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Happy New Year!

Connecting People to Christ



The Church at Antioch

Bible-based, Christ-centered, Holy Spirit-led, Mission-bound • Fellowship, Evangelism, Doctrine, Stewardship

October-December 2017

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Congratulations to Sis. Maggie McCollum

Few people who give their tithes and offerings by debit card at the end of worship services know that the person handling the transactions is not only a Georgia Golden (Senior) Olympics Gold Medalist but a National Senior Games gold medalist. Sis. Maggie McCollum won five gold medals during the National Senior Olympics held in Birmingham from June 14th-25th. Sis. Maggie is a shining example that keeping fit is for all ages as 1 Cor. 6:19-20 reminds us, "your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you."



Candlelight Communion

To Him who is able to keep us in 2018

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever".

Those two verses, taken from the book of Jude, provided the backdrop for Co-Pastor Kenneth Alexander's last sermon

for 2017 during Antioch Baptist Church's annual Watch Night service.

Normally used as a benediction, Alexander said that Jude 24-25 is a short blessing.

But lately, he has seen the words used in a confusing manner – as the invocation.

"The way we've been trained is the invocation comes first and the benediction last," he said. "I believe the words in

June are appropriate to use as we end 2017 and as the invocation for 2018."

Indeed, it's a good idea, Rev. Alexander said to start the year off with a good prayer before 2018 starts.

"Our lives would go better if we learned to call him up in the beginning," he said, and we don't need a priest or spiri-

Continued on page 2

A Message From The Pastor



Dear Antioch Family,

We have had another phenomenal quarter of ministry and fellowship at Antioch. I am very proud of our Son of the Church, the Reverend James Miller, pastor of Bridge of Life Church and King Star Baptist Church in Texas, who served as the evangelist for our Fall Revival. He gave us solid, biblically sound teaching in sermons entitled “God Sees Me,” “Divine Deliverance” and “Crumb Snatcher Faith.”

Our 140th Church Anniversary celebration surpassed all expectations. Our Anniversary Committee came up with unique ideas to bridge the past and the future as we celebrated our theme, “Reflecting on our Past while Building our Future.” It was a treat to see our intergenerational committee working harmoniously, learning from each other. Antioch has a bright future!

We can count on Antiochians to overwhelmingly respond to the needs of others. The Christmas Toy Giveaway and Youth Christmas Celebration provided a meaningful celebration of the true reason for Christmas. The message of the play, presented by our Youth Ministry, and the actions of our members in providing a joyous Christmas for over seventy-five families show the spirit of giving that is shown year-round.

The spectacular evening of celebration of Antioch Urban Ministries, Inc. was postponed because of uncharacteristic cold and snow at the beginning of December. However, it remained sold out and well attended on its re-scheduled date. We enjoyed an evening of fine dining, fellowship, music and fashion as several dedicated members were recognized for their contributions.

Recognition of our members’ accomplishments stretches well beyond the walls of Antioch. We are proud of Sis. Dr. Brenda Eason and her recent honors in the bestowal of the Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters and her receipt of the CLI Certificate. Sis. Maggie McCollum, the picture of good health resulting from solid athleticism, won five gold medals in the National Senior Olympics. Antiochians shine their lights as they strive for excellence in all endeavors. Sis. Faye Weekes, who diligently serves as an usher and health professional, is to be commended for the National Daisy Award she received after being nominated by her co-workers from the Neuro-surgery Administrative Staff and Physicians at the Emory Clinic.

We enjoy our worship and fellowship when we assemble, but Antioch scattered is truly letting their lights shine for Jesus!

Yours in God’s service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. M. Alexander'.

Reverend C. M. Alexander, Pastor

Continued from cover



Rev. K. L. Alexander

tual guru to do that. We can call God up ourselves.

Jude warns believers not to turn back. If God delivered you, pray he will keep you from going back. If he got you out, stay out. It’s a terrible thing when you finally get the blessing you’ve been waiting for to pull away from God.

“God has saved you, but it’s up to you to build your faith and keep yourself in the love of God,” Alexander said, referring to verse 20-21.

Then returning to the “now” in verse 24, he said that too many of us waste the now worrying about the future or the past.

“If God has blessed you with now, you need to make the best of now,” he said. “Right now I have eyes to see. Right now I have ears to hear. Right now, I have mobility of my limbs. Right now, I know my name.”

“God has brought us through 2017 with all its problems...God doesn’t have to do anything else for me. He’s done enough.”

Alexander said he has learned how to appreciate his now and encouraged the congregation to use the now to tell loved ones they love them, to get right with God, the one who is able to keep us from falling.

OCTOBER

Ministers' wives and widows hold conference

Under the theme, "Be Still and Know" based on Psalm 46:10, the Metropolitan Ministers' Wives and Ministers' Widows held its first conference Oct. 7 in the African American Hall of Fame in the Dr. M.L. King, Jr. International Chapel at Morehouse College.

Featured speakers included Sisters Bonita Williams and Vivian Bright.

Williams encouraged everyone to begin journaling and said writing about our experiences helps us see how God has brought us through over and over and gives us strength to continue.

Sis. Bright, who spoke on "Coping with Life's Trials, shared her experiences handling life's rough tides.

One attendee said Bright helped her understand what "Blessed Assurance" really means.

"I've been singing that song all my life, and that's a long time, but today is the first time I have really felt deep down that I can make it through anything with God," she said.

Keynote speaker Patricia Lawson, wife of Fifth District GMBC, Inc. President W.J. Lawson, recited from memory,



Sis. Vivian Bright

"The World Is Mine - Oh God, Forgive Me When I Whine" and reminded the women that no matter what our situation, we should not complain because there is someone who is worse off.

"Be Still, or, in other words, God's Got It," she said. God just asks us to be obedient, and in the midst of commotion, He will put out the drama makers and raise us from our beds of affliction.



Nurse Weekes recognized as a "True Daisy"

Sis. Faye Weekes, a registered nurse and long-time member of Antioch Baptist Church North, was the recipient of the coveted DAISY Award given by the Neuro-surgery Administrative Staff and Physicians at the Emory Clinic.

The DAISY is a national award that recognizes outstanding nurses who have excellent clinical skills and exhibit extraordinary compassion.

"Faye is regularly mentioned by her providers, co-workers and patients, for her empathy, compassion, patience and clinical skills," said one of her colleagues at the awards ceremony.

"She goes above and beyond the need of an Advance Nurse Clinician. We're proud to have her as a member of our clinical team. Patients have stated that they choose Emory because of her."



My, My, My... What About That?

Vernestine Murphy's 93-year old mother joined during a Wednesday Night Prayer Service on October 4th, 2017.

Golden Girl Pageant winners named

Mother Barbara Hardeman, mother of Antioch Baptist Church North member Enrika Hardeman and a stalwart member of Macedonia Baptist Church for over 50 years, placed first in the Fifth District Minister's Wives and Widows Golden Girl Pageant held Oct. 7 at New Springfield Baptist Church.

She replaces reigning Queen Christine Green of Cornerstone Community Baptist Church.

The "Golden Girls" are senior women contestants from the member churches who vie for the title of queen based on the amount of money they raise. The funds collected are used to support the work of the General Missionary Baptist Convention, Inc.

Other winners included Mother Dorothy Brown, a member



of Greater Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church who placed second; and Mother Claudia Davis, a 59-year member of Calvary Temple Baptist Church, who came in third.

Fifth District: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Worshippers attending the Fifth District quarterly fellowship service Oct. 3 were challenged to think about what was in the bitter cup Jesus chose to bear.

In a message entitled "Jesus the Cupbearer," the Rev. Harry Holley said the sins of all mankind, past present and future were in the cup.

Holley, guest lecturer,

took his text from Matthew 26: 39-42 and was among a slate of ministers to deliver messages at the service hosted by Mt. Zion Baptist Church, where the Rev. Eddie Bright, first vice president of the district and a son of Antioch, is pastor.

The Rev. Dr. Kenneth B. Martin, president of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia,

Inc., delivered the sermon, preaching from Psalm 124:1-5.

Martin said debates among theologians about when David wrote this psalm don't really matter.

"This psalm is about any time we are in distress and have to call on God to deliver us. Like David, most of us can look back at some time in our lives and say, 'If

it had not been for the Lord on my side,'" he said.

And although most of our enemies—family, friends, co-workers—are close to us—with God on our side, it doesn't matter who is against us.

"We must remember that because God moved in our situation, we can bless someone else," he said.

GMBC providing disaster relief training

A major emphasis of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. has been providing immediate response to disasters across the country through the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

The Rev. Dr. Timothy French, pastor of Beulah Missionary Baptist Church in Macon, provides leadership to the Disaster Relief Ministry. He organized a

two-day training in mid-December; and is hoping to have at least two certified responders in each of the twelve districts of GMBC and volunteer teams at each member church.

Much of the emphasis was on how to develop a Christ-centered response to minimize damage and maximize relief for victims of hurricanes, tornadoes, fires and floods, said the Rev.

David L. Frazier, Disaster Relief Ministry Coordinator of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.

Participants were tasked with deciding how best to respond in each disaster, listing detailed steps, and then presenting its plan.

American Red Cross trainers went over shelter fundamentals and disaster cycle services. Most people are familiar with the Red

Cross's response for people who suffer loss as a result of house fires, over 76,000 per year in Georgia. It also responds to mass disasters, such as earthquakes and wildfires, and man-made disasters, such as chemical spills. Since the Red Cross does not have shelters, it seeks to partner with churches to provide both short and long-term assistance to those in need.

Mount Zion hosts Senior Saints luncheon

More than 20 Antioch seniors attended the Annual Senior Saints Luncheon held Oct. 19 to celebrate the blessing of growing older.

The gathering, attended by seniors from 13 metro Atlanta churches, was held at Mount Zion Baptist Church where Antioch son the Rev. Eddie Bright is pastor.

After a spirited devotion by deacons of the various churches, the program included the welcome and occasion and response from the churches in attendance, a heartfelt poem about the benefits of being older by Mother Ann Reese, and a memorial period remembering seniors who had passed during the year.

The Rev. Bright provided words of encouragement.

“Although many have retired from jobs, there is no retirement from Christian service,” Bright said. “Because of your years of experience, you can give firsthand accounts of how God has worked in your lives and inspire others to trust in Christ.

“God still has a work for each of you.”



Scenes from the luncheon



ANTIOCH FAMILY!

Proud of the job you do or want to nominate your sister or brother in Christ to be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Church At Antioch*?

E-mail your story idea to Sis. Gracie Staples at gstaples@ajc.com.



NOVEMBER

Sis. Brenda Eason receives honorary doctorate degree

Sis. Brenda Eason added to her long list of accomplishments a Certificate of Appreciation from the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. and a Doctor of Humane Letters from the Louisiana State United Theological Seminary and Bible College in November.

The recognition was part and parcel of a life spent serving others.

Born and raised in the state of New York, Eason, a long-time member of Antioch Baptist Church North, holds degrees from both Abyssinian Church School of Cosmetology and New York University, where she graduated *Magna Cum Laude* in business administration.

While in New York, Eason served as church clerk, deaconess, recording and finan-



Sis. Brenda Eason

cial secretary of the Usher's Ministry, and secretary of the New York State Ushers Association. She also founded the Big Sisters Outreach Program for teenage under-privileged girls in the greater Mid-Hudson Valley and was director of "Reach One ~ Teach One" Big Brothers and Sisters United,

helping youth and teens learn valuable skills and set goals.

In 1988, she and her family relocated to Atlanta, where she soon joined Antioch Baptist Church North and has remained active. Eason, a former deaconess, is coordinator of Antioch's Ushers Ministry, a member of the Pastor's Support Ministry and Christian Education Ministry and the Pastor's Head/Pulpit Usher.

In 1992, she coordinated the Ushers for the National Baptist Convention that was held at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta; in 1994, coordinated the Ministry of Ushers for the Billy Graham Crusade. In May 1995, she was named coordinator of the newly formed GMBC Ushers Ministry. She is a certified instructor for the Ushers Auxiliary and lectures during the GMBC, Inc. Con-

gress of Christian Education.

Eason has touched the lives of countless youth and young adults, acting for many years as a coach, mentor and counselor. The author of "Door-keepers, hundreds of ushers have benefited from her love and lectures on the motive and method of their ministry.

As if that weren't enough, Eason, the mother of one daughter and a grandson, is Director of Operations and Convention Planner for the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc., coordinating all state programs and activities. She was featured in the Meeting Planners USA Magazine "Who to Watch" in 2003 and 2012 as one of the top 20 Meeting Planners in the Southeast Region.

Sis. Mary Hicks heads online effort at divinity school

Bryant Theological Seminary joined the digital age in December, launching a sample of its first online courses, which will start spring quarter.

The online program, introduced during the 147th Annual Session of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc., was initiated by Dr. Mary L. Hicks, a long-time member of Antioch Baptist Church North and chairperson of the Seminary's board of trustees.

The convention was held Nov. 13-16, 2017.

Hicks, who collaborated with Rev. Mark Seals, said the goal of the online program is to train ministers and leaders. Seals is



Dr. Mary Hicks

the program coordinator.

Hicks, a faculty member of the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education, said the program meets students "where they are."

"We want to continue doing it the way Jesus did, and we don't want to get off the mission which God has prepared," she said.

Bryant Theological Seminary celebrated its 80th anniversary last year, educating and equipping future faith leaders.

The Associate Degree program is a two-year full-time seminary program designed to provide a practical biblical foundation.

GMBC session still doing the Lord's business

The General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. opened its annual session Nov. 13 in Macon with business as usual, offering everything from classes and worship to training and auxiliary sessions.

"Our business is the Lord's business," the Rev. Kenneth B. Martin, the GMBC president, declared at the opening. "We must continue to emphasize the Missionary portion of our name."

Major outreach was made during each of the disasters that touched not only Georgia but beyond as relief was provided to hurricane victims in Texas and Louisiana and beyond as the GMBC also donated to the NBCUSA, Inc. Disaster Relief Fund.

In addition to gift cards to help pay for food, lodging, and medication, "boots on the ground" volunteers, under the direction of Rev. Timothy French, pastor of Beulah Missionary Baptist Church in Macon, helped people evacuate, took truckloads of supplies, and prepared and served meals to evacuees.

The major emphasis of the GMBC, Inc. has been mission and evangelism. Each

auxiliary and district has been engaged in outreach to those in need, choosing the area of most need in that district.

At the Annual Session, the Minister's and Moderator's Department sponsored "Operation Pack A Bus," collecting school supplies for the Bibb Country Schools. The Ministry of Ushers and Health Professionals, Antioch's Sis. Brenda Eason, Coordinator, continued its shoe drive, collecting new and gently worn shoes, which will be sent to Haiti, where the GMBC's foreign mission emphasis is in Tapio. The drive continued for Dial Soap, which is taken to the Women's Prison in Jackson, GA. Throughout the session, the Saints With a Testimony team offered training in evangelism prior to going into designated areas in Macon to witness.

A highlight of the Annual Session was the presentation of a plaque honoring the Rev. Dr. Marshall Stenson, president of GMBC's Bryant Theological Seminary for 35 years.

The seminary will begin offering two online degree programs, a Certificate or Associate Degree in Biblical Studies, in Spring Semester 2018.

Pioneer's Tribute Luncheon

Because the theme of our 140th Church Anniversary was "Reflecting on our Past while Building our Future," the Pioneer's Luncheon included not only Antioch's Pioneers of 20-60+ years but her Future Pioneers.

The middle verse of the theme scripture, Psalm 119:89-91, declares that the Lord's "faithfulness is unto all generations," and on Nov. 3, Fellowship Hall was filled with the young to not-so young, new and seasoned saints who are witnesses of God's faithfulness.

Powerful testimonies uplifted and encouraged everyone present. A lavish lunch was accompanied by the sounds of true fellowship as chatter and laughter filled the air.

Loving Spirit hosts Soul Bowl Revival

For three days in late November, the Fifth District of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. hosted its annual Soul Bowl Revival at Antioch Loving Spirit Baptist Church.

On day one, Nov. 27, Antioch Baptist Church North son Carlton Williams preached "Get Something Started" saying it is not natural for us to want to give but to take.

If we want to start something different from the world, however, he said that we must show ourselves friendly and give love to everyone, especially the unsaved.



Rev. Ervin Richards introduces Rev. Carlton Williams

In another sermon, the Rev. M. Davis, pastor of Greater Ephesus Baptist Church and past president of the 5th Dis-

trict, said that "we have lost the value of God's Word."

"We must quote the Word without backing down, remembering that it is a light, a sure foundation, heavenly hope for the hopeless and salvation for the sinner," Davis said.

Then on day two, Nov. 28, the Rev. Frank Jones, associate minister at Cornerstone Community Baptist Church, lectured on "The Mystery of the Gospel of Jesus Christ" based on Ephesians 6:18-19, and Rev. Ernie Anderson, pastor of True Vine Baptist Church, preached "It's All Up

to Him" based on Mark 1:40-45.

On the closing night, Nov. 29, the Rev. Dexter Alexander, Associate Minister at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, lectured on "Faith" based on Hebrews 11:1-7, and the Rev. Patrick K. Latimore, pastor of Greater Fair Hill Baptist Church, preached a sermon entitled "You Were Built for This" based on Matt. 7:21-29.

Latimore said that we are created in God's image and built for such a time as this, "a time to stand firm, live out God's word and share our testimonies."

Ministerial alliance serves up

For nearly 30 years, the Antioch Ministerial Alliance has been preaching and ministering to the residents of the Salvation Army Red Shield Center in Atlanta.

This year was no different.

From the Rev. Rodney Turner and the Rev. Sean Smith, to the Rev. Scott Copeland and the Rev. Lester Duncan, who have carried the torch since 2001, they have remained steadfast, holding service at the Salvation Army every other Monday night.

The outreach ministry's sole purpose is to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, but in 2004, Copeland and Duncan decided they didn't want to just feed men's souls, they wanted to feed their body's bodies as well.

And so every year since, they have been serving residents a hearty Thanksgiving Day meal along with the word.

Most of the residents, Duncan said, can't be with family and loved ones; others came from states and locations seeking shelter after evictions, losing everything in home fires or falling on very tough times and needing assistance to get to the next



Thanksgiving meal to homeless



level in life.

“This was and is an opportunity for the Ministerial Alliance to spread love on behalf of our pastor and church family,” he said.

Each year, the Alliance, along with Angela Davis and the SCAN ministry, put together a menu and provided the food, labor and manpower for about 150 residents, increasing the number served when the Salvation Army expanded its facility and added another 150 residents, which included entire families.

In 2013, the Antioch Male Chorus got involved and now provides much of the food and labor needed to serve the residents.

This Thanksgiving, they prepared eleven turkeys, six hams, eight pans of dressing, collard greens, macaroni and cheese, corn, string beans, candied yams, wild rice, dinner rolls, cake, pie and punch and served some 300 residents and families.

“Antioch has always enjoyed the opportunity to serve others,” organizers said. “We look forward to continuing that legacy for many years to come.”



Our soul: “A priceless treasure”

The 40th Annual Soul Bowl Revival of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. was held on Dec. 2 at Lizzie Chapel BC, the Rev. Ronald Toney (Son of Antioch), pastor.

Soul Bowl is the brainchild of Antioch Baptist Church North Pastor C.M. Alexander and launched during his GMBC presidency.

“They have the Cotton Bowl, the Sugar Bowl, the Rose Bowl—all those Bowls,” Alexander said at the time. “We need to have a Bowl for the Lord.”

The theme, “Solidarity with the Savior through Mission and Evangelism,” based on Luke 19:10, has been walked out throughout the twelve districts over the past year in very tangible ways. In addition to adding souls to the kingdom

through baptism, Christian Experience, and transfer of membership, each district gave financial gifts during the District Soul Bowl Revivals.

The Rev. Ronald Gantt, pastor of Maple Springs BC in Dewey Rose, GA, and Coordinator of Evangelism for the GMBC, preached “The Value of the Soul,” based on Luke 12:16-21.

Gantt said that the most important part about us is what we don’t see—“the soul”—and reminded everyone that the human soul is what Matt 16:26 says it is: “a priceless treasure,” for which Jesus paid a great price.

“We must guard against selling our soul out for mere pennies—material goods, fame, power, prestige,” he said. “We must give our souls back to the Lord.”

A.S.K. Christmas Fellowship

The Antioch Seniors Kare Ministry (A.S.K.) held its annual Christmas Fellowship on Dec. 17, after the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service.

“We felt it was important to come together and fellowship during this Christmas season,” said Sis. Tommie Nash, coordinator. “We are involved in Bible study, sick and shut-in visitations and other events throughout the year, so we wanted to say, ‘Thank you’ and spend some time enjoying one another.”

Scenes from the AUMI Health Fair



Toy giveaway, Grinch highlight of Antioch celebration

Two days before Christmas, Antioch's 590 Building became a giant present as Antioch's Youth and Community Celebration got underway.

The MADD for Christ Choir led the congregation in spirited singing of traditional Christmas songs. The Youth Ministry presented *How the Grinch Found the Christ in Christmas*. A Christian rendition of the popular 1957 book by Dr. Seuss, Antioch's Grinch steals toys, gifts, food, and anything material that represents Christmas. He thinks by stealing everything, he has destroyed Christmas, but he learns that he cannot steal the joy in



people's hearts resulting from the birth of Jesus Christ. The joy is overflowing, and the Grinch accepts Christ as his savior

and returns all the stolen goods.

During intermissions, 40 bicycles, donated by an anonymous donor, were given away. Everyone in attendance received a ticket, and as the winning numbers were drawn, people came forward to select a bike. One giveaway was especially poignant as the winning ticket holder gave the bike to a young man named Nevin.

It was the only thing he really wanted for Christmas, he told the crowd.

As lunch was served, some 76 families, thanks to the generosity of Antioch members, were blessed with toys that matched their children's ages and requests.

Antioch youth participate in GMBC ushers conference

Fifteen Antioch youth ushers attended the Second Annual Youth Ushers Conference held at Lundy Chapel Baptist Church in Macon.

In addition to worship services and training, the youth ushers, 250 in all, par-

ticipated in one of the main outreach emphases of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc.

Sis. JoAnn Cash, a member of First Corinth Missionary Baptist Church, spoke to the youth about the conditions

in the Women's State prison in Jackson, GA, cautioning them not to disobey rules and laws causing them to be imprisoned.

"Think before you act; don't give in to peer pressure," she said. "There is no fun in pull-

ing a prank that may land you in jail."

Following the message, the youth put scriptures on and wrapped over 1,000 bars of Dial Soap to be donated to the Women's State prison in Jackson, GA.

Did You Know?

ORIENTATION CLASSES!

Members that have joined Antioch in the past month(s) and have not completed the required orientation classes are asked to attend an orientation class on Sundays after the 7:45 a.m. Worship Service in the Sanctuary. Adults are asked to attend three classes, and youth are asked to attend one class. This is a part of your membership process. Please contact Sis. Gwen Johnson for further details at 404-527-5784.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Antioch Members who have been given the Right Hand of Fellowship are asked to please update their membership profile information via Antioch's website at www.antiochnorth.org or call the church office. If you have changed your name, address, home or cell phone number(s), or email address, please submit your new information to the church office. If you are registered with online giving through **ACCESS ACS**, you may update your information on that site. For help on how to update your profile, verify your records, retrieve your envelope number or how to use Access ACS, contact Sis. Gwen Johnson or Dea. Benny Williams at the church office, 404.688.5679.

Antioch Womanhood Ministry Gift-wrapping Party



Volunteers gathered Dec. 19 to begin wrapping Christmas gifts donated by members of Antioch Baptist Church North during the month of December. Hundreds of toys and bicycles were donated for the church's annual toy giveaway.



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