

Old Malden News



The Parish Magazine of
St John the Baptist, Malden

May 2023

50p

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Old Malden News

**The Parish Magazine of
St John the Baptist Parish Church Malden**
Church Road, Worcester Park KT4 7RY

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Copy date for the magazine is the 15th of the month and
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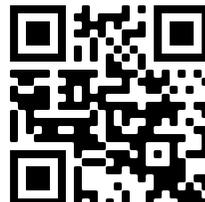
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Tel: 020 8942 8321

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Parish Website:	www.stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk	
Parish Office:	administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk	

To receive the Parish Mailing please scan the
QR code with your smart phone camera



Services for May



St John's is OPEN

St John's is open for worship so please see the Parish Mailing for details Live Streaming of services will continue so you will be able to see services live via our YouTube Channel.

Sunday 8am - Said Eucharist

Sunday 9.45am - Sung Eucharist

Wednesday 11am — Said Eucharist

The midday Eucharist on Wednesdays has been moved to 11am to cater for the Mothers' Union which on the 1st Wednesday of the month will have a coffee morning at 10am followed by the Eucharist at 11am .

Please make sure you are signed up to our mailing list to get up to date information regarding the services.

<http://eepurl.com/gNz4Tf> or scan the QR Code

Vicar's Letter

Alleluia Christ is Risen! So goes the familiar refrain that is part and parcel of worship over the long Easter Season. From the many emails I've received it would appear that this Holy Week and Easter has been an uplifting occasion for many of you. That is very good to hear because whenever we innovate or offer new services or opportunities, it's hard to predict what the uptake will be and whether people will get something out of them. I suppose that is why many parishes just stick to the predictable routine and offer exactly the same thing year after year. But the truth is one size does not fit all, and what may work for one person doesn't appeal to another. Our intention this year was to offer a broad range of different things so that everyone could find something to help them connect with the heart of the Easter message, the new life offered in Christ who has passed through death into glorious new life that is his gift to those who want it. Apart from Easter Day numbers were relatively low through the week, but we were competing with the holiday break for many; nevertheless we had a good crowd for Messy Easter on Palm Sunday and the procession on Good Friday from the Manor made an impact too. Not all changes have suited everyone, but you have given me the benefit of the doubt and we have celebrated Easter with joy. To be honest Jonas' christening and the weather made the day on Easter Sunday, so if someone can have a little one ready for baptism next Easter that would be a bonus!

Alleluia Christ is Risen is also appropriate to St. John's. Holy Week and Easter capped the dark days of Covid and lockdowns as things are finally back to where they were before. Church is full of newcomers and energy. We are enjoying being together again in number as church, and ready to get on with it. The next phase in our life together begins on the 21st May as we hold our Annual Meeting. This is a business meeting as we discuss the past year and look to the future. It is a statutory requirement but also a useful marker to gauge where we are, and more importantly, where we want to go. If you are not already on the Parish Roll please do join as this marks membership of St. John's. It is also

important to attend the AGM if possible in order for your voice to be heard. I would encourage everyone to read the reports and be au fait with what's going on and where we are as a parish for this.

There are many opportunities and roles that need to be filled to help steer us through the year ahead. The Stewardship Team and I are also launching our new campaign for 2023 in order to plan for next year's budget and meet the challenges this year presents with our increased fuel costs and inflationary pressures. We are encouraging everyone who can to join the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), a very helpful means of giving run and supported by the Church of England nationally. Every penny you give comes straight to St. John's and what's more, if you are able to gift aid your donation, the tax you paid comes to us as well within a few days immensely improving our cash flow and easing the complicated reporting/reclaiming burden from our Free Will Offering Gift Aid officer. In the meantime we will continue our weekly and seasonal rhythm of worship and social activities as we move forward together. So do jump in and be part of all that makes this such a special place. Help us help you and continue making a difference!

Michael

A Jordanian Journey - Part 2 - The Romans

The two night stay in Amman embraced a full day of touring which began with a visit to three Desert Castles. Leaving the hill country behind we soon found ourselves on a brown, arid plain dissected by wadis where seasonal streams run. The first of these castles - Qasr al-Kharaneh - is a very impressive and solid fortress standing alone in this inhospitable landscape. It dates from 710/11. It functioned as a hotel and caravanserai in the 12th century and had 61 rooms. It was last used by the Bedouins and their animals. After a thorough exploration of the ruin it was on to Qasr Amra, more a Palace than a castle and again in a remote location. The interior of this was covered with amazing frescoes. There were hot and cold rooms for bathing, a hypocaust and a well with some complex machinery for working it. After the visit, an invitation to a Bedouin tent for a talk about their way of life whilst sipping cinnamon tea. Finally to the castle of Qasr el-Azraq, a 3rd century Roman construction. Lawrence of Arabia stayed here in 1916/18. (More of his desert exploits in Part 4). It includes a mosque in the courtyard and has amazing stone doors at the entrance.

A lengthy drive followed to the north-west, firstly for a lunch of Jordanian specialities and then to the remains of the Roman city of Jerash. This lies in a fertile valley, criss-crossed by streams and very green - a big contrast to the castle sites of the morning. It would have been a convenient stopover point for all the caravans trading in the surrounding area and the Mediterranean. There are traces of settlements dating back to the Bronze and Iron Ages. However, it was the Romans who conquered the area in 64AD and the city enjoyed great prosperity under the rule of the Emperors Trajan and Hadrian.

Jerash was only unearthed around 1880. Its decline started with the fall of the Roman Empire at the end of the third century. Persians, Arabs, and later The Crusaders invaded the city and, although some of these civilisations added to its splendour, the frequent earthquakes eventually led to its complete abandonment in the 13th century. As we will see with Petra the sand and mud which buried it also preserved the layout of the city perfectly. It is very reminiscent of Ephesus in Turkey.

One enters through the impressive Hadrian's Triumphal Arch and is immediately in the colonnaded and unusually elliptical Forum, dating from the 2nd century. This

was the market place (agora) where all trading would have been conducted. It leads on to the street, Cardo Maximus, 800 metres long, lined on both sides with the remains of shops. To one side is the Hippodrome - a vast arena for sporting events. Further on are Temples dedicated to Artemis and Zeus, theatres, baths and a nymphaeum. In Byzantine times the miracle of Jesus turning water into wine was commemorated annually in the Fountain Court. Whether Jesus did visit Jerash is a matter for debate. Much of this is repeated at a higher level route leading back to the entrance. Near this is the South Theatre which could hold 3000 people and has amazing acoustics. A marked place in the arena amplifies the voice which can be easily heard all round the building. By this time some of our group had discovered my musical credentials and bullied me into singing something. I had to give in, but the effect was electrifying. So ended our visit to this fascinating place. We could learn much from these earlier civilisations.

The next day was another early start and before leaving Amman for the long drive to Petra we paid a brief visit to the Citadel. More Roman remains up here, e.g. the 2nd century Hercules Temple, destroyed by an earthquake, and great views over the city. Then south, with a stop to explore the huge castle of Al Kerak, perched on the end of a high rock bluff and dominating the town. The road continued across more desert, at first rather monotonous but, reaching the Dana Nature Reserve, suddenly became more dramatic with incredible rock formations scored by seasonal snow-melt. The altitude here is more than 4000 ft. One stop along the road allowed our guide to point out a barely-discernable track known as the King's Way. This dates back 3000 years and it is said that the King of Edom prevented Moses from travelling along it. (Incidentally, the route followed on this day took us from the Kingdom of the Ammonites, through that of the Moabites to the Kingdom of the Edomites.) A final stop to watch the sunset preceded a meal at a Bedouin settlement before arrival at Petra for a three-night stay.

Barry Eaton.

Intercessions from Mothering Sunday 2023

In the Springtime garden, LORD, Your flowers with dew are glistening -
We thank You for Creation and the promise You are listening.

As Mary brought her Holy Son to you for dedication,
May we remember all who find in motherhood vocation.
For all who, in their nurturing, have made us who we are,
We ask Your blessing, Father, be they near to us, or far.
To those who, struggling, wonder how it is that they will cope
We ask You bring community, and rest, and living hope.
LORD, in Your mercy...

Into the temple went the Holy Family to give
Their vow to bring their precious Son a Godly way to live -
We ask Your wisdom LORD, where our churches are divided -
To bring about a harmony with grace that You provided
And may these mother churches draw to them new people, who,
Perhaps have never known that all they really sought was You.
LORD, in Your mercy...

In Syria and Turkey, in Ukraine and Tanzania,
Across Your world are orphans being made, and even here,
Through conflict and through poverty, disease, malnourishment
This never was Your plan, LORD, in the families You meant
To be each child's beginning - show these little ones You're there,
In charities and foster homes, show them they deserve care -
And where, in sorrow, grieving - a child has lost a mother -
We pray You hold them tenderly and love them like no other.
LORD, in Your mercy...

Each of us bear burdens, but You hear us, Father kind
As we bring before You all the ailments of mind
And body rendering hard the lives and futures we would live.
We want to know Your touch and the healing you can give.
But help us., LORD, above all else, our own wills to surrender,
As, trusting in Your sovereignty, to You our hopes we tender
We give You those who have entrusted us to offer prayers
And ask that health and liberty in every way be theirs.
LORD, in Your mercy...

New flowers show their brightness - leave behind the wintry earth,
Reminding us, dear Father of Your concept of rebirth
We ask for joy and blessing for those who went before
And pray for those who, left behind, await that blessed shore,

Neia Glynn

St John's Knitting & Crochet Group will be meeting
on the last Thursday afternoon of the month (25th May)
in the Church Coffee Lounge.

Bring your knitting or crochet and enjoy a cup of tea (or
two) with cake and biscuits.

Marilyn





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Regular Giving by Direct Debit

The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) is a secure and simple way of giving to St John's on a regular monthly basis (or quarterly or annually if you prefer). It works by making a Direct Debit from your bank account on the 1st of the month, which is credited to our parish bank account by the 10th of the month. If eligible, you can opt to add Gift Aid and PGS claims this on our behalf, passing it back to St John's which benefits our cash flow.

Optional Annual Increases

If you opt to increase your gift annually, PGS will write to you and advise you of the new amount. If this is acceptable you don't need to do anything, but you can choose to add more or to decrease the amount if you wish. If the majority of our planned givers were to opt for this, it would have a huge impact on our finances. Like many churches, one of the problems we face is that of 'static giving', often through inertia rather than intention.

One-Off Giving

It is also possible to make a one-off gift online and add Gift Aid if you are eligible. Instead of setting up a new Direct Debit, you use a debit or credit card, Apple Pay or Google Pay. Scan the QR code to get started.

Three ways you can set up a regular gift with PGS

- The simplest way is online. Visit our PGS website page shorturl.at/bopP5 or scan the QR code above.
- By phone: 0333 002 1271, Monday to Friday 9.00am-5.00pm
- By post using the application form at the back of church

You will need your bank details to set up the Direct Debit and, for phone or postal applications, St John's unique parish code **370637139**.

**Thank you for considering this option in your support of
St John's**



St John the Baptist Old Malden

Dear Friends of St. John's,

There is much to be thankful for here at Church. **The number of people attending Sunday services and our varied activities have finally returned to pre-pandemic levels.** Things feel normal again! Unfortunately as we all know, we are living through a difficult time with the cost of living crisis and burgeoning energy costs. Thanks to our Red Envelope stewardship drive in 2021, we had **6 new individuals/households** join the stewardship scheme. This saw an increase of £4,000 a year of brand new giving. Another £3,500 was raised by generous donors increasing their giving. This has slowed the spending of our limited financial reserves (£50,000) on which we are reliant to pay our Parish Share to the Diocese as well as cover our bills. Due to current circumstances we are looking at a **deficit of £20,000** this year which, unless our situation improves, will come from these reserves. We have been hard hit by energy prices and inflation. Our finite reserves are needed to help us attract grants to begin the Restoration Project of the Church building's deteriorating fabric, as we need to prove our own financial stake and commitment to completing the project.

More importantly our **viability as a parish is in question.** For several years we have been using reserves simply to pay the bills, but when that money is gone we will no longer be able to pay our way. We have a **large membership (120 on the Parish Roll)** and should in theory be able to meet all our financial commitments. At the moment the **overwhelming majority of our income comes from 15 individual/household donors.** **Our goal is to add at least 20 new regular givers** this year to help spread the load and put us on a more stable footing financially. It is a big ask and no one should feel compelled to give beyond their means. We have made cuts where possible and will continue to do so as appropriate.

People don't come to Church to be squeezed for money, but there is this notion that someone out there (*ie: the National Church, the Diocese, or even the King*) pays for parish churches across the land. This is simply not true and St. John's depends on what we all can give in our time, talents, financial resources, and what the fundraising team can raise. **We need to share the burden and meet the challenge!**

Your support enables us to build on our service to the community (*Tea and Chat, Sunday Lunch Club, our two toddler groups, and the Bereavement Café*) offering more opportunities to meet needs here in our local community. It also enables us to grow our worship and learning as we seek to renew and enrich our worship to be engaging for all ages and stages of faith. We need to continue sharing our faith with our younger generation and develop new and interesting ways to explore faith and the difference it can make in our lives. With the right resources we could go beyond the occasional Messy Church and have a Parish Playweek in the summer holidays. We could have more involvement with the children of our own Church school and engage with Malden Manor Primary School through activities and learning. In short we could do much more, but we need to meet our financial commitments and have the resources to do more. That vision of the future depends entirely on what we collectively as a Church community can give. **If you are not a member of the Stewardship scheme, please do seriously consider joining as together we can make a greater impact.**

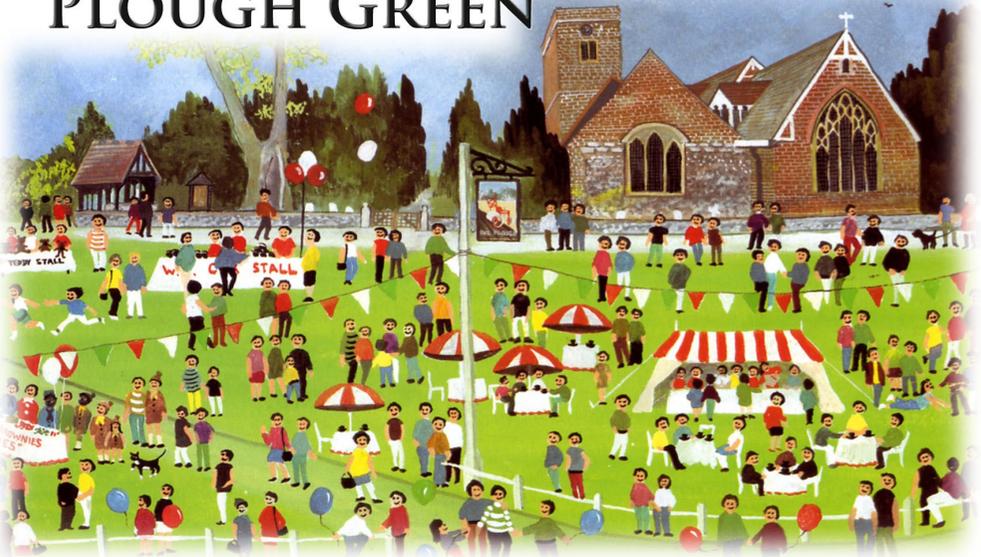
Please return your Pledge Card whatever you pledge to give, by Pentecost Sunday to be entered into the draw for a gift basket of goodies from Betty's Tea Shop of Harrogate courtesy of the Vicar!

With Every Blessing

Michael

MAELDUNE FAIR

PLOUGH GREEN



Saturday 24th June

*We need your help to stock the stalls at the fair.
Could you provide something from this list?*

- ◆ Cakes ◆ Jams & Chutneys ◆ Bottles (full)
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- ◆ Stationery ◆ Modern paperback Books
- ◆ Items from the Fair Trade Stall for our Hamper prize

**WE ALSO NEED HELP ON THE DAY TO SET UP
EARLY AND TAKE DOWN AT 3PM**

***As one of our major fundraisers, your help will be
much appreciated. Offers to Debra - 07769 048603***



As many of you will know, St John's has supported Romania since 1992 - the really bad times when Romania was recovering from the Ceausescu devastation. In more recent times we have been supporting the Romanian Aid Foundation and Asociatia Neemia in Romania where life and conditions continue to be difficult. So it was with great sadness that I received the latest news and update. I share it with you:

'The past month has been a particularly significant one in the life of RoAF and AN; a month during which we have encountered some opposition, uncertainty and stress. As regular supporters will recall, new controls governing the import of goods into Romania came into force last year. There was initially some doubt as to how our established practices would be affected but it is now clear that some significant changes are required. The most significant changes concern the range of goods that we can import as aid, and therefore free of import duties. A second change places limits on the people and groups that we can donate items to. The Prayer Notes and the website set out these changes in more detail.

One change in particular will be a particular disappointment to the ladies, and gentlemen, of the many groups who have been sending knitted items such as blankets and baby clothes. It is with regret that we now have to decline these items. The 'Great Knits' page has been withdrawn from our website but I intend to re-instate it in due course as an historical record of the skill and generosity of so many people. Thank you to all our great knitters; we trust that you will find an equally worthy outlet for your efforts.

Our list of acceptable items has been revised, with the deletion of those items that would complicate our transport arrangements. Some items require special labelling or certification, or to be documented in a particular way. Other items have potential liability implications. Given the potential customs complications and the general improvement in conditions in our area we have decided that continuing with our previous wide range of items is no longer necessary or viable.

We would like to take this opportunity to, once again, express our sincere thanks to all those who have loyally supported RoAF and AN for many years. We wait on God for his guidance as how to best continue with our involvement in the years to come.'

I hope that we shall be able to find another outlet and good causes to support. If you have any ideas, please let me know.....

Marilyn

The Road to Emmaus ?

I will start by giving this brief note some context. Last Easter, as we returned from a holiday in Hustanton, we needed a drink, so we stopped at an English Heritage site called Denny Abbey – just north of Cambridge. It also functioned as a museum of East Anglian farming. We did not wish to spend time looking around, all we wanted was a coffee. A very understanding lady let us in and we had our coffee and a very nice home made hot cross bun. So, this Easter, having been to Hunstanton again, we were looking forward to another visit to Denny Abbey. However, when we arrived, the lady was less than understanding and said we would need to pay full entry charges before we could procure our coffee!! Then, relenting somewhat, she suggested that we should take the road to Emmaus! There we would find Joan's café.

“Where is that?”

Just carry on along the A10 towards Cambridge and you will see it. Off we went and shortly saw a vague sign pointing towards the “Emmaus Project.” It transpires that this is a project to help the homeless, but what a project. Spread out over a considerable area – acres rather than back gardens – was a large facility. Masses of car parking, many vans and trucks advertising Emmaus, a number of what I assume were single occupancy rooms (for the homeless) etc. Altogether, it was a cross between KACH, the tip at Villiers Road, but only the bit where recycling went on, a jumble sale and a car boot sale. There were special sites for donations, for electrical goods, for bicycles and lawn mowers and, still we walked on, looking for Joan. Eventually we found the café. All a bit ramshackle, but a nice coffee and a pastry and all around were people who were working in the various areas and who I assume, had a job there and an address there and hence were able to get into the security system.

Having had our coffee, which was at one end of a long temporary facility, we walked through the remainder and found areas for chine, glass, books, kitchen equipment/utensils, furniture, paintings etc. You name it and you could get it there and it was all donated.

Overall, you could see the results of a very successful charitable organisation as you walked around and we were very impressed.

Might this be God...?

Could this be God then,
when the rugged old oak
splashes rain on my head?

Or when the brisk wind
snatches at my hair
and lifts the load from my back?

Might this be God then
when the lime tree scatters
the earth with luminous yellow hearts?

Or when the scarlet rose hips
glossy with dew, spread
the power of peace within me?

Could this truly be God then
when wind, leaves, earth and rain
create in me this happiness?

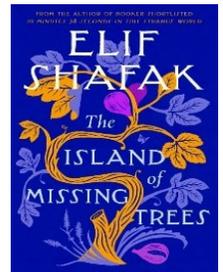
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St John's Reading Group

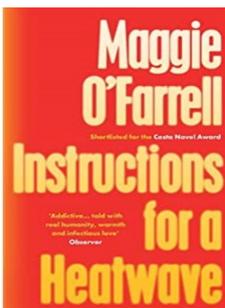
May 2023

Our latest book to review was Elie Shafak's novel, **'The Island of Missing Trees'**. The background to this novel is the division of Cyprus in 1974 when a Turkish girl falls in love with a Greek man. Like a Romeo and Juliet story.

Jump forward to the late 2010s when Kostas is burying a fig tree in his garden to over-winter. By this time, his wife Defne has died, and Kostas is living in north London with his young daughter Ada. When Aunt Meryem arrives from Cyprus, relationships change for the better – the fig tree has its own take on life. This is a beautiful book with love, relationships, interesting characters, and nature described with great care. We learn how Kostas and Ada come to terms with their grief and how Ada is able to establish her own identity. As winter ends and the fig tree is dug up, there is new life for the tree and for Kostas and Ada. A story of hope and renewal. An average score of 8/10 and to be recommended.



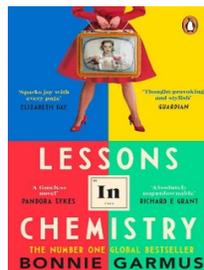
Our choice for May is Maggie O'Farrell's novel, **'Instructions for a Heatwave'** set in those heady days of 1976 when drought and hosepipe bans were the talk of the day. When Robert Riordan goes out to buy a newspaper, there is great consternation when he does not return.



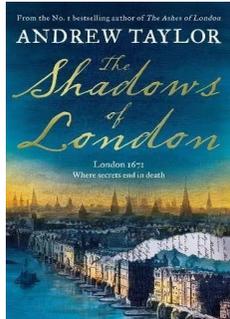
The family is in turmoil – what is the explanation? What does his wife know about his disappearance? Gretta and Robert's three children – such interesting characters – try to discover where Robert has gone but

they each have their own personal problems which they are trying to juggle at the same time. There is humour and great sadness too but it is an addictive read. You will find it difficult to put down. I loved it!

For the following month we have selected the top seller **Lessons in Chemistry** by Bonnie Garmus. It has been described as ‘smart, funny, joyous and powerful’ and is ‘the story of an unconventional female scientist with a quiet game-plan to change the world’.



The latest novel by Andrew Taylor is entitled **The Shadows of London** and it is the sixth in the series. We have enjoyed following James Marwood and Cat Lovett in their pursuit of solving crime in post-Restoration 17th century London.



The capital is still recovering from the devastating fire of 1666 and re-adjusting to the reign of a new monarch, Charles II. Still in hardback at present, we await its arrival in paperback!

Our next Reading Group meeting will be on **Thursday 4th May 2023** at 8.00pm in the Church Coffee Lounge

Marilyn



**There are boxes on the church porch bench for
your donations to the Foodbank.**

**Foodbanks are now vital to so many people
and our support is really important.**

Please donate if you are able.

500g bags of rice
pot noodles
Instant mash (packets are better)
Tinned potatoes
Tinned spaghetti
Tinned meat (including chicken, ham , beef)
Small bottles of squash
small pasta sauce
Tinned vegetables
Small packets of biscuits
Extras including : ketchup, mayo, pickle, small bottles of oil, mayonnaise,
pickled beetroot.
Shampoo shower gel
Toilet rolls



Bereavement Café

Thank you to everyone who supported the Bereavement Cafe through the Co-op community Charity scheme! You raised over £1,100! The next meeting will be in the coffee lounge at St. John's on Tuesday 16th May 2:00- 3:30pm. We have been very fortunate to be trained and supported by Princess Alice Hospice, who will continue to work with us to provide this needed service for our community.



With things opening up again please help raise much-needed donations for St John's Old Malden - Repairs Fund when you plan ahead and arrange things to do! From booking staycations and getaways to tickets for concerts or other fun activities, remember to use #easyfundraising to raise FREE donations for us. Book now: <http://efraising.org/fx3w1QPP7u>

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