so you have an opportunity to thank Dr. Lou and to give thanksgiving to God for His watchful oversight of this Christian community of ours.

We will have treats available and a time for you to greet Dr. Lou personally and thank her for her Christian service to this congregation.

Budget Review: Jerry Haldeman will lead a discussion regarding the Church Budget and where we are (almost halfway through our fiscal year) on Sunday, June 25 after the 10:00am worship service. Come and join us and ask questions you may have about our church's financial health.



Outdoor Worship:

Beginning on June 11th at the 8:00 AM Worship Service.

The 10:00 AM Service will continue to worship in the Sanctuary. Make sure to dress accordingly and join us!

New Green Shed Tables:

The Mission Council is happy to announce that we now have sixty beautiful new light weight tables in the Green Shed! They will be so much easier to move around for our sales and church functions. We are very thankful to our congregants who made private donations so that these tables could be purchased. The tables are also available to be rented out (for a small fee) to people and friends of the church. Please contact the office staff for details if you are interested. Thank you!



Congregational Care - Check-In!

As we welcome people back, are there individuals or families that you have not seen at the 8:00 or 10:00 service that you have previously seen at church? If there are, the Pastor and Congregational Care Council would very much appreciate you giving those names to us, so we may follow-up and reach out to them. Thank you on behalf of the Congregational Care Council, Karen Faulkner (518) 399-5736

Usher Help Needed -



We are always in need of Ushers. If you are willing and able to help with usher duties at the Sunday morning worship time, we need you! The duties are as follows:

- ▶ Greet folks arriving for church and pass out bulletins
- ▶ Direct anyone who needs them to the headsets or children's busy bags
- ▶ About 9:50 ring the bell. Switch is found in the Usher's Closet. Be sure to turn off.
- ▶ At 9:55am, close the doors in the front of the church on either side of the chancel Remain in Narthex to greet late comers
- ▶ During the Doxology, bring one plate up to the front and place on the communion table (leaving the other plate on the pedestal in the Narthex)
- ▶ Count the congregants in the sanctuary, balcony, and nursery before the children's message if possible. Note these numbers in the book in the Narthex.

Contact Tom Bodden or the Church Office and let us know your willingness to serve. A schedule is being set up so all Sundays are covered.

BROOKS' BBQ - Wednesday, June 21, 4:00-7:00pm (or until sold out)

We invite you to sign up to help with our Brooks' BBQ Fundraiser this month and/or purchase some food to support the ministries of the church! Pre-sale tickets are available NOW, after church or in the office during the week. Check your emails or call the church office to sign up to volunteer.

- Easy Drive through!
- Chicken Dinner \$15
- Half Chicken \$12

(Dinners include meat, roll, potato, butter, coleslaw and brownie)

Calling All Volunteers For The SICM Summer Lunch Program:

The SICM Summer Lunch Program will be running in Collins Park this summer. FRCS is scheduled to volunteer to staff the site the weeks of June 26 and August 14. We are in need of 2 volunteers per day Monday through Friday during those weeks to help set up the food delivered by SICM and monitor the children as they eat their lunches. It is approximately a 2 hour commitment per day. You can sign up for the whole week or just a day...whatever you can do is greatly appreciated! This is an important ministry for the children of Scotia during the summer months. If you are interested and able, please contact Linda Naumowicz at 518-399-1366.

Thank You, The Mission Council

We need you! Your picture that is...

The Fellowship Council has been working at updating our photo board in Brink Hall. We're guessing that some pictures are more than 10 years old! Yikes!!

This summer while you're on vacation or relaxing would be a wonderful time to take a family photo and email it to Kristen Shave in the office at office@firstreformedscotia.org. She can then print out the new one and the Council can update the board. If you'd like an outdoor photo a Sunday during the summer, contact Sunny Baldwin, 518-320-4561, so arrangements can be made to meet you. Hopefully these pictures could eventually be used to update our directory also.



Prayer Shawl Ministry - We are delighted to welcome three new knitters, Cheryl Pelkey, Anita Brudos and Joyce Murray. Together with Trudi Thun and Sue Pitts, our lone crocheter, we recently received eight new shawls. We thank them for all their stitches made with love and prayers! This ministry began at our church in 2008 and since then hundreds of shawls, symbolizing God's love embracing the recipient, have been created. If you know of someone who is need of a shawl, whether for contact Sunny Baldwin, 518-320-4562



I Scream, YOU Scream, We ALL Scream For ICE CREAM!

August 6 after the 10 am we will have Ice Scream on the Plaza. This year you will choose which treats are your favorite and we'll be serving the top 3. Fill out a ballot that will be in the bulletin until July 15 and come to enjoy and see what our favorites are. Vote with the ballot below!

Summer's Here- Pick Your Top 3 Favorites Mark an X by your 3 choices

- Nutty Buddy
- Fudgesicle
- Popsicle
- Ice Cream Sandwich

- Ice Cream Bar
- Orange Dreamsicle
- Chocolate;Vanilla Ice Cream Cup
- Chipwich

Nursery Care - We are in need of a Director for the Sunday Nursery Care. This is a paid position! If you are interested and can offer your time, we need you. This position helps parents of young ones experience worship without having to worry about their young child and is a precursor to our Church School program. It is available for children from birth to age 4.

Youth/Children’s Sunday:

June 11, 2023 10:00 AM

“Faith is the key”



Come join us for a Pancake breakfast, served from 9-10 and 11-12, and a very special 10am service.



From Miss Diana:

I want to thank all those who helped make the education of our children and youth possible here at First Reformed Church. You may not realize it but the seeds you plant today blossom into something more beautiful than you will ever know! From the bottom of my heart thank you for all your efforts and support! God Bless!



Summer is a time to rest and relax.

There will not be any Sunday School classes this summer. Youth Sunday will be our last class. ENJOY your summer! Keep an eye out for a very special event in September!

Youth Group Calendar

June 4th - Year End Picnic at Miss Diana's camp 1:00 PM-5:00 PM

June 11th - Youth Sunday & Pancake breakfast

Graduates:

Shannon Warfield will be graduating from Scotia Glenville High School. She will be attending John Jay College of Criminal Justice for forensic psychology in the fall.

Jack Pierce graduates from Scotia Glenville High School, and will be attending SUNY Schenectady for Culinary Arts.

Olivia Munson earned her Master of Music (M.M.) degree in Violin Performance from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.



Caring and Sharing:

Our Caring and Sharing Group is a group of volunteers that send over thirty monthly cards with handwritten messages to members of our church who need some words of support and prayer. Our card list includes our missionaries and those who are grieving, recovering from an illness, in an assisted living facility, rehabilitation or a nursing homes.

If you know someone, whether a member, friend or family member, who needs support or encouragement, contact the church office, 518-370-4751, with the person's name, address and reason for the request. The group will send that person a note that month on your behalf. You will need to refresh the request each month.

COMING SOON. . . St. Pauly Textile Donation Shed:

Hopefully very soon, you will notice a new donation shed sitting in the church parking lot near the Green Shed. St. Pauly Textile, Inc. currently partners with over 1,300 organizations, collecting clothing donations in a uniquely clean and community-friendly way. They collect clothing by setting up a beautifully constructed, wooden framed clothing drop off with an organization such as First Reformed, in a community or neighborhood. The organization hosting the shed receives funding for all the clothing donated. There are several St. Pauly donation sheds within the Capitol District and the organization has an exceptional rating with the Better Business Bureau, and carries very positive references.

Will there be a mess? Absolutely not. This program is designed so that the donation shed remains clean at all times. The shed will be emptied by St. Pauly weekly. Mission Council volunteers will spend 15 minutes once or twice a week moving donations away from the donation chute in order to prevent it from becoming obstructed. Should a large item be left outside of the shed, St. Pauly will be notified to remove it immediately. Strict cleanliness is one of the most important aspects of their business model.

Where does the clothing go? St. Pauly sells clothing, in bulk to sorting and shipping companies, who in turn contract with U.S. government agencies, foreign government agencies, relief organizations and private companies. The geographic destinations for the clothing change constantly, depending upon what is happening in the world at any given time. We are welcome to use clothing donations from the shed if additional donations are needed for one of our three Sales or if there is someone in need of clothing in our community.

St. Pauly will send us 4 cents for every pound of clothing collected (paid monthly). The average organization typically receives \$50-\$200 per month once the program is well established. There will be a small box attached to the shed, which will hold receipt forms should donors wish to get a tax deduction.

We handle over two tons of clothing donations a year here in donations to either the Green Shed or Brink Hall prior to the three sales our church currently offers each year. The addition of the St. Pauly Shed on the church property increases public awareness of another community service we offer to the public and allows them a place to donate their usable items year round. The following is what St. Pauly WILL ACCEPT: usable clothing, shoes, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, pillowcases, curtains, and stuffed animals. UNACCEPTABLE items not to be donated are electronics, books, household items, toys, garbage, pillows, and fabric scraps.

The addition of the donation shed from St. Pauly is a win-win situation for the company, our community, and First Reformed Church of Scotia. Thank you, Your Mission Council

Community Meal: The Community serves all that are in that community. Our next meal is planned for Saturday, June 24 and begins at 11:00 AM. The mission is to have a meal with our neighbors that are struggling with food insecurities. Plus we have meals for anyone that would like a meal. If you like to share in fellowship and would enjoy a meal please come.



The Community Meal has reached a milestone of 4,036 meals served. Thank you to all of our volunteers for their support and hard work. You are all greatly appreciated.

We had an outside cafe this month. The meal consisted of macaroni salad, or tuna macaroni salad, a roll and a green salad. We had 70 meals go out and many guests remarked about the kindness they were shown.

In June we will be having ziti, rolls and green salads. Hopefully we can have the meal outside again. God Bless you all. ~ **Mark Holley**

Mission of the Month for June: Emergency Food Distribution Program administered by our church to identified families in need of food.

June Communion Offering: Will be used by Deacon's Fund here at First Reformed Church of Scotia. The Deacon's Fund is used by our Deacon's and Pastor to assist people in need anonymously and with Christian love.

[Doug Bartling Jr.: Over The Bridge Mission](#)

A rapidly growing mission here at First Reformed is Doug Bartling Jr.'s "Over The Bridge" ministry. Our Mission Council, with help from the congregation and Backpack volunteers, shops and creates snack bags for the program. The Over The Bridge bags usually contain a granola bar, chips, cheese and crackers, fruit snacks, cookies, a juice drink and or water. Most Sundays after church, we load up Doug's van, and he heads "over the bridge" to Schenectady's Hamilton Hill Neighborhood. Doug drives up and down the streets finding people he can offer the snack bags. They may be homeless, or living a life challenged by addiction and prostitution. Many of the folks he comes across are people struggling to make ends meet, living in a low income area. Doug's mission statement is "to spread love in the name of Christ, giving hope to all people." As someone who has had the privilege of riding along to assist Doug on his trips, I can say that the minute his van starts rolling up and down the streets of Hamilton Hill... that is the time where the true mission begins.

God has gifted Doug with a very keen sense of communication. He is able to pull up to someone standing on the street and within seconds, is able to make that person feel comfortable and strikes up a conversation. We listen to their life stories and struggles. Doug spreads the word of God to bring understanding and hope into their lives. Some interactions are short, while others are long. Before you know it, other passers by stop to join in the conversation. We then pass out the snack bags of which everyone is very grateful for and move on to the next stop. Absolutely everyone blesses us as we do so. Doug knows the mission of truly listening to all types of people. He is then able to minister to them, according to their specific concerns and walk in life.

I have had the privilege of riding over the bridge with Doug twice now. I can honestly say as we finished up both days, I had a feeling that I helped to make a difference in someone's day. I felt that today, someone got some unexpected snacks that they couldn't afford to buy. Today, someone was listened to by total strangers and felt their voice was heard. Today, God's love and words were shared. Today... I helped to make a difference. I ended that day feeling that I was the one who had been truly blessed. Please hear some more comments from others who have experienced the Over The Bridge mission with Doug. ~ *Linda Naumowicz*

From Sue Pitts: "What I have learned and received from riding with Doug on Sunday after church has turned out to be an inspiring, enlightening experience meeting people that are from "Our Community", but from over the bridge. Our community does not have borders. I met people who are struggling to have enough food to feed their families. They are a proud people, just trying to make a living. Have I encountered violence? No! The only thing that is evident is these are loving grandparents, parents, children and homeless individuals that are just plain poor without a lot of necessities, that are needed to survive. Regardless of their circumstances, all the people that I have met were courteous, interested in *Over The Bridge* and where we came from, thankful for the food give outs and continually gave blessings to us. If your heart is nudging you to help out, riders are needed, snacks need to be purchased and money donations are gratefully accepted. This ministry has doubled in size and continues to grow each week."

From Molly Hayner, Vicki Hayner's daughter: "Riding with Doug was a wonderful experience! It's truly God's work what he does for those in need! Such an inspiring time together and to see those in need get something small, and it brightens their day, was great!"

From Stacey Salter, Linda and Ed Naumowicz's niece: "I had the privilege to ride with Doug a few months ago. His dedication and determination were truly heartfelt. His non-judgmental disposition shined bright. Almost all the people that we stopped already knew Doug, and he knew them by name. It brought tears to my eyes. I myself have battled with addiction, and have been sober for over a year now. I saw myself in many of those faces. I was able to open up to share my story, and even got one young man to attend the New Choices Recovery Program... the same program that I remain active with. Doug's light truly shined on many people that day. He spoke from the heart and it was an honor to ride with him. I felt blessed to be given that opportunity. You could see people who probably haven't smiled in a very long time, light up and truly feel like someone cares, listens and realizes we all fall sometimes. It was one of the best days for me. It fed my soul big time. I will be happy to be given that opportunity again. Thank you Doug!"

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[Doug Bartling Jr.: Over The Bridge Mission... continued](#)

From Dave Walsh: “Doug’s mission is grounded in Jesus’ teaching that we are all children of God. Doug travels every Sunday to talk with his brothers and sisters in his old neighborhood. His folks are walking the sidewalks, doing errands, and visiting neighbors. Doug’s mission is to be part of their conversation on a Sunday, to bring a simple ‘Howdy’, to offer some snacks. And they respond! They talk to Doug about their lives, their families, and neighbors. Sometimes they just give a short thank you. But most appreciate the time to chat, to accept Doug’s words about God’s grace. This short trip reflects what we learn as Christians: share words of greeting and comfort with a neighbor, and to know that the other person may have the weight of many worlds on their shoulders.”

Thank you for letting us take you inside the mission of Over The Bridge. We hope this has given you more of an idea of just how important this mission is to the people of Hamilton Hill. Through this mission, Doug and the people of First Reformed are able to be disciples and spread God’s grace, hope and love to everyone who crosses our path on those rides. Please consider a donation to further ensure that snack bag supplies will continue to be handed out. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday to ride along with Doug to assist with handing out the bags, please contact Linda Naumowicz at 518-399-1366.

Thank you! Your Mission Council

Community Lunch Organizer Appreciation:

June marks the start of the fifth year for the Community Lunch, which provides nutritious, delicious meals and fellowship to our neighbors on the last Saturday of the month. More than 4,000 meals have been served so far. There is now also a monthly grab-and-go lunch.

All of this is possible because of your prayers, financial support and a team of volunteers led by Mark Holley. Mark is always the first to thank those around him for helping with meal prep, serving food and being a friendly face to those in need.



If you haven’t had the pleasure of meeting Mark, here are some of the ways the volunteers describe him:

“The spirit of giving is deep in Mark’s heart.”

“Mark is always looking out for his elderly neighbors, whether it is food that is needed or just a friendly conversation.”

“It is clear that the Holy Spirit has been working through Mark, giving him the vision, guidance, and trust that this program can be built and sustained for both the people of First Reformed and the surrounding communities.”

“Mark's enthusiasm and commitment is contagious.”

“He stepped up when there was no one to do such a thing.”

“He is an example of ‘actions speak louder than words.’”

Thanks for your leadership, hard work and dedication, Mark. Your faithfulness and care for others are what it means to be church.

June Anniversaries:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 1 Bill and Karen Faulkner | 10 Russ and Claudia Garrison | 21 Al and Margo Snyder |
| 3 Bob and Barbara King | 11 Duane and Mary VanPatten | 28 Robert and Mary Grumbling,
David and Jae Schalekamp, |
| 4 Kent and Jill Busman | 16 Nick and Libby Farone | George and Karen Squires |
| 5 Jeff and Cindy Taft | 18 John and Diana Ackner | 29 Peter and Jennifer Forth |
| 6 Stanley and Fern Lee | 18 Judson and Beth Hoffman | |

Kids Hope USA News - Life Together Is Life at Its Best: We have successfully finished our 13th year of Kids Hope at Sacandaga Elementary School. We ended the year with an ice cream sundae party and presentation of certificates for each of the ten students included in the program this year. We needed parental permission for the children to attend the party, and every single parent/guardian provided it! These ten children were supported each week by ten adult mentors, ten prayer partners, ten teachers, and ten parents/guardians. It's exciting to look forward to another year in the fall with a new director and a return to the program as it was originally designed. Please consider becoming a mentor, with training expected to begin in September. No special skills are required, just a love for children.

BackPack Program: The BackPack Program has been providing 69 bags of food each week to students in the Scotia-Glenville School District. We will be conducting our last food distribution on June 15th to help families experiencing food insecurity. A huge thank you to the volunteers both within our congregation and the community who have consistently each week traveled to the Regional Food Bank sites to pick up food, deliver it to church, unpack and sort it and pack the bags. And another huge thank you for those volunteers who each week have delivered those bags to the schools and to individual families. A special thank you to Sue Pitts for organizing the volunteer packers each week and to Martha Eberle for coordinating the ever-changing delivery routes. This year, the price per bag increased by \$45 from \$183 to \$228. We won't know if there will be another increase next year until late in the summer. Between our church and Trinity Presbyterian, we have been providing food each week and vacation periods for over 100 students. So, also, a HUGE thank you to those members in our congregation who support this vital program.

Health & Wellness Note: Although summer is still a few weeks away, we've already had several days of summer-like temperatures, which can cause excessive sweating and then dehydration. Dehydration, which can range from mild to severe, is usually caused by an inadequate intake of fluids to replace those that have been lost. *Severe dehydration is a medical emergency and needs to be treated immediately.* Other factors that cause dehydration are increased physical activity, diet, and illnesses that may lead to fluid loss such as persistent diarrhea and vomiting.

Who's at risk? Babies and infants are at the greatest risk of becoming dehydrated because their low body weight makes them sensitive to even a minor loss of fluid. The elderly are also at a greater risk because they may be less alert to dehydration setting in and not realize they need to drink fluids. People who are diabetic or who suffer from alcoholism are also at a greater risk of dehydration and athletes can be affected due to the amount of body fluid lost through sweat. So it's important to recognize symptoms.

Mild or Moderate Symptoms include: thirst, dry or sticky mouth, not peeing very much, dark yellow pee, dry cool skin, headache, and muscle cramps. In babies, signs include the soft spot on the top of the skull (fontanelle) being sunken; few or no tears shed on crying, fewer wet diapers, drowsiness, or irritability.

Severe dehydration also includes: very dry skin, feeling dizzy, rapid heartbeat, sunken eyes, sleepiness, lack of energy, confusion or irritability, and fainting.

To Prevent dehydration: Be sure to drink water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty. Other alternatives are to eat foods that are high in water content, like watermelon, peaches, jello, ice cream, cucumbers, yogurt and soup.

If dehydrated, you need to drink plenty of fluids such as water, squash or fruit juice, but avoid caffeinated beverages and fizzy drinks. Other alternatives are to eat foods that are high in water content, like watermelon, peaches, jello, ice cream, cucumbers, yogurt and soup.

If illnesses such as vomiting or diarrhea are making it difficult to hold water down, small sips should be drunk. Infants and children who are dehydrated should not be given water as this can dilute the already low levels of electrolytes and minerals in the body. The World Health Organization recommends the use of oral rehydration solutions, which are especially designed for children with diarrhea and dehydration. If unsure, call the child's health care provider.

By knowing the risks, signs and symptoms and acting quickly when dehydration occurs, you can prevent serious life-threatening complications!



June Birthdays:

- | | | |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 Cheryl MacNeil | 11 Aleksey Falcon | 20 Phil Davis |
| 2 Sierra Grace May | 12 Joe Deamer, Juliet Torelli | 21 Al Carter |
| 4 Ayanna Willoughby | 14 Laura Bull, Linda Ciabotte,
Miranda Gilgore | 23 Grace Ackner |
| 5 Leo Crisci | 15 Collin Penn | 25 Alta Pirigy |
| 6 Pam Walsh | 16 Paul Kramer | 26 Linda Naumowicz, Barbara Wurz |
| 7 Randy MacNeil, Jim Penn,
Shelly Poremba | 17 Cassandra Stryjek | 28 Laurie Cooper, Terri Doyle |
| 8 Brian Ahl, Bub Bekkering,
Sue Steciak, Jacklyn Zenner | 18 Ken Sill | 29 Ron Locke, Demetri Zappone |
| 10 Michaela Kilgallen | 19 Diana Ackner, Erin Parker,
Thomas Hoffmann | |

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