



## CAROLS AND DESSERT Christmas Concert

*Saturday, December 16, at 5:00 pm*

The annual St. James Christmas concert, Carols and Dessert, will take place on Saturday, December 16, at 5 p.m., in the St. James sanctuary. Celebrate the Advent and Christmas season by joining us for a musical program of vocal and handbell choirs, instrumentalists, soloists, and audience carols. Be sure to stay after the concert for fellowship and dessert. All are welcome. Bring a friend!

Sunday, December 3 & 10– 8:30 am

**Advent Workshops**  
during 8:30 & 9:30 Sunday School times

*All are welcome to join us in the Youth Lounge for stories, crafts and games to prepare for the birth of our Savior!*

Saturday, December 16 – 5:00 pm

**Carols and Dessert**  
*No 5:00 pm worship service.*

Sunday, December 17 – 8:30 am

**Sunday School Christmas Pageant**

Sunday, December 17 – 10:45 am

**Advent 3 Service with Lesson and Carols**

Wednesday, December 20 – 6:30 pm

**Presentation of Live Nativity with Caroling**



## Christmas Worship Schedule

4 Advent

Saturday, December 23

*No Worship service*

December 24

10:00 am

Christmas Eve, December 24

3:00 pm Family Service with Holy Communion

5:00, 7:00, 11:00 pm

Candlelight Services with Holy Communion

Christmas Day, December 25

*No Worship service*

December 30 Saturday

*No Worship service*

Sunday, December 31

10:00 am

WORSHIP SCHEDULE: Saturday at 5:00 pm & Sunday at 8:30 & 10:45 am

8:30 am is LIVESTREAMED ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL

## From the Pastor



Advent is coming, literally. *Adventus* is a Latin word meaning coming, or arrival. We are waiting for Advent – for Advent, the season of waiting. “What are you waiting for?” is a question Advent asks you and me. And so we wait. We might wait in hope, or in fear, or in expectation, or even in boredom. But Advent calls us to wait in faith, and to get ready, to prepare, and make use of the time.

Consider this parable, as told by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks:

A young man, having troubled over the question, asks his father: “Why does the Messiah not come? Maybe in former times the Jews were not ready, but now, having endured the Holocaust and returned to Israel, surely they are ready.”

“I will tell you, my son,” said the Rebbe. “How could the Messiah come? Consider: if he were a *hassid* of one sect, the *hassidim* of the other sects would not recognize him. If he were a *hassid* of any kind, the *mitnagdim*, their opponents,

would not recognize him. If he were Orthodox, the Reform Jews would not recognize him. If he were religious, the secular Jews would not recognize him. How then can he come?

“And now,” continued the Rebbe, “I will tell you a great secret.” The Rebbe dropped his voice to a whisper. “*It is not we who are waiting for the Messiah. It is the Messiah who is waiting for us. He has been here all the time. It is we who are not yet ready for him.*”

What would it take to be ready for the Messiah? It might mean doing things differently. It might mean foregoing the rush-rush-rush of the holiday season: doing less, purchasing less, and in its place finding time and space for reflection, for quiet, for preparing our lives for the arrival of Christ’s coming – not at some far, distance point in time, but now.

We value “filling the calendar” rather than “creating empty time.” What about Advent waiting as being a time for prayer, for reading, writing, reflection? These contemplative practices are suited for Advent waiting, Advent hope, and Advent expectation.

While Advent calls us to wait and prepare for the coming of Christ, Advent is not about preparing our homes as much as it is preparing our hearts: “Am I ready to meet Christ who comes to me in the form of my *neighbor*?” That is, in the form of the one who needs my help, my support, my presence.

### ST. JAMES STAFF

Peter Narum, Pastor	Cell: 469-9625
Michelle Lichty	Parish Administrator
Barb Roberts	Office Assistant
Susan Zimmer	Office Assistant
Barb Roberts	Card Ministry
Holly Parker	Director of Children & Family Ministries
Laura Smith	Director of Confirmation
Paulette Spoon	Adult Choir & Handbell Choir
Susan Bubolz	Youth Choir Director
Rhonda Chalone,	Accompanists
Jim Erickson, Carol Murphy	
Barb Rasmussen, R.N.	Parish Nurse/Visitation Coord.
Heather Pearl	Director, St. James Preschool
Holly Parker, Kari Poppen	St. James Preschool
Nicole Sudhoff, Kristin Wills & Stacy Zimmerman	

### CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Julie Murphy, President	608-345-8533
Dennis Beres, Vice-President	608-845-9305
Karen Breitnauer, Secretary	608-209-3035
Kim Feller, Treasurer	608-206-4562
Rob Frederick	
Christine Kemnitz	608-886-6363
Mark Smith	608-214-2212
Rebecca Woolums	847-894-8344
Susan Martin-Zernicke	608-246-2025



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

Your *neighbor*, in Christian terms, is the one through whom God calls you, speaks to you, makes demands on you. That is the great seriousness and great blessedness of the Advent: Christ is standing at the door, Christ who lives in the form of a human being among us. Will you close the door or open it?

I close with a portion of a letter written to his fiancée by the Lutheran pastor and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer, executed by the Nazis in April of 1945. It was sent to from Tegel prison:

*I think we're going to have an exceptionally good Christmas. The very fact that every outward circumstance precludes our making provision for it will show whether we can be content with what is truly essential. I used to be very fond of thinking up and buying presents, but now that we have nothing to give, the gift God gave us in the birth of Christ will seem all the more glorious; the emptier our hands, the better we understand what Luther meant by his dying words: "We're beggars; it's true." The poorer our quarters, the more clearly we perceive that our hearts should be Christ's home on earth.*

Dear Jesus, may your light shine in the darkness. Amen.

—Pastor Peter

## Council Update

Hello St James Family,

I would like to give a quick update on the process as we begin on calling our next Pastor to St James. We are in the preparation phase of this process and we have two major pieces to complete during this phase. The first piece decided by the council was to have the Synod appoint a full-time interim pastor. However, due to staffing shortages across southern Wisconsin we may be appointed only a part-time pastor. The good news is that after speaking with the Synod, they do have an interim they would like the Council to meet within the next few weeks.



The second piece is to form a transition team which will work side by side with the interim pastor to prepare the congregation for our next pastor and identify the type of leader who needs to be called to our church. Members of this team should represent a wide cross section of the church including people of different ages and various lengths of time at the church. Council will appoint members to this team at their November 28 meeting.

This transition phase is a time for prayer and discernment, not only about our next pastor, but also about our congregation's mission and future. A pastoral call is not a simple hire, but the beginning of a long spiritual relationship with a pastor and congregation. The process could take 2-3 months or 4-8 months or even longer. The timing is unknown at this point but know we are making a very important decision in our church lives and good things come to those who wait!

If you have more concerns or wish to share your thoughts or worries, anyone from council, including myself, is available to talk or listen.

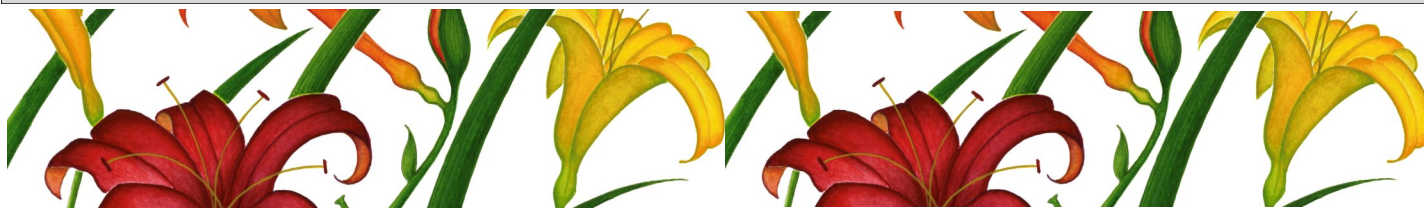
In the weeks and months to come, please remember this transition and call process in your prayers.

God's Blessings to all,

Julie Murphy

Congregational Council President

# St. James Lutheran Church Operational Budget Update thru October 31, 2023



	Oct YTD 2023 <u>Actual</u>	Oct YTD 2023 <u>Budget</u>	Favorable/(Unfavorable) <u>Variance</u>	%	Oct YTD 2022 <u>Actual</u>	Favorable/(Unfavorable) <u>Variance</u>	%
YTD Receipts	\$566,681	\$598,245	(\$31,564)	-5.3%	\$567,941	(\$1,260)	-0.2%
YTD Expenses	<u>\$609,514</u>	<u>\$638,594</u>	<u>\$29,080</u>	+4.6%	<u>\$599,014</u>	<u>(\$10,500)</u>	1.8%
YTD Net (Loss)	<u>(\$42,833)</u>	<u>(\$40,349)</u>	<u>(\$2,484)</u>		<u>(\$31,073)</u>	<u>(\$11,760)</u>	

## Current State

The financials show that we are on track from a budget perspective to date in being behind budget overall by just \$2,500 on a net basis thru October. This also shows that our giving is running behind budget by 5% thru October but that lower than budgeted expenses have helped to offset most of the giving shortfall.

In comparing to the prior year, we can see that our giving is on pace with the prior year but that even with controlled spending, expenses are running 2% higher than last year. Thank you to all for your generous giving support of the mission of St. James so far this year.

## Future State

The church year giving history trends for higher giving levels in November and December to close out the year. This occurs as we enter the holiday season, for year-end tax deductions, and other personal reasons. November and December are very important giving months in the St. James church year and this year is no different as your generous contributions will fulfill a balanced budget to support the mission and vision here at St. James for 2023. Thank you very much for your support and if possible, please consider increasing your church giving by 5%-10% or more to end the year strong. To illustrate, the following are the budgeted offering contributions for remainder of 2023:

<u>General Fund Offering</u>	<u>2023 Actual</u>	<u>2023 Budget</u>	<u>2022 Actual</u>
September	\$35,991	\$45,000	\$38,669
October	\$35,354	\$41,000	\$35,269
November		\$53,000	\$64,647
December		\$73,000	\$64,297

As you can see, for November and December combined, the budgeted offerings are \$40,000 higher than the September and October total. This matches the historical giving pattern for our congregation as last year the November and December combined offerings totaled \$129,000 which was \$55,000 higher giving than September and October last year. Increased giving in November and December is important to live out our strong mission. Together we can do this again and your prayerful and thoughtful generous giving is greatly appreciated! As Pastor Peter has creatively introduced the 2024 Stewardship theme, it also holds true in 2023....

**“Consider the Lilies.** That is, consider the gift that is your life – your life created by God, redeemed by Jesus, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. All gifts...now, and forever.”

With Gratitude and God’s Blessing, Kim Feller, Treasurer

# Congregational Life

## Women of St. James Bake Sale & Luncheon - Thank You!

The Women of St. James Board extends a big thank you to the St. James family for making the 2023 Bake Sale and Luncheon a huge success. The funds raised are to support the Women of St. James mission of providing funding to church and community programs that benefit women, children, and families. The event raised over \$4,000 this year and with the additional \$750 Thrivent donation that comes from members who invest in Thrivent, a total of \$4,750 is available for many causes. Examples include supporting the Badger Prairie Needs Network, sponsoring several families at Christmas as selected by the VASD social workers, purchasing Bibles for the St. James Youth, contributing to the annual Women's Retreat, providing High School scholarships to two graduating seniors, and support to the quilting and prayer shawl ministries.



Lynnea & Lori Krajco bake lefse

The annual event includes generous baked good donations from so many of the St. James members and would not be possible without this wide group of strong support. The bake sale included over 90 packages of lefse and over 100 bags of pfefferneusse along with dozens of krumkake and pies. This thank you also extends to the dedicated group of women (and expert dishwashers Jim and Mark) that volunteered at the luncheon and bake sale event, the St. James Office in helping to

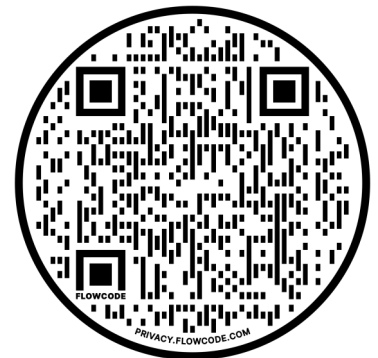
## Thanksgiving Outreach

**Thank you!** We raised nearly \$5,000 and donated that to the Badger Prairie Needs Network for their Thanksgiving meal outreach effort.

**We also donated 14 coats to the Madison Area Jail Ministry.** Thank you very much for your support, kindness, generosity, and sharing the grace and love of Jesus with those often overlooked and forgotten. For more information on that ministry, visit [www.madisonjailministry.com](http://www.madisonjailministry.com).

## St. James Men's Ministry

Hello Men of St. James! We are looking to start a Men's Ministry group here at church. The focus of this group will be to create one primary group with many activities. Activities would range from conversation groups, bible studies, service inside and outside the church, conversations over breakfast or dinner, game nights etc. Some activities will be Christ centered, while some would be a social gathering. In order for this to be successful and something geared to what you may want to see, we have come up with a survey to get your input. So please take a moment to scan the QR Code and answer the questions. In the meantime please keep an eye out for some in person gatherings. Thank you for your time. Rob Frederick. [rdcrkr@chours.net](mailto:rdcrkr@chours.net)



### Men's Group

**Due to Labor Day, the Men's group will meet on Monday, December 4 at 6:00 pm** (typically the first Monday of the month) at Paddy Mac's located at 608 W Verona Avenue. All are welcome.

### Quilting Group

The Quilters meet the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 9:00 am. Interested members are invited to attend.

# Confirmation

Congratulations to these 13 students who celebrated their Affirmation of Baptism on October 29th! They and their families enjoyed a lovely banquet on Wednesday evening, and cake after the service on Sunday. Thanks to all of you who have supported them along the way!



Front Row: Hazel Anna Woods, Emma Irene Eckmayer, Gabrielle Zella Taft, Tillie Renee Heitz, Isobel Rose Kindschi, Kailyn Elizabeth Jacobson, Elliot James Gabrielski

Back Row: Luke Henry Person, Parker Daniel Sobczak, Jenna Anne Heil, Pastor Peter, Benjamin Edward Calahan, Sawyer Clark Hillstead, Caden Thomas Jonjak

## 2023-24 Confirmation Team

Laura Smith, Confirmation Director, Pastor Peter Narum, Mark Smith, Karen Breitnauer, Joleen Rau, and Holly Parker

## Join Us!

We are always looking for more volunteers to lend a hand! Sharing even just an hour or two a month will greatly benefit the students and other teachers...and will be rewarding for you as well! You don't need to be an expert - we are a supportive group who learns and grows together and along with the students. Contact Laura at [confirmation@stjamesverona.org](mailto:confirmation@stjamesverona.org) with questions.

# Youth Group

Third Wednesday of Each Month

6:00 – 7:30 pm

The St. James High School Mentorship Team will be hosting Youth Group again this year! All 4th through 12th graders are welcome to attend. Join in fun activities on the third Wednesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 pm. Pizza will be served. The next Youth Group meeting is on December 20. We will be participating in a Live Nativity (outdoors)!



The group made pies for the Bakesale last month!

## Thank You Women of St. James



We extend big thank you to the Women of St. James for putting the Word of God in our children's hands. The time, energy and funds you generously give to help our children learn the stories of His love are greatly appreciated!



# Children, Youth & Families



## Advent Workshops on December 3rd & 10th

During 8:30 & 9:30 Sunday School times

All are welcome to join us in the Youth Lounge for stories, crafts and games to prepare for the birth of our Savior!



## Annual Pop-Up Christmas Pageant December 18 during 8:30 worship

The interactive format is fun for all generations and allows everyone in attendance to participate...or just sit back and enjoy...it's up to you! You can simply pick a prop when you arrive at church, proceed to the altar when your prop is called, then join in a traditional Christmas hymn before returning to your seat. The service will also feature special musical performances by St. James children & youth. Join us for fellowship in the Dining Room after the service!

### Contact Information

Those interested in specific roles can contact the following leaders:

#### Acting and speaking roles

Katie at [wallacek@verona.k12.wi.us](mailto:wallacek@verona.k12.wi.us)

#### Greeters and Prop Crew

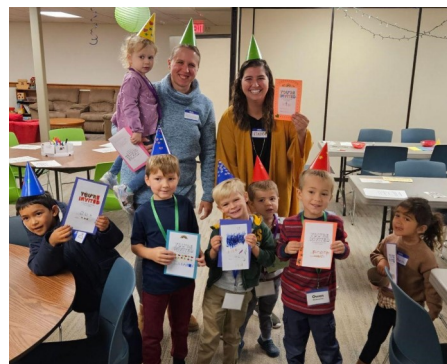
Holly at [hparker@stjamesverona.org](mailto:hparker@stjamesverona.org)

#### Ushers

Laura at [confirmation@stjamesverona.org](mailto:confirmation@stjamesverona.org)

## Sunday School Fall Highlights

We've had a blast exploring Bible stories and our faith through hands-on adventures, crafts, games and more!





## THANK YOU CYF Volunteers!



We have been blessed with many generous volunteers this fall and would like to take a moment to thank them. We know their lives are very busy and appreciate the time and energy they are investing in our children and youth!

**Sunday School** - Diana Bhatoya, Nikki Bradley, Dan Bubolz, Brienne Carlson, Gretchen Cassidy, Elizabeth Chizeck, Addison Edge, Jillian Fose, Landis Heitz, Tillie Heitz, Teresa Hoffman, Kendra Johnson, Diane, Julian Murphy, Danielle Nelson, Brittany Nyenhuis, Nicole Osten, Chloe Parker, Lori Rudy, Laura Sampson, Lizzy Smith, Claire Sommers, Barbara Thomas, Katie Wallace, Jonathan Woolums, Rebecca Woolums.

**Confirmation** - Karen Breitnauer, Joleen Rau, Laura Smith, Mark Smith **Youth Group** - Landis Heitz, Jaydon Hillstead, Chloe Parker, Cody Parker, Emma Parker, Cindi Stampfli, Jackson Stampfli, Will Wallace

**Join the fun!** Volunteers are essential in providing quality faith formation opportunities for our children and youth. As a volunteer you can help fill young hearts with love and hope of Jesus...and in doing so, fill your own heart as well! Here are some ways you can receive, grow and give with us:

- Sunday School - Lead or assist a story, craft or game station or supervise small groups as they rotate through stations. (1-2x/month)
- Confirmation - Lead or assist classes on Sunday mornings (1-2x/month)
- Youth Group - High schoolers are welcome to join the High School Mentorship Team, adults can donate food or supplies, or help supervise.
- Mission Trips - Coordinate or help coordinate a trip!
- Service Projects - If you have ideas or would like to lead a project, please let us know!

Have other ideas or gifts to share? Please reach out!



## Thank You Club Connect

Thank you to our 5th & 6th Grade Club Connect students for cleaning up the Giving Garden. Your service is appreciated!

## From the Parish Nurse...

It's hard to believe the year is almost over, but December is a very busy time for most of us. We have the most important time, that of Jesus' Birthday and most of us are more than busy getting ready for Christmas celebrations at church and in our homes with families. Some of us are planning on traveling near and far to be with loved ones. Remember to pace yourselves. Get plenty of sleep, eat food that's good for you, exercise, and limit your alcohol. Don't be afraid to say "No", so that you don't overextend your generosity.


Be aware how you are feeling physically, emotionally, and mentally. For many people, the darker days of fall and winter trigger what is called SAD, or Seasonal Affective Disorder. As Christians, honoring our mission of, **Receive, Grow, Give**, we have an opportunity to reach out to those who are more isolated and alone this Holiday Season and beyond. It not only helps others, but ourselves as well.

Some symptoms of SAD may be: Feeling sad or having a depressed mood; Loss of interest of pleasure in activities once enjoyed; Changes in appetite; Change in sleep; Loss of energy or increased fatigue despite sleeping more hours. Consider contacting your care provider if symptoms begin to escalate. It is a positive move to treat your symptoms if warranted.

Beside the things mentioned above, prioritize social activities. There is a causal relationship between social isolation and depression. Try to reach out to another person and in that way, it helps them by helping yourself. Zoom calls with another, phone call and meet for cocoa or coffee, meet at church for service and coffee hour. Be sure you are getting enough Vitamin D. Sunlight, Supplements, and what is called "Bright Light Therapy". Typically, 20 to 30 minutes sitting in front of the box each day will possibly alter a change in your brain that boosts your mood and elevates symptoms of SAD. Always check with your health care provider before beginning supplements and whether a light therapy box is right for you. Keep a strict schedule involving when to go to bed and when to get up and when and what to eat. Lastly, let the light in!!! I'm not only implying open your curtains and let as much early light in each day, but Pray on a regular basis. Remember," Our Lord is the Light of the World and through Him, all things are possible."

God's Blessings,

Barbara Rasmussen, RN., Parish Nurse



### Blood Pressure Checks

We will hold the next blood pressure check will be held on December 10 after the 8:30 am service. All are welcome!



St. James  
Community  
Meal

### Community Meal

Wednesday, December 6 at 6:00 pm

The menu is Chili dogs with onions, cheese, relish, mustard and even ketchup! French fries, Relish tray, Christmas cookies, coffee, milk, lemonade and water. ***There is no need to register in advance.*** Skip the cooking and join us for dinner!



**The Prayer Shawl Ministry gathers the first and third Wednesdays of each month at St. James. All are welcome to join!**

The Prayer Shawl Ministry workshops are the first & third Wednesday of the month at St. James from 9:30-11:30. Please join us for fellowship, laughter, knitting and crocheting. There is yarn and directions at the Welcome Center and all are welcome to join in.



## Preschool News

### *Updates:*

Bucky Books: We are done selling Bucky Books. Thank you to everyone who bought one. We appreciate your support.

### *2024-2025 Preschool Registration:*

We have already been planning ahead to the 2024-2025 school year. It is looking like we will have very limited spots open due to current and legacy families. If you are a church member and are at all interested in enrolling your child in our preschool, please reach out to Heather Pearl ASAP by emailing her at [sjp@stjamesverona.org](mailto:sjp@stjamesverona.org) or calling her at 608-845-6922. Registration will open to all new families late January.



### *Preschool Happenings:*

In October, we hosted our annual Trick-or-Treat event for our students and their siblings. We handed out Halloween “treats” to over 100 kids. Families also had the opportunity to stick around for crafts and fellowship. Our staff costume this year was Sesame Street characters.



# PARISH NOTES

If you have someone that you would like to add to this prayer list please email ([office@stjamesverona.org](mailto:office@stjamesverona.org)) or call the church office (845-6922) or fill out a form which can be found at the Welcome Center at St. James.



We remember our members in our prayers, especially Rob, Emma, Anna, Jon, Darlene Brewer, Carol Couillard, Loretta Docken, Diane Maurer, Monica Pechan, Esther Wing & Larry Yeske.

We also remember Bruce & Pearlene (sister and brother-in-law of Karen Wolf) Kimberly Choi (daughter of Norma Bader), Dorothy (mother of Sue Zernicke), Dustin Olmschenk (nephew of Nancy Steinemann), Everette Reynolds (granddaughter of Dave & Sandy Saether), Sharon Schwinn (sister of Mary Moldenhauer) Charlene Tolmie (mother of Chery Vroman), Mary Volker, (sister of John Volker), Dave Wolf (nephew of Doug Wolf), Archer Yob (great-nephew of Renata Henry), and friends, Camille, Cindi, Dawn, Erin & family, Sue, Susan Kennedy, Susi, Leo, and Debbie Loughrin.

Sacrament of Christian Baptism: Rhett Brian Maurer, son of Jacob & Heidi (Disch) Maurer, on November 18, 2023.

Christian Sympathy is extended to the family of Betty Burgenske as they mourn her death, to the family of Samuel "Jack" Hoffman as they mourn his death, to the family of Michelle Johnson as they mourn the

death of her brother, Andrew J. Bryant, to the family of Julie Farmer as they mourn the death of her brother, Corny Favor, and to the families of Phyllis Benson, Cheryl Latsch, and Harriet Instefjord as they mourn their deaths.

**In Residence:** Four Winds - Zelma Danna; Noel Manor—Dick & Helen Dignan, Lorena Gerbitz, Dale & Audrey Hagen, James Hatch, Lloyd Hornbacher, Marilyn Le Moine, Jim & Candace Nerge, Carol & Jim Path, Peggy Papenfus, Chuck & Marilyn Rour, John Scharer, Jim Schumann and Charles & Gloria Widish. Crossroads Care Center of Sun Prairie - Kay Hankins.

**Serving in the Military:** Gavin Bazala, Wyatt Breitnauer, Bryan & Hannah Tordoff, Judy Watters, and Evan Spoon.

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