

#### The Steeple Bell—October 2024

#### Franklin First United Methodist Church

"Under the Green Steeple"





#### **Pray for Unity and Guidance as Election Day Approaches**



According to Wikipedia, on election day November 5, the President and Vice President will both be elected. Ohio will hold 17 electoral college votes. Additionally, all 435 seats in the US House of Representatives and 34 of the 100 seats in the US Senate will be elected, determining the make of the 119th US Congress. Governorships will be determined in 13 states (not Ohio) and territories.

While many people get upset about the negative rhetoric of our elections, it is so important that we exercise our constitutional right to vote. The adversarial atmosphere in today's political climate may leave us feeling discouraged and disempowered but never-the-less, our vote helps determine the future of our country.

I so appreciate the rare politician who will tell voters what he or she intends to do about pertinent issues rather than spend their public time cutting down opponents. I was talking with a congregation member on Sunday, and she mentioned that she already has opinions about what sitting office holders are doing wrong. She (and I) want to hear what candidates intend to do to improve our country's circumstances.

Public service is never an easy career choice. Elected officials must consider the wide needs of their constituents, which often conflict. I pray for our president and VP, along with other leaders. I invite your prayer efforts on their behalf as well.

As frustrated as we might be about our political system, we must recognize that we live in a country with freedoms that are not enjoyed worldwide. In other parts of the world, people are living without basic necessities and sometimes with a real fear for their lives.

Election day is drawing closer. I pray for safety for each of our candidates, and I pray God's guidance to take us beyond the rhetoric and give us a discernment about the consequences of politically proposed actions. I pray that we can get beyond the polarization that is so prevalent to find leaders and solutions for the betterment of our country. There is no problem that is beyond God's ability to correct.

kindness. compassion. humility. respect. love.

Pastor Laura

#### **Community Trunk or Treat**

Franklin First has signed up to participate in the City of Franklin's Fall Festival on Saturday October 19. Registrations to have a decorated vehicle at Community Park are due to the city by October 14 at 4 pm, but you are welcome to come and join in the fun as children walk the park from 5-7 pm for their treats. Our church will have a booth sharing information about our ministries, a photo opportunity, and smiling hosts. We encourage you to provide wrapped store-bought candy or small toy donations for those who will be handing out treats, as we expect large numbers of Trick or Treaters for this event. It promises to be lots of fun.









#### Marketplace (Bazaar) News

The Women's Circle and friends have started producing noodles for the Marketplace on **Saturday November 2** running from 9:00 – 2:00 pm. Pam Trout is lining up vendors, and plans are developing for take-out orders and the luncheon. Noodles can be pre-ordered. **Donations of Gold Medal all-purpose flour and large** 

Pre-Order Sales
to start on October 1st. Visit
our website,
Facebook page
or call the
office to place
an order.

eggs are needed ASAP. This is a well organized and well attended event.

Thank you to all who work to make it happen. If you have any questions, please see Monica Rhude.



#### **Confirmation Class**

Four students and their mentors joined Pastor Laura for Confirmation Class on September 15. The class will be meeting once per month through March, and the **Confirmation Celebration is scheduled for April 27**<sup>th</sup>. Please pray for these young people as they make this journey to deepen their faith.

#### **Music Ministry**

Franklin First is blessed with many talented musicians, as was evident during the Sundays of September. Our Chancel



Choir resumed their ministry on Grandparent's Sunday, and the Aspenleiter Bell Choir and the Women's Ensemble joined the Chancel Choir for Homecoming Sunday. Megan is a joy at the piano, Trisha keeps the beat going, and others share their instrumental talents as well...flute, violin, cello, organ. Connie whistles beautiful pieces. Thanks to everyone who shares their musical skills. You do not have to have perform solos to be a part of our music program. Talk to our directors, Monica and Tami, and see where you can plug in.

#### **Homecoming Celebration**

We celebrated our annual Homecoming on September 22, and each of our choirs shared their message in music and did a wonderful job. Our guest musician was Priscilla Acuff at the organ. The theme was God's creation, and music and message extolled the beauty of nature and the Creator.

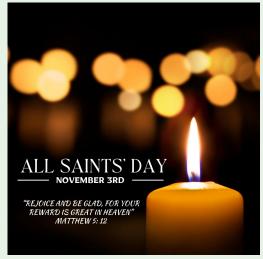
Following worship, folks enjoyed a complimentary meal from the food truck Coffee Collab. The menu was wood-fired pizza, pulled pork and cole slaw, along with pies provided by Women's Circle members. No one left hungry! Thanks to everyone who helped make Homecoming such a memorable time.











#### **All Saints Sunday**

Looking ahead, all Saints Sunday will be observed Nov. 3. We will be remembering those who have joined the Church Triumphant since All Saints Day last year. You are welcome to submit a picture of your loved one by **October 27** for use in the worship service.

This year, we are inviting you to give a donation to the church in honor or memory of someone who is no longer with us, but was instrumental in your faith walk. We will use these offerings to our Children's Ministry to purchase bibles for our Confirmation class and bibles for our third graders.



#### **Angel Shop**

Franklin First's Angel Shop has done a booming business during the Homecoming season this year. Jenny Chilcutt has done a great job heading this ministry as young people from the area have enjoyed shopping for their formal attire for Homecoming celebrations. Jenny and her mom Tami Chamberlain used grant money to upgrade the atmos-

phere to be more of a luxury

boutique. Beautiful dresses, shoes, jewelry, and men's wear have been donated from supporters in the community. They are then made available for free. As word about the shop has gotten out the number of shoppers increased. This valuable service will be made available again next year at prom time. Thanks Jenny and crew!







#### **Gerke Parent-Teacher Conference Meals**

We will be providing meals for teachers at Gerke Elementary during Parent-Teacher conferences on **October 24 and 30<sup>th</sup>.** The meals will be set

up buffet-style so that staff can dish up as their schedules allow. If you would like to help with this initiative, please talk to Pastor Laura ASAP.





#### **Snack Packs are Back**

Franklin First began packing Snack Packs on September 16 for Gerke Elementary First Graders. We are again working with Principal Jim Rhoades on this invaluable ministry. Packing is done Wednesday afternoons at 1:30, and you are welcome to join this ministry. If you'd like to donate, you can purchase shelf-stable food items or designate an offering for "snack packs."

## The Dignity Index

The Dignity Index can help people come together and treat one another with dignity. Use the tool to self-assess your biases and treat others how you like to be treated.

- 8 "Each one of us is born with inherent worth, so we treat everyone with dignity no matter what."
- "We fully engage with the other side, discussing even values and interests we don't share, open to admitting mistakes or changing our minds."
- 6 "We always talk to the other side, searching for the values and interests we share."
- The other side has a right to be heard.
- "We're better than those people. They don't really belong. They're not one of us."
- We're the good people and they're the bad people. It's us vs. Them."
- 2 "Those people are evil and they're going to ruin our country if we let them. It's us or them."
- \*They're not even human. It's our moral duty to destroy them before they destroy us."

"Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." – Romans 12:10, NIV





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## Building Skills for Dignified Conversations

Let's practice ways we can honor someone's dignity, especially when we disagree.

Be curious, not furious

Try to learn more about a person and their views.

Regulate, then debate

When you start to get upset, pause and take a breath before speaking.

Listen to hear, not to respond

Intentionally listen to understand the other person's beliefs.

Challenge ideas, not the value of the person Speak your truth and do it with dignity.

Acknowledge knowledge

Recognize when someone makes an interesting or logical point.

Build up rather than tear down

Advocate, explain and build up your idea rather than attack others' ideas.

To learn more, visit dignityindex.us

Campaignforkindness.com





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Join our Faith Seekers group on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am. All are invited!

## Franklin First Online Giving

Online giving is a great choice for when you are unable to join us for Worship to continue to support the church. You can either set-up a recurring payment or give each time you visit the site.

Connect by using this link:



https://franklinfirstumc.org/giving-%26-memberresources

#### **Birthday**

October 02 Sally Fitzgerald October 04 Bill Hatfield October 5 Morgan Schramm October 5 Matthew Schramm October 08 Brady Chamberlain October 10 Robert Bowman October 15 Sue Fullen October 15 Cosette Sams October 19 **Emily Alyea** October 19 Maverick Line

#### **Anniversary**

Sept. 30 Pam & Daran Bishop October 11 Mike & Carol Runyan October 12 Mike & Linda Smith October 19 Rick & Kay Marksberry October 23 Jennifer & Cody Chilcutt October 23 Jimmy & Chelsea Trout October 26 Don & Ernestine Chamberlain October 27 Ken & Madelyn Lang

#### **Prayer for Civic Engagement**

O God of justice and peace, we pause to reflect on the extraordinary call You place upon our lives to be faithful witnesses in all we do. As we approach the time of decision in our nation, we ask for Your guidance and wisdom. Help us to discern what is right and just, and to engage with a spirit of love and humility. May our participation in the civic process be a reflection of our commitment to Your Kingdom, where righteousness and equity dwell.

We remember the sacrifices of those who came before us, who fought for the rights and freedoms we now hold. May their courage inspire us to be vigilant and proactive in ensuring that these rights are protected for all. Let our voting be an act of faithfulness, not only to our beliefs but also to the future generations who will inherit the decisions we make today. Strengthen our resolve to work for a society that mirrors Your compassion, justice, and peace.

As we prepare our hearts and minds to engage in this civic duty, remind us that our actions are a testament to the faith we profess. May we be instruments of Your peace in our communities, advocating for justice and mercy with every step we take. Guide our nation,O Lord, and help us to be Your hands and feet in this world, committed to building a future that honors You and uplifts all of Your children

Amen.



#### **Super Serve Saturday!**

It's Back! Super Serve Saturday sponsored by the Great Miami River District - October 19

After a summer-long hiatus, Super Serve Saturday returns on Saturday, October 19! You may remember the partnership between Hyde Park Community and the District office to offer monthly community serve opportunities - a way for families, multiple generations, small groups, youth groups, friends and people of all backgrounds to put their faith into action by serving in the community. And, there's something for every age and ability - no

superpowers necessary - just a willing, humble and flexible spirit and heart for all.

On October 19 there are 4 projects to choose from with 3 different organizations in Hamilton County. <u>Click here to sign up.</u>

We are hoping to expand the reach of this initiative to all counties in the Great Miami River District. If you know of any organizations who may want to participate, please contact Nancy at nnewton@wocumc.org or 513.421.2057.

#### 2024 at Franklin First

Oct	ober	24	Gerke Parent/Teacher Meal
	lissions Team begins to collect paper products	29	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
	or The Pantry	30	Snack Pack Packing, 1:30 pm
1	Noodle Making, 9 am	30	Gerke Parent Teacher Meal
1	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm	November	
2	Snack Pack Packing, 1:30 pm	Church Conference to be scheduled	
3	Noodle Packing, 9am	2	Fall Marketplace
6	World Communion Sunday	3	All Saints Sunday/Daylight Savings Ends
8	Noodle Making, 9 am	4	Christmas Basket Sign-ups
8	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm	5	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
9	Snack Pack Packing, 1:30 pm	6	Snack Pack Packing, 1:30 pm
10	Noodle Packing, 9 am	6	Finance Committee Meeting, 2:30 pm
13	Breast Cancer Awareness Sunday	11	Christmas Basket Sign-ups
14	Women's Circle Meeting/6:30 pm	11	Women's Circle Meeting; 6:30 pm
15	Noodle Making, 9 am	12	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
15	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm	12	Mission/Outreach Team, 6:30 pm
16	Snack Pack Packing, 1:30 pm	13	Snack Pack Packing, 1:30 pm
16	Finance Committee, 2:30 pm	13	Endowment Team; 2:30 pm
17	Noodle Packing, 9 am	17	Confirmation Class, 11:45 am
19	Franklin's Trunk or Treat	19	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
20	Laity Sunday	20	Snack Pack Packing, 1:30 pm
20	2nd Confirmation Class, 11:45 am	24	Thanksgiving Sunday
22	Noodle Making, 9 am	24	Hanging of the Greens
22	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm	26	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
23	Snack Pack Packing, 1:30 pm	28	Thanksgiving



Noodle Packing, 9 am

24





### CHURCH LEADERS STAND WITH HAITIAN NEIGHBORS BY: Heather Hahn

United Methodist leaders in Springfield, Ohio, and across the U.S. are standing in solidarity with Haitian migrants and condemning hateful rhetoric that targets them and their newly adopted homes.

"We are doing our best to support each other," said the Rev. Vicki Downing, pastor of Grace United Methodist Church in downtown Springfield. "It isn't us and them; it's just us."

Her congregation is one of many in the western Ohio city that counts Haitians among its parishioners. On any given Sunday, she said, about eight to 12 Haitian residents attend worship at Grace. Over the past few years, Downing has baptized three Haitian-American babies.

But this past week has shrouded her entire community in a pall of fear.

Springfield — about 27 miles northeast of Dayton — has been rocked by at least 33 bomb threats since former President Donald Trump and his Republican running mate, U.S. Sen. JD Vance, began pushing <u>false</u> <u>claims</u> that the city's Haitian migrants were eating people's pets. Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, also a Republican, told ABC's "This Week" that "there's no evidence of this at all."

All the threats turned out to be hoaxes. But they led to the evacuation of city facilities, closures of public schools, blockage of roads and lockdowns of two hospitals. The city called in Ohio state police to protect the children returning to school. The onslaught disrupted the lives of just about everyone in this city of 58,000 and terrorized the Haitian newcomers — people, it should be noted, who are in the U.S. legally.

In the midst of the upheaval, United Methodists have tried to offer both hospitality and comfort to the besieged community. In doing so, they are trying to follow God's instruction in Exodus 23:9: "You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt." It's a sentiment familiar to most Americans, who like the Israelites, can trace their family origins to other lands.

After worship this past Sunday, Downing made sure her Haitian parishioners knew she was available to listen. One member asked if she should leave Springfield. Downing answered, "You belong here."

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung, who began his leadership of the East and West Ohio conferences on Sept. 1, <u>also called on fellow United Methodists</u> to pray for all the people of Springfield.

"We pray for Springfield and its citizens who are cur-



The Greetings from Springfield, Ohio, mural has become a landmark of downtown. United Methodists in Ohio and beyond are stepping up to extend a similar welcome and show support for Haitian immigrants in the city. Springfield experienced more than 30 bomb threats after being targeted by anti-immigrant rhetoric based on false claims. Photo courtesy of Greetings Tour; used with permission.

rently experiencing chaos and hurt," Jung, an immigrant himself from South Korea, told United Methodist News. "We are concerned for the dignity and freedom of the Haitian community. I strongly believe immigrant justice belongs to all of us. Any discrimination and harm must stop."

The United Methodist Board of Church and Society <a href="mailto:shared a similar message">shared a similar message</a> — urging "United Methodists to make a bold witness, stand against hate and take action" for all immigrants.

That witness is already happening. When the Revs. Chip Freed and Terry McHugh heard the news, the pastors of Garfield Memorial United Methodist Church in the East Ohio Conference offered to share their church's "Love Your Neighbor" signs with their fellow clergy across the state. The West Ohio Conference has adapted the Garfield Memorial United Methodist design and printed signs it plans to distribute across the area on Sept. 20.

By and large, the Haitian migrants who have moved to Springfield and other cities across the U.S. have received temporary protected status. The designation, administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, means that beneficiaries can live and work anywhere in the U.S. while conditions in their home country make it unsafe for their return.

Many of the migrants came to Springfield fleeing danger in <u>Haiti, which has experienced civil conflict</u> since the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021.

(Continued on page 9)

Homeland Security has granted Haitians in the U.S. temporary protected status through Feb. 3, 2026, and may choose to extend that date.

Bottom line: The Haitian migrants in the U.S. are here legally, and they are contributing to their new communities.

Springfield city and business leaders credit the estimated 12,000 to 15,000 Haitians in the city and surrounding Clark County with helping to bolster the local economy. According to a city website of frequently asked questions, Springfield is now home to 10 new businesses started by Haitians.

City officials also have repeatedly debunked rumors that

The city of Springfield, Ohio, has put together a website to answer frequently asked questions about immigration in the city. Visit: <a href="https://springfieldohio.gov/immigration-fags/">https://springfieldohio.gov/immigration-fags/</a>

Haitians are abducting and eating people's pets. The Wall Street Journal reports that the

Trump campaign ran with the rumors even after city officials on Sept. 9 told a staff member of Vance's that they were baseless.

The city also has refuted rumors that Haitian migrants have contributed to a rise in infectious diseases, including HIV.

What is true is that the massive influx of immigrants over the past four years has brought challenges, including the need for more housing and school resources.

"The infrastructure was not prepared to receive as many immigrants who decided to come to Springfield," Downing said.

However, she added, "all of us are created in the image of God. We can all be together and love and respect each other."

High Street United Methodist Church in Springfield is among the groups helping to provide needed resources for new neighbors. The church holds English Language Learner classes with a high number of immigrants participating.

The Rev. Cynthia Atwater, the church's pastor, said she has heard from fellow United Methodists from across the state and as far away as Washington state who also are eager to help with their prayers and support.

"It makes me proud to be a connectional church," she said.

United Methodists are also seeking to uphold the sacred worth of all people <u>now that national attention is turning toward the western Pennsylvania community of Charleroi</u>, a borough of just over 4,000. Former President Donald Trump used part of his rally in Tucson, Arizona, to bash the community's Haitian immigrants. His rhetoric exacerbated already existing tensions in the borough, where some credit immigrant-owned businesses with revitalizing downtown and

others worry about the changes the newcomers bring.

Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball, who leads the Western Pennsylvania Conference, said she laments the hateful rhetoric toward the Haitian community in both Springfield and Charleroi.

"In these times of heightened polarization and division, it is more important than ever to foster a spirit of empathy, respect and understanding while working for the safety and support of our Haitian families," she said.

She added that Scripture challenges United Methodists and all Christians to choose the more perfect way of living and to embody love and respect in all interactions.

"The Great Commandment directs us to 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' The letter to the Colossians tells us to put on compassion and kindness. And Genesis reminds us that every individual is made in God's divine image and is therefore worthy of honor and respect," she said.

The Rev. Don Wilson, who recently began his appointment at Covenant United Methodist Church in Springfield, said the unity that he and others so often preach must be more than a slogan.

"It must be lived," he preached. "We are called to manifest love in radical ways, to stand in faith that lifts the weak, heals the broken and raises up the downtrodden. This is our moment to embody the love of Christ — a love that does not retreat but steps boldly into the fight for justice, truth and freedom."

Hahn is assistant news editor for UM News. Kay Panovec, director of communications for the West Ohio Conference, contributed to this story. Contact them at (615) 742-5470 or newsdesk@umcom.org.

Taken From: <a href="https://www.umnews.org/en/news/church-leaders-stand-with-haitian-neighbors">https://www.umnews.org/en/news/church-leaders-stand-with-haitian-neighbors</a>

#### Kroger Community Rewards

Have you checked the bottom of your Kroger's Receipt? If it does not list our church as your designated Community Rewards Beneficiary, follow the instructions on the back and get signed up now! Please note our new church number! You do not need to change your current account; this is for new sign-ups.



Go to: www.krogers.com

New account users: go to "Register" Create Account Or Sign-in Go to: Community – Community Rewards Click: Enroll now Church #: RK151

#### Franklin First United Methodist Church 2024 Lay Leadership Ministry

Making disciples... Building Christian community... Transforming lives!



#### **Church Council:**

Church Council Chair Mike Smith
Church Council Secretary Amber Ramsey
Lay Leader Mike Smith
Lay Member of Annual Conference Tami Chamberlain

Lay Member of Annual Conference Alternate

Treasurer Tami Chamberlain
Membership Secretary Cheryl Cyphers
Financial Secretary Theresa Fultz
Church Historian Robert Bowman
Pastor Laura Saunders

**Ministry Team Representatives:** 

Staff-Parish Peggy Darragh-Jeromos

Finance Paul Anderson Endowment Paul Anderson

Trustee Chairs Jim Martin, Mike Runyan

Worship Monica Rhude Technology Joe Chamberlain

Committee on Lay Leadership Laura Saunders
Christian Education Joe Wright, Rhonda Roberson
Missions & Outreach Linda Smith, Karen Anderson

Care Team Lee Saunders

Hospitality & Events TBD

Welcoming Ministry Dorothy Rayburg
Women's Circle Monica Rhude
Member At Large Kaylee Glossip
Member At Large Amber Ramsey

#### **Staff-Parish Relations Committee:**

Chair: Peggy Darragh-Jeromos Lay Leader: Mike Smith Terms expiring 2024: Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson Terms expiring 2025 Cheryl Cyphers, Mishelle Dicken

Terms expiring 2026

Sue Fullen, Peggy Darragh-Jeromos, Pam Trout

Trustees: Co-Chairs: Jim Martin, Mike Runyan

Terms expiring 2024: Jan Abell, Jim Martin, Trisha Dicken

Terms expiring 2025:

Cody Chilcutt, Mike Runyan, Connie Bolinger

Terms expiring 2026:

Gary Ogden, Joe Chamberlain, Joe Wright

Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations):

Chair: Pastor Laura Saunders Mike Smith, Lay Leader

Terms expiring 2024: Ken Smith, Shirley Berold

Terms expiring 2025:

Kathy Martin, Peggy Darragh-Jeromos

Terms expiring 2026: Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson

Finance Committee: (By virtue

of office.)

Chair Paul Anderson
Treasurer: Tami Chamberlain
Financial Secretary: Theresa Fultz
Church Council Chair: Mike Smith

Trustees Co-Chairs: Jim Martin, Mike Runyan Staff Parish Chair: Peggy Darragh-Jeromos

Lav Leader: Mike Smith

Lay Member of Annual Conference: Tami Chamberlain

Pastor: Laura Saunders

Permanent Endowment Fund Committee

Chair of Finance Committee
Church Treasurer
Chair of Board of Trustees
Chair of Church Council
Lay Leader
Member at Large (Term: 2023-24)
Manual Anderson
Tami Chamberlain
Jim Martin
Mike Smith
Mike Smith
Monica Rhude

Member at Large (Term: 2024-25) Ken Smith
Pastor (non-voting member) Laura Saunders

Worship Ministry Team: Chair: Monica Rhude

Choir Director: Monica Rhude
Bell Choir Director: Tami Chamberlain

Altar Design:

Kay Marksberry, Pam Bishop, Shari Tutt, Carol Runyan

Technology: Joe Chamberlain
Lay Leader: Mike Smith
Pastor: Laura Saunders

**Mission & Outreach Team:** 

Co-Chairs: Linda Smith, Karen Anderson

Madelyn Lang, Karen Anderson, Tami Chamberlain, Marna

Rogers, Sally Fitzgerald,

**Technology Team:** Chair: Joe Chamberlain

Joe Chamberlain, Trisha Dicken, Andy Kuntzman, Tami Chamberlain, LeeAnn Lee, Paul Anderson, Rick Chamberlain

**Christian Education Team:** 

Co-Chairs: Joe Wright (Adult) Rhonda Roberson (Children)

Jan Truesdell, Rachel Chamberlain, Madelyn Lang, Carol Runyan, Joe Wright, Rhonda Roberson

Care Team: Chair: Lee Saunders

Lee Saunders (phone contact); Charlotte Summer, Dorothy Rayburg, Jan Truesdell, Judy Deskins

(visitation team)



# TEEPLE BELL NEWSLETTER

#### Franklin First United Methodist Church



Pastor Laura Saunders

**Sunday Worship Service** 10:45 am Livestreaming on Facebook

Faith Seekers Bible Study Sundays, 9:15 am

## Upcoming Events September 29—October 27 "Do Unto Others" Sermon Series October 13 Breast Cancer Awareness Sunday October 19 Franklin's Trunk or Treat November 2 Fall Marketplace November 3 All Saint's Sunday November 4 & 11 Christmas Basket Sign-Ups November 24 Thanksgiving Sunday

#### Franklin First United Methodist Church

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PLEASE PLACE STAMP HERE

