

✠ Holy Cross Lutheran Church ✠

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The Nativity of Our Lord – Christmas Day

December 25, 2023

Divine Service, Setting Three

As We Gather

We do not often emphasize the psalms during the Advent season, instead being eager to read about the prophecies, anticipating Jesus’ coming. Yet the psalms are God’s Word during terrible times to people who lived before God’s promises were fulfilled in our Savior’s coming. This Advent we have focused on several psalms as we use them to prepare to celebrate our Lord’s birth with open eyes and ears.

The traditional psalm for Christmas Day, Psalm 98, is a psalm of rejoicing. Sing to the Lord a new song! This is a day for praising God, rejoicing with one another, and spreading the joy to all whom we meet!

380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, “Glo - ry to the new - born King;
2 Christ, by high - est heav’n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!”
Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin’s womb.
Light and life to all He brings, Ris’n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see, Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty!
Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, “Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!”
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



Refrain
Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, “Glo - ry to the new - born King!”

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–88, alt.
Tune: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–47
Text and tune: Public domain

Confession and Absolution

Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 98:1–4; antiphon: Isaiah 52:10

P The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the | nations,*
and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation | of our God.

C **Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done | marvelous things!***
His right hand and his holy arm have worked salva- | tion for him.

P The LORD has made known his sal- | vation;*
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the | nations.

C **He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of | Israel.***
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation | of our God.

P Make a joyful noise to the LORD, | all the earth;*
break forth into joyous song and sing | praises!

C **Glory be to the Father and | to the Son***
and to the Holy | Spirit;

as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

P The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the | nations,*
and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation | of our God.

Kyrie

LSB 186



C Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

386 Now Sing We, Now Rejoice



1 Now sing we, now re - joice, Now raise to heav'n our voice;
2 Come from on high to me; I can - not rise to Thee.
3 Now through His Son doth shine The Fa-ther's grace di - vine.
4 Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'n - ly ground?



He from whom joy stream - eth Poor in a man - ger lies;
Cheer my wea - ried spir - it, O pure and ho - ly Child;
Death was reign - ing o'er us Through sin and van - i - ty
Where the an - gels sing - ing With all His saints u - nite,



Not so bright - ly beam - eth The sun in yon - der skies.
Through Thy grace and mer - it, Blest Je - sus, Lord most mild,
Till He o - pened for us A bright e - ter - ni - ty.
Sweet - est prais - es bring - ing In heav'n - ly joy and light.



Thou my Sav - ior art! Thou my Sav - ior art!
Draw me un - to Thee! Draw me un - to Thee!
May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

Text: Latin and German, 14th cent.; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–74, alt.
Tune: German, 14th cent.
Text and tune: Public domain

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And with thy spirit.

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 52:7–10

R The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapter 52.

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings good news,
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice;
together they sing for joy;
for eye to eye they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing,
you waste places of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people;

he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

Hebrews 1:1–12

R The Epistle is from Hebrews, chapter 1.

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”?

Or again,

“I will be to him a father,
and he shall be to me a son”?

⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God’s angels worship him.”

⁷Of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels winds,
and his ministers a flame of fire.”

⁸But of the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

¹⁰And,

“You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;

¹¹they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment,

¹²like a robe you will roll them up,
like a garment they will be changed.

But you are the same,
and your years will have no end.”

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.



☐ Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

John 1:1–14

☐ The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.



☐ Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

☐ ¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

☐ This is the Gospel of the Lord.



☐ Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

☐ **I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.**

**And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.**

**And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life † of the world to come. Amen.**

Sit

382 We Praise You, Jesus, at Your Birth



1 We praise You, Je - sus, at Your birth; Clothed in flesh You
2 Now in the man - ger we may see God's Son from e -
3 The vir - gin Mar - y's lul - la - by Calms the in - fant
4 The Light E - ter - nal, break - ing through, Made the world to



came to earth. The vir - gin bears a sin - less boy
ter - ni - ty, The gift from God's e - ter - nal throne
Lord Most High. Up - on her lap con - tent is He
gleam a - new; His beams have pierced the core of night,



And all the an - gels sing for joy. Al - le - lu - ia!
Here clothed in our poor flesh and bone. Al - le - lu - ia!
Who keeps the earth and sky and sea. Al - le - lu - ia!
He makes us chil - dren of the light. Al - le - lu - ia!

5 The very Son of God sublime
Entered into earthly time
To lead us from this world of cares
To heaven's courts as blessèd heirs.
Alleluia!

6 In poverty He came to earth
Showing mercy by His birth;
He makes us rich in heav'nly ways
As we, like angels, sing His praise.
Alleluia!

7 All this for us our God has done
Granting love through His own Son.
Therefore, all Christendom, rejoice
And sing His praise with endless voice.
Alleluia!

Sermon

Offering

391 Rejoice, Rejoice This Happy Morn

Stand

Offertory

LSB 192



C Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

Prayer of the Church

- P** Lord, all the ends of the earth will see Your salvation. Lift our hearts to hope and joy in the celebration of our Savior's birth, that we would manifest this joy in witness to the world. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** Bless churches, schools and every place where the good news of God-in-our-flesh is taught. Guide our hearts to discern the voice of truth from error. Lead us to know and confess with all joy the good news of our Savior, that those who hear may rejoice with us and the holy angels to worship Christ, the newborn King. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** Lord, You have comforted Your people and bared Your holy arm for our salvation. Preserve those threatened by persecution for the sake of Christ. Grant courage, comfort and peace to those who suffer danger or violence. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** God of peace, look on the nations of this world. Give them a spirit of peace so that conflicts would cease, and reveal through the birth of Jesus Your great salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** Lord, the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. Give peace to the troubled in mind and heart. Deliver them from the taunts and temptations of the evil one. Enable us to help them with compassion. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** Mercifully grant healing, relief, comfort and peace to all the sick, to those who suffer, to the dying and to those who grieve. Bless doctors, nurses, all medical professionals and caregivers in their service of aid and comfort. Let all rejoice in the good news of Christ, our light and salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.

- P** Lord, You graciously give us everything we need. Teach us generosity for the work of Your kingdom. Accept the tithes and offerings we return to You, through which we display before the world our trust in Your provision and goodness. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Father, the great love that laid Your Son in a manger also lays His flesh and blood before us in bread and wine. Grant us grace to bow our hearts before Him with all those in heaven and on earth who adore Him, that we may receive His forgiveness and life with repentance and joy. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Lord God, in the birth of Your Son You have called people from every time and place into His Body, the Church. We give You thanks for the believers who went before us, especially who were with us in Christmases past and who now live with You. Grant us sure confidence in Your promise of resurrection and eternal life, and bring us with them at last into Your presence; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

Welcome to our Visitors

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor or an elder.

For further study, see Matthew 5:23f.; 10:32f.; 18:15–35; 26:26–29; and 1 Corinthians 11:17–34.

Service of the Sacrament

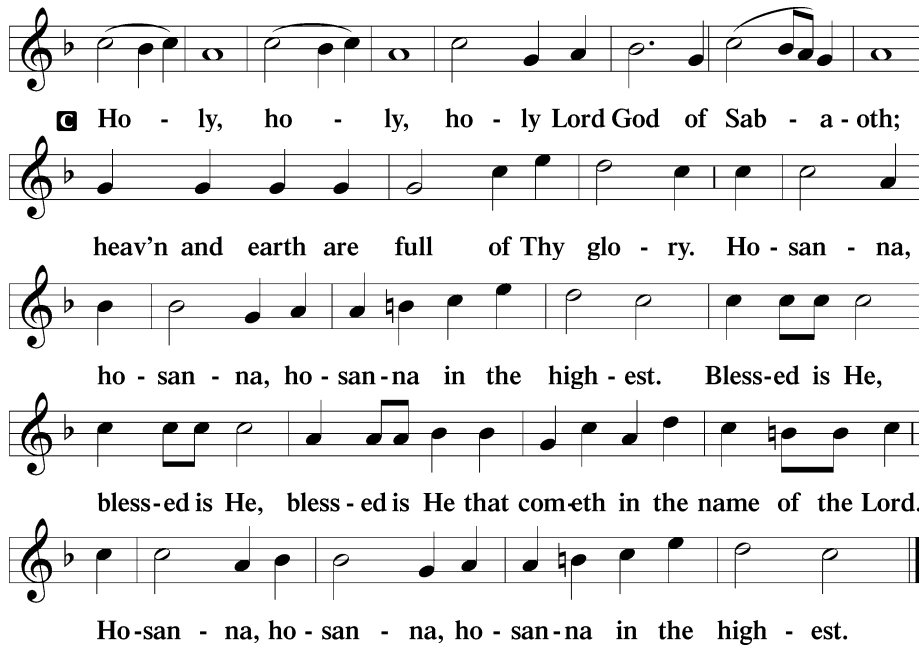
Preface

LSB 194

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And with thy spirit.**
- P** Lift up your hearts.
- C** **We lift them up unto the Lord.**
- P** Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.
- C** **It is meet and right so to do.**
- P** It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 195



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;
heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,
ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,
bless - ed is He, bless - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 196

P 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,
but deliver us from evil.



C For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the
glo - ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

The Words of Our Lord

LSB 197

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Pax Domini

LSB 197



P The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.
C A - men.

Agnus Dei

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

Sit

Distribution

366 It Came upon the Midnight Clear

1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un-furled,
 3 All you, be-neath your heav-y load, By care and guilt bent low,
 4 For lo, the days have come to pass By proph-ets seen of old,
 From an-gels bend-ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
 And still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats O'er all the wea-ry world.
 Who toil a-long a drea-ry way With pain-ful steps and slow:
 When down in-to the cir-cling years Came Christ as was fore-told.
 "Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav'n's all-gra-cious king."
 A-bove its sad and low-ly plains They bend on hov-'ring wing,
 Look up, for gold-en is the hour, Come swift-ly on the wing,
 His word of peace shall to the earth God's an-cient prom-ise bring,
 The world in sol-emn still-ness lay To hear the an-gels sing.
 And ev-er o'er its ba-bel sounds The bless-ed an-gels sing.
 The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an-gels sing.
 And all who take this gift will hear The song the an-gels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-76, alt.
 Tune: Richard S. Willis, 1819-1900
 Text and tune: Public domain

370 What Child Is This



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
 2 Why lies He in such mean es - tate Where ox and ass are
 3 So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
 feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The
 own Him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; Let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
 si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall
 lov - ing hearts en - throne Him. Raise, raise the



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
 song on high, The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



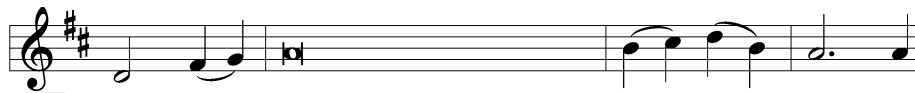
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-98
 Tune: English, 16th cent.
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Nunc Dimittis

LSB 199



Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -



cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,



which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,



a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy



peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and



to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,



is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

Thanksgiving

LSB 200

P O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
C and His mercy endureth forever.

P Let us pray.

O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

P The Lord be with you.

C And with thy spirit.

Benedicamus

LSB 202

P Bless we the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

LSB 202

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.



C A-men, a-men, a - men.

387 Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

Announcements

Adult Sunday School at **9am** on Sunday mornings is studying Leviticus.

The **Flowers** that beautify our altar this morning are given to God's glory.

The **Ladies Bible Study** meets next on Wednesday **Jan 3** at **10am**, studying the book of 2 Samuel.

Church Council next meeting is **Jan 14** at **8am**.

Christmas Morning Divine Service is at **10am**.

December has a **Fifth Sunday!** Join us for a potluck luncheon!

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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