

CHURCH CHAT

Finalist Spotlight

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All Saints' Anglican Church in Waterloo, Ontario, purpose-built the SideWalk Community Centre as part of an extensive redevelopment of its property to provide one of the only in-neighbourhood community centres in the city. The creation of the community centre stemmed from the realization that there was a lack of spaces for recreation and connection in this rapidly changing neighbourhood with a large percentage of new Canadians, visible minorities, and families with limited disposable income. To ensure that it met the community's needs, leaders and church volunteers collected data from nearby residents, local politicians, and social services in interviews and conversations over a multi-year planning period.



The secular SideWalk Community Centre offers a wide variety of programs, including yoga, pickup sports, music classes, and cultural events, as well as food preparation classes and food assistance programs. The staff and volunteers work to build a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, from recent immigrants learning to cook new meals for their children to teens finding confidence on

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the basketball court. Opened in 2024, SideWalk welcomed over 14,000 visitors in its first year – then matched that number in the first half of 2025. More than half of attendees were children and teenagers. The high usage rate is evidence that the centre is meeting a community need, particularly for youth and immigrants.

Most of the funding for the SideWalk Centre came from the sale of a portion of the church's land to a residential developer, with additional financial support from local funders such as the Hallman Foundation. Having that development project already under way helped streamline the zoning and approvals for the community centre, and the new building was soon "shovel ready." The Church made a deliberate choice to dedicate the majority of the funds from its congregational donations to support building and operating the centre, putting lasting infrastructure in place for a safe, productive community space.

The robust church community at All Saints' provides a steady volunteer and donation base that assists in everything from running the food bank to hosting fundraising events that generate supplies for the programs, such as sports balls and cookware. By thoughtfully repurposing property at All Saints' Anglican Church and listening to local voices, community champions and church volunteers created an essential community amenity in the SideWalk Community Centre. Their example demonstrates how churches can fill gaps in "third places" and strengthen community life at the neighbourhood level.

Learning from what worked

- It is important to have a passionate community champion who dedicates time and effort to driving the mission of the project forward through all phases of the process, from planning to development



to execution. Planning for a leader in the next generation to continue community commitment and programming at the site will ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of the project.

- Having a clear, written guide or checklist for adaptive reuse projects would make the process more accessible for a broad range of community champions. In particular, navigating zoning, site plans, and by-law surprises can be daunting for those who are not developers or planning practitioners.
- Talking to neighbours, social agencies, sports organizations, and potential funders from the outset is important to identify community needs and gaps, and to build support before major decisions are made. While the staff of a community centre may be small, consistent outreach and a clear mission invite people to contribute time, skills, and resources, allowing for a great deal to be accomplished on a limited budget.
- Obtaining written commitments from groups that will use the space helps reassure donors and grantmakers that the project will have lasting impact. SideWalk's success came from connecting with 13+ agencies, ranging from food security programs to basketball clubs

Stewardship Moment ~ Pastor Marty

Proportionate Giving Guide

Weekly giving

Income	10%	5%	3%
\$180,000	\$346	\$173	\$104
\$110,000	\$212	\$106	\$63
\$90,000	\$173	\$86	\$52
\$60,000	\$115	\$58	\$34
\$40,000	\$77	\$38	\$23
\$25,000	\$48	\$24	\$14
\$10,000	\$19	\$10	\$6

Monthly Giving

Income	10%	5%	3%
\$180,000	\$1500	\$750	\$450
\$110,000	\$916	\$458	\$275
\$90,000	\$750	\$375	\$225
\$60,000	\$500	\$250	\$150
\$40,000	\$333	\$167	\$100
\$25,000	\$208	\$104	\$62
\$10,000	\$83	\$42	\$25

Yearly Giving

Income	10%	5%	3%
\$180,000	\$18,000	\$9000	\$5400
\$110,000	\$11,000	\$5500	\$3300
\$90,000	\$9000	\$4500	\$2700
\$60,000	\$6000	\$3000	\$1800
\$40,000	\$4000	\$2000	\$1200
\$25,000	\$2500	\$1250	\$750
\$10,000	\$1000	\$500	\$300

Tithing is a Biblical concept. The tithe was a requirement of the Law, which demanded that the Israelites give 10 percent of the crops they grew and the livestock they raised to the tabernacle/ temple (Leviticus 27:30; Numbers 18:26; Deuteronomy 14:24; 2 Chronicles 31:5).

The New Testament talks about the importance and benefits of giving as well. We are to give as we are able. Sometimes that means giving more than 10 percent; sometimes that may mean giving less. It all depends on the ability of the Christian and the needs of the body of Christ, the church. We should diligently pray and seek God's wisdom about participating in tithing and/or how much to give (James 1:5).

I am providing a chart which indicates the percentage that each of us gives to the building of God's Kingdom of our incomes. Over the coming weeks, I invite you to prayerfully consider your offering. You may already give a tithe, or the 10 percent tithe may be more than you can handle at this time. I invite you to find yourself on the following chart and prayerfully consider raising your offering for the coming year, if just by 1% as we seek to practice tithing as

a congregation.

As we continue to work closely together to build out programs at SideWalk and the new church, the amount we can accomplish together when we joyfully give will be more than we can ever ask or imagine.

Evangelism Moment ~Pastor Marty

The word "evangelism" can sound intimidating, evoking images of street preaching or intense theological debates. But at its heart, evangelism simply means **sharing the Good News**, and every single person in our parish is equipped to do it.

Evangelism is less about converting strangers and more about living a life that makes people ask, "What is the source of your hope?"

Here are three simple, practical ways you can be an evangelist in your daily life:

1. Be Present and Listen (The Evangelism of Empathy)

The most powerful evangelistic tool we have is **active listening**. When you genuinely stop, look someone in the eye, and listen to what they are carrying, whether it's joy or sorrow, you are demonstrating the love of Christ.

- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Instead of just asking, "How are you?" try, "What's giving you energy this week?" or "What's heavy on your heart right now?"
- **Validate Their Pain:** If someone shares a struggle (grief, stress, illness), don't rush to fix it or offer a platitude. Say, "That sounds incredibly difficult. I am so sorry you're going through that." This validates their human experience, just as Christ validated the pain of the people he met.
- **Offer Simple Prayer:** If appropriate, you can gently offer: "Would you mind if I held you in prayer this week?" This is a direct, non-preachy way to share the resource of your faith.

2. Practice Radical Hospitality (The Evangelism of Welcome)

Hospitality isn't just about hosting parties; it's about making space for others, both literally and figuratively.

- **Be the Friendly Face at Church:** Make it your ministry to notice newcomers or people who usually sit alone. Offer a genuine smile, invite them to the coffee hour, or help them navigate the bulletin.

- **Invite an "Unexpected" Guest:** Think beyond your immediate circle. Invite a neighbour, a new colleague, or a single parent to a casual dinner or event. The simple act of including someone who might feel marginalized is a profound act of Christ-like welcome.
- **Keep a Neat 'Front Door':** What does your church building look like from the street? Does it look inviting and accessible? Support the efforts that make our physical space a welcoming sign to the community.



3. Share Your Own 'Why' (The Evangelism of Testimony)

You don't need a theology degree to share how faith has changed your life. Your story is your most powerful asset.

• **Speak Naturally:** Don't use "churchy" jargon. When a friend asks how you got through a hard time, you can simply say, "Honestly, my faith community kept me grounded," or "I found a lot of

strength in my morning prayer routine."

- **Invite with Intent:** Instead of generally saying "you should come to church," give a specific, low-pressure invitation. "We're having a Blue Christmas service this year for people who find the holidays hard. It's very gentle; would you be interested in coming?"
- **Live Generously:** Our Christian values should shine through our actions. How you treat the cashier, how you talk about your colleagues, or how you use your money often speaks louder than any sermon. **Integrity is compelling evangelism.**

The Power of the Spirit

We often put too much pressure on ourselves to be clever or persuasive. The final, most important step in evangelism is this: **trust the Holy Spirit.**

We are called to plant the seeds—to listen, to welcome, and to share our own story. But it is the **Holy Spirit** that brings the growth, the conviction, and the change. When you offer a kind word, when you listen with empathy, or when you simply show up to serve, you are partnering with the Spirit.

So, go forth, not in your own strength, but with the confidence that the Spirit of God is already working in the hearts of those you meet. Your simple act of sharing the light is enough.

Book Club ~ Joyce Harry

Hello once again from the Book Club.

It has been a while. Since our last report in April, we have continued to meet every last Wednesday of each month for a total of 7 great reads and interesting discussions. During the summer months our numbers are a bit smaller, but we usually average six in the group.

It is customary to take the month of December off as there is always a lot happening for everyone during this festive season.

We will be back at it in January, here are the titles for the next three months:

Jan 28/26 - Welcome to the Hyunmam Dong Bookshop by Hwang Bo-Reum

February 25/26 - State of wonder by Ann Patchett

March 25/26 - The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon

We are still meeting at All Saints' at 1:00 p.m. This central location works quite well for us.

We would be happy to welcome new readers to our group. This is a great way to meet and get to know some new folks.

There is usually a little treat as an added bonus.

“Be yourself, everyone else is already taken” Oscar Wilde.



All Saints Filipino School Sponsorship

Joylyn Rose Impas, affectionately known as "Joy-Joy," is a 15-year-old student who recently completed Grade 9. Born on March 11, 2010, in Alabang, Muntinlupa City, Philippines, Joylyn is a lively and enthusiastic young girl. Joylyn has a passion for playing volleyball, finding joy and excitement in the sport. She is skilled enough to enjoy the game and really appreciates the teamwork and camaraderie that comes with it. When working on projects, Joylyn often seeks help from her family members, valuing their support and guidance.

Joylyn's dream is to become a chef, a goal that beautifully showcases her creative side and genuine interest in cooking. With the unwavering support of her loving family, who encourage her every step of the way, and fueled by her own determination, Joylyn looks forward to pursuing her culinary aspirations. She is eager to hone her skills, explore new recipes, and bring joy to others through her cooking. With persistence and hard work, Joylyn is confident that she can make her dreams a reality and succeed in the culinary world.

Joylyn is currently facing challenges in some subjects, which adds some pressure for her. However, she is taking proactive steps to address these difficulties. Joylyn is working diligently to improve her grades in those subjects, focusing on areas that require improvement. By doing so, she aims to achieve better grades and meet her academic goals, ultimately earning the grades her teachers expect of her. Her teachers share that she is a bright student with great potential.

Joylyn's relationships with her classmates have proven to be a valuable support system. When she is absent from school due to illness, her classmates kindly fill her in on any assignments or tasks that she misses. This thoughtful gesture helps her stay on top of her schoolwork and ensures she doesn't fall behind. Moreover, her classmates' ability to make her laugh, even on tough days, brings a sense of camaraderie to their interactions. Through humor, they create a lighthearted atmosphere that makes school more enjoyable. This positive dynamic is a testament to the strong bonds Joylyn has formed with her peers.



Deanery of Waterloo Refugee Team Update ~ Mary Hunt

Our Waterloo Deanery Refugee Team has been busy this fall getting ready to sponsor another family. There are 12 churches in our Waterloo Deanery and most of the churches have at least one member on this deanery refugee team. We have been meeting at least once a month.

In August a small group of us met to discuss ways we could fundraise in order to support the next family we sponsor. One suggestion was to participate in St Jame's Wine Survivor fundraiser, and that church generously said they would share 50% of the money raised with our refugee team. Thank you to those from All Saints' who supported this fundraiser and enjoyed participating in this fun and unique fundraiser!

On December 9th, our team selected our next family, a single mother (Mapenzi), 32, originally from The Democratic Republic of Congo, with three young boys, aged 8 (Bukuru - will be 9 in January), 3 (Utinyele - will be 4 in February), and 2 (Tumain - will be 3 in January), all born in Tanzania. There will definitely be some challenges with helping this new family settle, but we also have some experience with a single mother in the past, and our team felt that we could meet these challenges through the grace of God who does infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.

Here is a personal reflection from our chair, Ann Coughlin, who was encouraged in her daily reading of Isaiah ch 60 (vision of new Jerusalem and God's world order) complemented by the note suggesting looking at Isaiah 58:6-8 for how we can participate bringing this about: "break the chains of injustice..., free the oppressed...share your food with the hungry...invite the homeless poor into your homes...put clothes on the shivering ill-clad." [The Message]

We do not know the arrival date yet, but probably sometime between January - February. In the meantime, our team will be starting to secure an apartment, and will be looking to furnish it for this family.

There are several ways you can consider helping with this new family. We really need more volunteers from All Saints' willing to join this Deanery Refugee team. There are various sub teams including transportation (drivers), education, shopping, medical.

Please keep this mother and her 3 boys in your prayers and also the Deanery Refugee team in your prayers as we get ready to welcome this family to Canada.

For more information on how to get involved, please feel free to talk to Mary Hunt.



Advent Reflection ~Pastor Dan

Dear Friends, As we are now fully immersed in the Season of Advent, I am reminded of the nature of joyful waiting. When I was growing up near London, the Detroit Tigers 'AA' minor-league team, the aptly named London Tigers played at Labatt Park. Every year, around my birthday in May, all I wanted to do was celebrate by going to a London Tigers baseball game with my friends. My dad would book a group and get tickets right behind home plate.

The two weeks leading up to that game for me as a child were filled with anticipation—a very joyful time of expectation.

That type of enthusiastic, joyful waiting is precisely the type of waiting we as Christians are called to engage in during Advent. It is the time when we watch and wait with expectation for Christ's coming.

What are we waiting for in Advent? We are waiting for two things:

- The 'already': A celebration of Christ's birth as a baby in a manger.
- The 'not yet': Watching with expectation for Christ's promised return, when the Lord will bring Heaven to Earth and put all things right forever.

The world around us—driven by commercialism at this time of year, often skips this essential period of waiting and goes "straight to Christmas". But as disciples of Jesus, this four-week period of watching, anticipating, and waiting on the Lord in joy during Advent is central to who we are.

As we continue this holy season together, I encourage you to take some time to pray about how you



can engage in this kind of joyful anticipation. How, in the midst of the holiday hustle and bustle, can you slow down and simply wait for the Lord?

For the Lord our God shall soon appear, and it shall be good.

All the very best to you and yours for a blessed Advent.

Yours in Christ.

Fall Fundraising Frenzy! ~ Sheila Crowther



Alliteration aside, the SideWalk Community Centre has had some very successful events this Fall. Thanks to all who prepared for, participated in and enjoyed themselves at these very special functions. Starting with our annual golf tournament with an incredible dinner menu and silent auction, we raised \$11,520.

Our annual Patronal feast on November 1 was a special Spaghetti Dinner and Time and Talents auction. Thanks so much to all the volunteers and donors- and to Pastor Marty for agreeing to auction his haircut- we collected \$4728.

The success continued on Cheeseball Production day on November 21, netting us \$2040.

And on November 22, we launched our first Yuletide Treats & Treasures market! Our outside community vendors were very happy with our venue and contributed to our \$1750.

Without the generosity of All Saints parishioners, our fundraising would not have been the success it was, so thank you all very much!

Sharing the Christmas Story with Your Children ~ Catherine Sprowl

I have fond Advent memories as a child, and with our own children, kneeling in front of our nativity set to say our bedtime prayers. After Christmas, we'd place the wise men around the house, and once found, they would move again to continue their journey during the 12 Days of Christmas, demonstrating that people still seek Jesus and need help finding him.



Family is the centre of spiritual development for children because parents and grandparents play the most important role in connecting children to Jesus. Here are five fun ways to help your family connect to the Christmas story:

1. **Be creative:** A nativity set is a hands-on storybook. As you read the Christmas story, make it accessible; ask them to hold each character as you read about them. Ask them questions like, Why is there an angel, or shepherds? Ask kids to bring the story to life by drawing or painting. Ask, what do you think aspects of the Christmas story look like? Allow them to use their imagination.
2. **Sing it:** Look for kid-friendly songs that are a little more Jesus and a little less “Frosty.” Ask them to choose their favourites and make a playlist, sing along in the car, have dance parties in the living room, or play along with an instrument, all with the intention of worshipping together.
3. **Watch It:** Seeing something helps us connect with it emotionally and remember it. For example, find a Live Nativity or a Christmas play in your community. Or watch it on TV or in a movie. The 2017 animated children’s Christmas movie “The Star” is a good option, told through the eyes of the animals.
4. **Act It:** When we act, we enter into a character’s experience and emotion. You can do this at home with homemade costumes or with the nativity set. Getting involved in our Children’s

Christmas Pageant at All Saints' is a great way to experience the story and connect kids with their community of faith.

5. **Read It:** Read the Bible together as a family. God's word is living, and it speaks to even the youngest family members. Some things to be mindful of: Pray, invite God to be a part of this time. Also, consider the Bible translation you will use. Search online for a translation with a reading level your child can understand. After reading, take time for reflection, and ask questions that dig deeper. Questions directed to comprehension—who, what, where. Then ask connection questions—why, what would you do, I wonder. Additionally, small Bible story books are great for the little ones.

Remember that this is always a group activity because we can learn from our kids, too! Listen to them, and take this as a chance to grow in your faith as well.

Who is Edna Ruth Byler ~ Rachel Prichard

Edna Ruth Byler, (1904-1976) was born in Kansas into a Mennonite family. While coming from a simple background and attending a one room school, she went to college and married her professor. They both worked for the Mennonite Central Committee, and it was while on a trip to Puerto Rico together, she saw the needlework of poor women and agreed to market it for them back home. With the help of the MCC, Edna began selling handcrafted products from the trunk of her car, eventually expanding to a storefront called Self Help Crafts in 1958. She wanted to promote sustainable economic opportunities for artisans in developing countries by creating a viable marketplace for their products. Self Help Crafts became Ten Thousand Villages and was inspired by Mennonite values, including compassion, service, mutual aid, and peacemaking. The name was inspired by a quote from Mahatma Gandhi "India is not to be found in its few cities, but in the 700,000 villages".



Ten Thousand Villages is a non-profit, fairtrade organisation selling handcrafted products from more than 120 artisanal groups from 35 countries. It is a founding member of the World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO) and a certified member of the Fair Trade Federation (FTF)

I volunteered for the Ten Thousand Villages' store in New Hamburg, where the head office of the MCC Canada is situated. I loved working there, with the beautiful products - from furniture to linen, from clothing to toys, from ornaments to silver jewellery, from chocolate and coffee to preserved fruit. The artisans are truly gifted and inventive - a substantial number of their products are made from recycled items such as saris (table linen) and bicycle chains (toys) or from natural products such as reeds (baskets). Around school year end we would have children coming in to buy small gifts for their teachers and their parents would admire and sometimes buy the beautiful handknotted Bunyaad rugs from Pakistan. These are truly a work of art and made entirely in one village, where the villagers all play a part in herding and shearing the sheep, spinning,

carding, dying the wool, making the dyes from vegetable products, making the looms, with men, women and teenagers contributing to the rug hooking. I made a point of learning about this so I could explain to our customers what true cooperation it is and how valuable they are.

When MCC Canada closed in 2020, it wasn't because of COVID - the writing was on the wall before that. They were forced out by big box and online stores such as Amazon. I was disappointed on two counts, partly because I loved working there but also because I was concerned about the artisans. I spoke with the store manager and asked what would happen to all those artisans all over the world, losing the Canadian outlet. She explained to me that MCC has workers in all these villages, teaching them how to market their products so they could expand into other developed countries. And when products are ordered from artisans, they are paid half up front and the balance before the products leave the country. There is always a no competition agreement so that they are not competing with another village or artisan. This way the artisans have learned to market their own products so they are not taken advantage of by unscrupulous middle people. There are still several stores in the US and I would encourage you to visit them when you go.

What an amazing woman Edna Ruth Byler was and what an example of the solidarity model, rooted in equality and justice, she fostered with the help of the MCC.

Prison Ministry ~ Catherine Sprowl

On November 4th, I was invited to speak to our Savvy Saints' about Prison Ministry. I was excited because I have always felt that I didn't want this ministry to be done in isolation, outside my relationship with my church. My aim was to build compassion and stir attendees to get curious about how our church might be a bridge of connection, community, and support for the incarcerated, their families, the recently released, and those working directly in prison ministry, inspiring hope and action for a more wholesome community grounded in Jesus Christ.

The presentation included Scripture, story, and art to illustrate Jesus' heart for the broken and marginalized. How he was impacted by the forces that create hunger, poverty, sickness, and incarceration,



becoming arrested, naked, thirsty, and executed himself. How his death and resurrection redeem and liberate us from everything that separates us from God, addressing the full scope of human brokenness, on an individual and social level. How we are forgiven, healed, and transformed to share in God's redemptive work—to rebuild, restore, and renew (Isaiah 61).

We discovered that our church is ideally positioned in a region with a correctional institution—Grand Valley Federal Institution for Women, where I lead faith-based programs under Chaplaincy with Prison Fellowship Canada, and help drive women from the minimum-security unit for escorted temporary absences (ETAs) into the community. Christian spiritual care volunteers do not bring Jesus into the institution but find him in the face of the incarcerated. Walking alongside the women to reinforce the truth that all are beloved, and nothing can separate us from God's love. There is no offence that cannot be forgiven, and some of our darkest times can be used for God's glory.

An overview of prison ministry showed how it can be viewed as a four-level pyramid: 1.) Direct ministry inside; 2.) Ministering from and on the outside (like the ETA opportunity we are hoping to start with our Saturday morning knitting group); 3.) Ministering with no inmate contact (like the Angel Tree Christmas program, check out the poster in the hallway); 4.) Pray, discover, imagine, and maybe even repent.

After the presentation, I was approached by three people interested in volunteering as a driver for our ETA. Praise God! If you'd like to know more about prison ministry, come and chat with me, or go to <https://prisonfellowship.ca> or <https://diohuron.org/ministries/prison-ministry>

Funnies



Word Search

The True Story of Christmas Word Search



Read the story below. Find and circle the words that are **underlined**. The words can appear in any direction: horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backwards.

The True Story of Christmas

More than 2000 years ago, there lived a young woman named Mary. She was preparing to be married to a man named Joseph.

One day, an angel appeared to Mary and said, "Listen! You will soon have a son, and you will name him Jesus. The baby will be holy and will be called the Son of God."

Around the time for Jesus to be born, the Roman rulers ordered everyone to return to their hometown to be counted.

Joseph and Mary had to travel to the town of Bethlehem. When Joseph and Mary arrived at Bethlehem, the town was very crowded. They had to stay where animals were kept.

While they were there, baby Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him with pieces of cloth and placed him in a manger.

That night, in a field near Bethlehem, shepherds were looking after their sheep. An angel appeared to them and said, "I bring you good news of great joy for all people. Today in Bethlehem, a Savior has been born. He is Christ the Lord!" Then many more angels appeared, praising God for the birth of Jesus.

Sometime later, wise men from the east saw a bright, new star in the sky. They knew it was a sign that a great King had been born. The wise men followed the star to look for the child. When they found Jesus, they bowed down, worshiped him and gave him gifts.

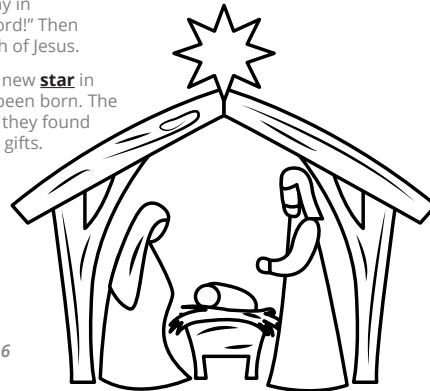
This is the true story of Christmas. Christmas is the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

God sent his Son, Jesus, to be born on earth because he loves us very much.

For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

A	Y	R	A	M	B	I	A	P	A	S	N
N	M	F	E	J	E	J	M	X	H	S	H
G	T	J	M	J	T	U	K	E	V	P	W
E	J	S	E	S	H	D	P	O	E	W	W
L	A	S	F	A	L	H	G	S	O	W	N
C	U	O	H	V	E	A	O	R	G	F	E
S	H	G	F	R	H	J	M	G	A	A	M
Q	T	R	D	V	E	W	L	I	T	T	E
E	E	S	I	W	M	R	V	Y	N	M	S
S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C	J	A	I
M	B	E	I	Q	T	U	U	K	T	M	W
M	A	N	G	E	R	T	T	Q	S	Y	T



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