



THE GLAD TIDER

Stevensville United Methodist Church

February 2022

Living a Life of Integrity



Integrity. It's a great thing to have. It's a helpful way to live. It's a valuable quality to offer. But admittedly, before I did a little more research and reflection, my definition would have simply been: *Doing the right thing*. Undoubtedly, this aspect is part of the definition, but it's not all of it. In fact, the "whole enchilada" must include the vital aspect of *wholeness*.

This fuller definition invites a way of living that seems pretty straight forward, but could really be amplified with the foundation expressions and experience of this wholeness and morality. The Conscious Leadership

Group names four pillars of integrity: communication (talking *and listening*), feeling our feelings, taking responsibility, and living out our agreements.

Communication invites candid and open dialogue with truth telling. And beyond talking is the listening, deeply, to the words and spirit of what is shared. The goal is to understand the other through curiosity, leaning in, and grace.

Feeling our feelings is the crucial choice to experience the sensations that occur within our bodies and minds. When we feel our feelings, we release energy from an emotion and keep energy for what is helpful and generative. Feelings also show us something about the situation and our internal experiences. Feelings are resources for decision-making, team building and creativity.

Taking responsibility is the act claiming ownership of all that is in our lives. We take rather than wait for responsibility to be given, making conscious choices of how to respond and create the reality around us.

Living out our agreements. Agreements are anything we say we will do, and they are clear about the "who, what and when." When we're impeccable about our agreements we are trustworthy in our words by following through, renegotiating an agreement if needed and cleaning up if an agreement is broken.



We discussed this value of integrity and its role with the Unified Board at the January Retreat. I'm considering how each of these pillars becomes real in my life as a mom and wife. I sense that such conscious embrace of integrity in our civic life together is crucial to address and solve the most vexing problems while being care-filled enough to make space for suffering and woundedness that already exists.



Jesus called us to be whole as God is whole, all-embracing as God is all-embracing. Despite this seeming to be just a great aspiration, these particularities of promoting integrity give me hope and even joy. They energize me for the journey, a *life* of integrity. They offer distinct tools. They remind me wholeness has value for my inner and external life. They encourage collaborative, community engagement.

Do you live with integrity?

In Christ to know wholeness, Pastor Sarah Merchant



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February Trustee News

Decluttering has commenced. Ben Longbottom and Julie Ludington have sorted through, cleaned out, and organized the large closet in the Fellowship Hall. It has gone from looking a bit like Fibber McGee's closet to a poster closet for Good Housekeeping. We would like to keep this space for tables/chairs and music storage. We will be putting up some shelving in this closet soon, but for now please refrain from hiding "stuff" you don't know what to do with in this space. The two large round tables leaning against the west wall are available to anyone who would like them.

Following the January 23rd Town Hall a group also volunteered to organize the kitchen and hospitality items in coordination with SELC. THANK YOU!



By the time this gets published, there will be shelves in the larger closet in the conference room. The intended use for this closet will be church office supplies. We will continue to sort, clean and organize other spaces (ie, the class room upstairs, the SELC school aged kids room). As we progress, any items the church no longer has need of will be made available to you before it is donated or discarded.

We are a couple months away, but we need to start thinking of spring clean up. Traditionally we have tried to get the outside spiffed up for Easter, April 17th this year. We'll keep an eye on the weather, but ideally this would happen on one of the first two Saturdays of April.

We got our first quote to replace the roof from Carl Construction. They quoted \$132,800 for a composite shake called Cedur. It is a 50-year shake that replicates split cedar shakes and is about 10% less than the DaVinci product we looked at last year.

There are samples of these shakes in the F/H. If you'd like to know more about this product the website is www.cedur.com. Carl also gave us a quote for CertainTeed Presidential shakes, an asphalt shake, which would be about \$23,000 less than the Cedur shake. The CertainTeed shakes have a 50-year life as well. We are waiting for another quote on the roofing project before we make the decision.

~ John Fisher, Trustee Chair

UMW. A season of Revitalizing and Renewal.

Hi Everyone,

I am Bev. Schneider your UMW president this year and hope to see a season of revitalizing and renewal following a Co-vid break. UMW is a wonderful organization and has been in existence for over 80 years at Stevi UMC. We all have great memories of Apple Dumplings and Bazaars. A large majority of our funds raised stays locally in the form of scholarships or local community contributions. Our next meeting is on February 19th from 10-12 in the fellowship hall. Please come prepared to brainstorm with ideas. God Bless. Bev.

February Liturgists

2/6 Dave Maclay-Schulte

2/13 Sara Malo

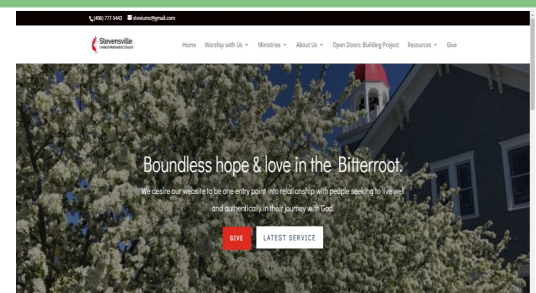
2/20 Bob Edgar

2/27 Bob Edgar

Checking the SUMC Calendar online

Go to the Website:

www.steviumc.org
Click on Calendar





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February 2022 Worship

How we encounter a daily practice of prayer, such as the Lord's Prayer, or the astonishing experiences of God's wonder, can all be held and integrated to illuminate our spiritual walk. Continuing in February, worship will guide us through the Lord's Prayer as Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount. This familiar prayer, examined from the original language of Aramaic, can open us to a depth of connection with God, each other, and ourselves as we reflect on this full body, mind and soul prayer. Thank you to Neil Douglas-Klotz for his insightful and compelling translation and commentary in *The Prayers of the Cosmos*.

February 6: The Lord's Prayer: Grant What We Need Daily in Bread & Insight



The day-by-day nourishment translated from Aramaic is no simple act or request. Lachma translates as bread, that which sustains our bodies and brains, making growth and flourishing possible. It also translates as understanding, a wisdom that feeds passion and relationship. While these daily gifts sound and are amazing, the prayer reminds us that they can't be hoarded or taken for granted. In receiving "daily bread," we are also called to give back respect to the earth the Source of all.

Scripture: Matthew 6:9-13 (The Message), Luke 12:16-21

Prayer: May the gift of physical, mental, and spiritual nourishment be enough for me today, O God. May I recognize the ways it calls me into life abundant without being greedy or worried about scarcity. Through this nourishment, empower me to

share it with others, in presence, patience, and even a cup of tea or warm meal. Thank you for knowing just what I need each and every day. Amen.

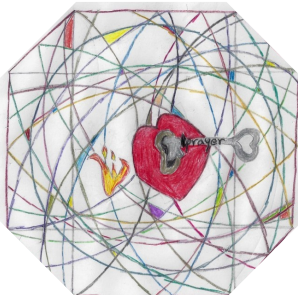


February 13: The Lord's Prayer: Untangle the Knots Within

What can happen with a needle and thread? What if one does not know how to use these tools? What a mess we can weave if we do not ask for help. The fourth part of The Lord's Prayer is the recognition of the tendencies to hold judgement over ourselves and others for not knowing how to use the tools we have at our disposal. But wait! It is also the humbling of our minds and the asking for help to use these tools properly. We can stitch together a beautiful tapestry learning from every thread. Hope, joy, sorrow, hurt, grace, and healing created through tying and untying knots fill God's landscape with beauty. Recognizing where and how we tangle we can work with each other and God to unwind all of our trespasses.

Scripture: Matthew 6:9-13 (Common English Bible)

Prayer: As I stitch my way through this life Lord open my mind, body, and soul to your creation, all of it. Let me be a person of integrity. Help me embrace the beauty of others in their journey here on earth as well. Help me to care for all you have given me from the earth beneath my feet to the vast sky beyond all horizons. Amen





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February 20: The Lord's Prayer: Don't Let Surface Things Delude Us



The line translated “lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” can be very perplexing for no one outside, especially God, can lead us into temptation. Instead, Douglas-Klotz helps us see the Aramaic phrase recognizing that interiorly we can get distracted, diverting us from the purpose of our lives. We might even forget our origins and the foundational practices and “burn out” over all that needs to be done. So we pray for the joy of liberty found in the right action at the right time, not only for ourselves, but also as one in the collective, collaborative whole embracing the all of life.

Scripture: Matthew 6:9-13 (New Living Translation), Philippians 4:8-9

Prayer: Thank you God that you have set within me a blessing of identity and purpose grounded in you as the Source of Love. When I'm off kilter, distracted by what is shiny or what the world and culture prop up, bring me back to that nourishing and sustaining way of life with you. Remind me that I don't and can't do this alone and empower me to be in community that enriches my thoughts, actions, and choices. Amen.



February 27: The Lord's Prayer: Out of You, the Vital Force



“At the end, we return to the creative visioning of God, the power to accomplish these visions, and the beauty that adds grace and artistry to them.” Neil Douglas-Klotz in *The Prayer of the Cosmos*. The end of the Lord's Prayer as said in the United Methodist Church links to the lineage of Jewish prayers. In Aramaic, we find a perfect summary of the main themes and the assurance, even oath, claimed that this prayer shall be the fertile ground from which we find nutrients and future growth.

Scripture: Psalm 100, Ephesians 1: 3-10, 18-20

Prayer: Truly, I pray, O God, that who you are is wild and wondrous and one with me. Truly, I pray, that I can, even desire, for you to transform me. Truly, I pray, that as I find grounding in you, that I find nourishment and bear fruit that brings you delight. Amen.

Ash Wednesday, March 2 ~ Service at 6:30pm

Perfectionism is impossible. Transformation isn't.

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward... but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." - Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Jesus used the word “hypocrite” to describe those who put on airs in public to make people believe that they were holy, that their religious practice was... well... perfect. But their hearts were actually not in the practice, rather in the rewards that public approval could bring them—which is here today, often gone tomorrow. Sometimes it is life itself that robs us of the shiny, perfect life that we had planned for ourselves. A diagnosis. A broken heart. A lost opportunity. This Lent, rather than change for “the best,” we’ll seek to gain momentum one day at a time, “to reach for a faith that is never perfect, but good enough,” Bowler and Richie from *Good Enough*.



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Welcome to the 2022 Outreach Ministry Team

The Outreach Ministry Team is looking for a few good, committed volunteers to continue this ministry of our church. I took over as chair a couple years ago and want to relinquish that position to someone who is committed to following through with projects.

Outreach began as a way to get SUMC out to the greater community in a more visible way. To that end we have promoted a float in the Creamery Picnic Parade, have promoted an entry in the Scarecrow Festival, hosted Trunk-R-Treat in the church parking lot, and for several years we distributed goody bags to people who had to work late on Christmas Eve.

We do not meet on a monthly basis, but only when there is a project that needs doing i.e. planning/building the above mentioned items.

Please consider joining our team!

Call joey diers at [406-396-7618](tel:406-396-7618) or email her at medowlark@msn.com if you think you might be interested.

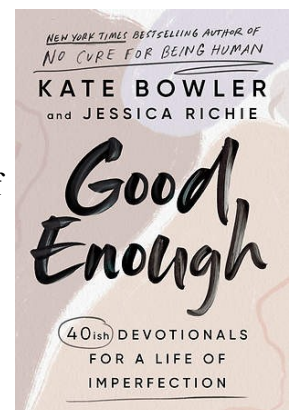
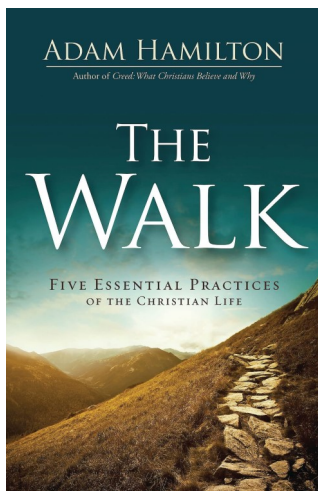


Wednesday Morning Bible Study Information

A gathering of people grounding their life in faith, fellowship, reflection and study meets each week at 10am on Wednesdays. Come at any time even if you don't have the materials because the conversation and prayer is rich.

For the rest of February, the group is moving through *The Walk* by Adam Hamilton. This study unpacks 5 core spiritual practices.

March 1 begins Lent with Ash Wednesday. Bible Study will include a short Ash Wednesday service and introduction in the Lent book, *Good Enough: 40ish Devotions for a Life of Imperfections* by Kate Bowler. Books available to buy. The Lent study will continue from March 1– April 13



Join Us, 10 AM in the After School Room at SELC



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Sapphire Early Learning Center Families



Hansen Family

Jared, Stephanie, and Hayden live in Stevensville. We have two rescue animals, our cat Maui and dog Dixie. We moved to Stevensville from Washington. We enjoy board games, hiking, swimming, and rock hounding. Our family goal is to be healthy and happy. We plan on a lot more family quality time events this year.

Hello from the SELC board! There is plenty of activity going on in the Learning Center. We currently have 32 kiddos enrolled, with one more (that we know of!) to begin in February. There continues to be lively interest in our Center; 6 tours were given to interested families in the last 2 weeks. We have 7 children on our waiting list, and we continue to hire more teachers as we are able.

Some truly joyful news is that the Center had the final step in the State licensing process, and we have been approved!

We are still applying for grants, and for State programs that will reimburse us for expenses. This is an on-going process that seems to move very slowly, but is a worthwhile effort.

The board is planning a time in March for our team of teachers to meet each of the board members, as we also celebrate 6 months since we opened. As a board, we feel very strongly that we want to keep our teachers and staff happy to work at our facility, and feeling supported in the important work that they do.

The SELC board welcomes your input or questions, and support in any way that you are able. Prayers are always a good start! Board members from the congregation are Julie Ludington, John Fisher, and Judie Fisher, as well as Pastor Sarah. You can speak to any of us at any time. We welcome your involvement in this ministry.

Crazy for Cookies: It's time to raise some dough!

Sapphire Early Learning Center is sponsoring a fundraiser to buy NEW playground equipment.

The goal is to raise \$5000 profit. This is a great value and fun for all supporters.

This is a limited time offer with selling dates Feb. 6-13. Money is due when you order.

Orders are delivered by March 1.



Quick Details

* Each item sells for \$16-17

* Each tub of cookie dough makes approx. 40 cookies

* 8 great flavors to choose: \$16: Chunky Chocolate Chip, Oatmeal Raisin, Snickerdoodle, and Sugar.

\$17 M&M Chips, Caramel Pecan Chocolate Chip, White Chocolate Macadamia, and Triple Chocolate.

SELC families, friends, SUMC folks, and community members can all support the cause.

Please sign up during church or at steviumc@gmail.com for your cookie delights to eat and share.



SELC Mission Statement

"Where We Move Mountains"

At Sapphire Early Learning Center, we believe in the value and uniqueness of each child we serve. Our childcare experience is designed to promote each child's own individual social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

We strive to bridge gaps and move mountains.

- Encouraging and supporting developmentally appropriate learning
- Building a foundation where children become life-long learners
- Empowering families through education and opportunities





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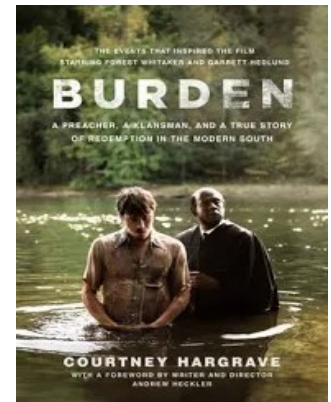
Announcements

- ♦ Communion Sunday, Feb. 6th at 10:30 service.
- ♦ Choir on Tuesdays at 7pm .
- ♦ Wednesday Bible Study at 10am in the After School Room.
- ♦ Town Hall Feb. 20th at 11:30am.
- ♦ Unified Board Feb. 9th at 4:30pm.
- ♦ United Methodist Women: Feb. 19, 10-12pm, Fellowship Hall.
- ♦ Choir on break in February. Lent and Easter choir begins March 1-april 17th.

The Stevi UMC Book Club will meet February 13th at 3 PM. Our reading choice this month is "Burden: A Preacher, a Klansman, and a True Story of Redemption in the Modern South" by Courtney Hargrave.

This title was recommended by Ginny Mellgren.

You are all invited to join us for a discussion for this book!!



Great News

Renatho has graduated from World Vision's sponsorship program.

The Stevensville United Methodist Men have sponsored a boy, Renatho, from the Bassin Diaman community in Haiti, for ten (10) years. Through the leadership of Marcia Prather, three other children in Bassin Diaman were sponsored by other members of Stevensville UMC. The community of Bassin Diaman is now empowered with the resources and skills to be a self sufficient community. The community has a clean water supply, training to promote health and prevent the spread of disease, vocational education, remedial courses in reading, writing, and math to name a just a few areas.

A big thank you to all that have helped sponsor children in the Bassin Diaman community.

Bob Edgar and Don Nelson, past leaders of UMM

Recycling Program

- Good News! Our church recycle program is expanding beyond plastics to also include aluminum cans. These will be collected by me, Lisa Nicholls, on the 4th Sunday of each month. Please drop them directly into the back of my black Ford Escape which will be located in the church parking lot, before and after service, tailgate open. (This plan seems a lot easier than dumping them in the Pastor's garage!) Please make sure they're empty and rinsed if they contained beer.
- The cans will be donated to AniMeals, a Missoula nonprofit organization dedicated to rescuing, feeding and healing cats.
- AniMeals is a No Kill Adoption Center.
- Check out their website: www.AniMeals.com





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FINANCIAL NEWS

We began the year 2021 with a budget for general fund expenses similar to that of 2020, but carried a positive balance in our general fund, due to the \$17,000 payroll protection loan received in 2020. This loan was forgiven by the federal government in accordance with its COVID relief package. The table below shows our general fund expenses compared to the budgeted amount for both 2019, 2020 and 2021.

	Annual General Fund Budget	Annual General Fund Expense	Percent of Budget Spent
2019	\$ 147,192	\$ 152,701	104%
2020	\$ 152,237	\$ 137,452	90.3%
2021	\$ 149,922	\$ 131,576	87.8%

We spent significantly less than we had budgeted in 2021 due, in part, to reduced church use during the construction of the learning center / fellowship hall building. We were still projecting a general fund deficit in late November, but that was offset by very strong giving in December. As a result, we ended the year with a positive balance in the general fund of \$3030. Our overall giving to the general budget was slightly less than it was in 2020 as shown in the following table.

General Fund Giving 2019, 2020 and 2021			
General Fund	2019	\$	140,639
General Fund	2020	\$	139,239
General Fund	2021	\$	134,606

The generosity of the congregation extended beyond the direct operations of the church with \$3110 given to outside ministries through the thank offering and \$2580 paid out from the “loaves and fishes” fund.

The largest capital expenditures involved the construction of the Sapphire Early Learning Center and Fellowship Hall. Most of the construction expenses for this project were paid by the loan from the Methodists Helping Methodists Foundation – the foundation arm of our Mountain Sky Conference. However, there were expenses related to the project that were paid by our church. Three of the major expenses involved payments to the company helping us establish and run the capital campaign, replacement of the emergency stairs from the upstairs nursery room, and reestablishment of the outdoor irrigation system after construction.

The loan with the Methodist Foundation has now been established at \$1,120,798.63. This includes \$1,101,141.63 in construction costs and \$19,657.00 in accrued interest on the first ten months of loan funds. The foundation has said they will charge us only interest for the first two years of the loan. They have started that process and are now collecting \$3973 the first of each month. This amounts to \$47,664 per year. This expense commitment will need to factor into the pace of any capital expenditures we plan until Sapphire Early Learning Center reaches its break-even capacity and begins to help pay for that obligation as well as their share of utilities and insurance liability.

The Open Doors Campaign guides us into 2022. Thank you to all who committed financial gifts for the coming year. The invitation to donate and be a part of the blessing of generations is still open to all. Generosity and faithful management provide a hope for the future and the continued good work in and through SUMC.

Lenny Johnson, Treasurer



Town Hall- The Conversations of the Community

SUMC Mission Statement:

*As disciples of Christ, we offer a path to hope,
inclusion and purpose for a community in need of healing care,
community engagement, faith formation and compassionate love.*



January 23rd Recap: What an engaged group! We know who we are and where we are! On Jan. 23rd, fifteen **people** gathered in the Fellowship Hall to take a tour of the building again to name and claim the space and purpose. This was an act of integrity- the pillar of radical responsibility- as we offered gratitude for those who had taken ownership and pride of what is here and dreamed together of what purpose would be lived out in the space.

Plus, we now have names for the space. Names have identified purpose for people: Jacob's name changed to Israel, meaning "One who strives with God," and Saul, a Hebrew name, used his Roman name Paul because he wanted to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. So rather than just a place with four walls next to something or distinct attributes, the spaces have names to embody their purpose and character.

Fellowship Hall: Large community room with the windows facing south. A place to gather.

Foyer: The space as you enter the area from the parking lot doors. The space to connect you to others and activities elsewhere.

Conference Room: The small room with a bathroom next to the church office. An intimate place to talk, retreat, meet with small groups.

Cleaning Closet: The space next to the furnace room and lobby. A space to store cleaning supplies and small tools for fix-ups.

February 20th Topic: What would it mean to be a community church?

Whenever we ask a "**what or how**" question, we should know the "**why.**"

The mission statement gives us a why- we are disciples of Christ. We can be one in Christ by matching our internal intentions with our external expressions. As disciples we seek to follow Christ's ways and promote what matters to Christ.

So what does that look like? How might we do this?

Let's take our work from the last several years (vision meetings, town halls, committee meetings, conversations over coffee) and give them some names and tangible expressions. The Unified Board has highlighted **six areas** that matter to Christ and align with the gifts and values of SUMC so that we might live into a name (purpose and identity) as a **community church**.

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| ♦ Mental Health | ♦ Elder Care/Caregiver Wellbeing |
| ♦ Creation Care | ♦ Community Engagement |
| ♦ Discipleship | ♦ Leadership |

What would this look like? What does it mean to you? How do you see yourself engaged?

Come February 20 at 11:45 to unpack these areas and energize our discipleship with Christ.

Ways to Contact Us

Office phone: 406-777-5443
Office email: steviumc@gmail.com
Pastor Sarah's email: revsarahmerchant@gmail.com
Church website: steviumc.org
Office hours: Tues, Thurs, Fri. 10:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

***Youth 3-10 years old during
worship service, 10:45-11:30am**

Sapphire Early Learning Center 406-625-2660
Sapphireearlylearningcenter.com
director@sapphireearlylearningcenter.com

Worship Opportunities

In Person Worship: 10:30 AM

Live Streaming Worship at 10:30 on

YouTube Channel & Facebook.

- o YouTube: Search for "Stevensville United Methodist Church." Look for the video that says "Live" in the bottom right corner.
- o Facebook: Search for "@Steviumc." Scroll till you see the service.

SELC is Hiring!

If you are passionate about learning and growing in the Early Childhood Education profession this may be the career for you. We are now accepting applications Pay is DOE. Early Childhood experience, High School diploma/ GED, CPR and First Aid are a plus, but not necessary. All training will be provided at no cost to you. Please contact SELC at 406-625-2660, director@sapphireearlylearningcenter.com

PANTRY PARTERS, Stevensville's Food Bank is looking for new volunteers to help with its tri weekly schedule. If you are interested in helping in this worthwhile community service, please contact Dawn Richard at [406-360-4637](tel:406-360-4637). Volunteers must be Covid vaccinated and willing to wear a mask in doors.



~ CHANGES OF ADDRESS ~
Bulk-rate mail is not forwarded.
If your address changes, if we have it wrong,
or if you no longer want to receive this newsletter,
please let us know.

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

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The Glad Tider

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