

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

March 2020



Vision Statement:

***We are a church centered in Christ,
inviting all into a community of worship,
nurturing all to be disciples of Jesus.
Together we reach out to make a difference
here and throughout the world.***

Our Savior's Voice

March 2020

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Spoiler alert: Lent, confirmation, and Bay City, Michigan all have something linking them together...



How so? Read on!

Let's start the newsletter from Messiah Lutheran Church in Bay City. The pastor, Andreas Teich, a classmate of mine, shared a blog entry from Brian Hehn, Director of The Center For Congregational Song of the Hymn Society of the United States and Canada. Originally posted December 18, 2019, these reflections seemed worthy to share with you.

After dismissing the idea that the church is dying, Hehn says this:

The church isn't held together by what we do or don't do. If that was the case, there wouldn't be a church today. Seriously...have you read church history? It's terrible. Have you read the Old Testament? The people of Israel screw things up pretty consistently. If you think the church is doing things today that are unrivaled in their bad-ness...please read more history and more scripture. The church isn't held together by what we do or don't do; it's held together by the Spirit of God. Always moving, provoking, stirring in new and unexpected places: The Spirit is always at work in, around, and in spite of whatever evil we can throw at it. That is why the church still exists today.

If we're worried about the church "dying," that says more about our faith in God (or lack thereof) than in the long-term viability of the church. If you're more concerned about preserving the church than you are following God's call at any time, you've lost your way and you are part of the problem. Is God not loving enough to see the church into its next step? Is God not faithful enough to stick by us this time? I believe in a God who is more faithful, loving, and compassionate than I can possibly imagine...so I just don't have time or energy to worry about the church's longevity.

Brian goes on to say that many of his millennial friends are turned off by the church because it seems that too often church is about...church! Not God, not an excitement for the good news of Jesus, not the needs of people. The church is concerned with itself. They're not into that, and Brian says, "I don't blame them."

The future of the church (actually, the future of everything) is in God's hands. Got that? GOD'S...not ours. And that means that we are freed to focus on our calling, not ourselves. Indeed, our biggest problem is not that we don't do enough. Rather, we do too much of our own stuff, of our own creation, and our own "fixing," and not enough of God's stuff! And in the end, that's what matters, because it's still up to God!

Which brings me to Lent. Lent, which began February 26 and runs until Holy Week and Easter (April 5-12), is traditionally about three things:

1. We hear and reflect on the suffering and passion of Jesus.
2. We take a look in the mirror, reflect on our sinfulness and failings, and seek to live different lives.
3. Ponder anew what it means to be baptized, and to live as faithful disciples of Jesus.

Good stuff, all of it! And we should do all that.

But what if instead of focusing on us as persons we did the same for us as a congregation? What if we took stock of our work together, acknowledged our failings and shortcomings, and then remembered who we are – a community of the baptized – a gathering of disciples?

And then, what if we really got into God, the gospel of Jesus, and the needs of those around is – and let God handle our future?

That starts with discerning God's calling as we listen to God speak. Which leads me to part two. Want to try a different way to listen to God speak?

Take a walk. No, not on the wild side. Take a walk in the neighborhood, or maybe in the woods.

Sunday, March 29 join Adam Kennedy's confirmation small group as they take a stroll from church (at 9:30 AM) down to Lake Neshonoc, and back again. See our neighborhood with new eyes. Chat with others as they do the same. Listen to God speak in the sounds and silence around you. Then, return to be fed with God's gifts of grace so you can...go back out into the world around us!

Or...

Sunday, April 19, join the Forward: Fearless and Faithful team on another forest walk. Keep your eyes peeled as you look for God at work in the renewal of life and spring begins to "spring forth."

More details on both of these elsewhere in this newsletter. But either way, listen to God speak, and know that God is here...God is in charge...and God holds the future – yours and that of the church – in very good and secure hands!

Pastor Jon





Wednesdays in Lent

March 4 through April 1

11:30 a.m.

Mid-day contemplative worship

5:30 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Holden Evening Prayer Worship

With a presentation of "You Heard What?"

6:15 p.m.

Soup supper with proceeds to the
World Hunger Appeal

Lenten Dinners

Lenten dinners will be held each Wednesday from March 4 through April 1 at 6:15 PM. Proceeds will go toward the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Join us for the meal and fellowship, and to support an important ministry!

Who's cooking each week? Check out the list:

- March 4 – Josh Iliff and his band of NHS chefs
- March 11 – Outreach Committee
- March 18 – Congregation Council
- March 25 - Wendy and her 6th grade crew
- April 1 – ???

Notice the ??? We are looking for one more team to provide soup for 50-60. How about you? Confirmation groups do the set-up, serving and clean up, and the proceeds go to fight hunger. See Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean to become a part of this ministry!



Sunday School News

The year is flying by. We just said good-bye to the *alleluias* and buried them under the altar, not to be spoken again until Easter morning.

In the midst of a winter storm in early February, 9 children, 4 teachers, and a music leader braved the weather to be here to learn about Jesus and sing his praises! Wow!

Our ***Sunday School offerings*** this year are being collected for **Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR)**. In the aftermath of the devastation of Hurricane Dorian in August 2019, LDR is there to help with the clean-up and rebuilding. And we want to help, too! We initially collected \$369.50 to help with the clean-up phase, and are now working to add bricks to our house as we help to rebuild shelter for those who have become homeless. Through late February we have collected \$349.36 for this effort. The 2nd grade class is leading the way with \$88, followed by the 1st grade with \$69.30 and the 4th grade with \$61.50. Check out our progress on the poster in the Gathering Area.



Important Dates

Sunday, March 1 - Grades 4K-2 sing at 10:30 worship
Sunday, March 15 - Grades 3-5 sing at 10:30 worship
Sunday, April 12 (Easter) - All grades sing at 10:30
Sunday, April 12 (Easter) - No Sunday School classes
Sunday, May 10 (Mother's Day) - All grades sing at 10:30

First Communion Class

First Communion workshops will be held Sundays, March 22 and April 5 from 1:30- 3PM. Parents and students are expected to attend both sessions. This is for all those in 5th grade and those confirmation students who have not yet had the class. If there are younger students who would like to receive the sacraments, please speak with one of the pastors to make special arrangements.



SUGAR CREEK BIBLE CAMP - 2020

"Generations"

Check out the brochures for camp on the kiosk in the gathering area!

OUR SAVIOR'S CAMPERSHIPS AVAILABLE

\$200 full week -- \$100 half week

**Request forms due in the office NO LATER than
April 26th**

(Forms will be available in the church office,
on the kiosk in the gathering area,
or on the website – www.oursaviorswestsaalem.org)

Confirmation Update

Confirmation classes for 6-8th graders take a break in March, while our 7/8th graders assist with worship leadership, and soup suppers.



9th graders meet after 7 PM worship March 4-11-18-25 to work on banners.

Looking ahead...Confirmation Sunday is April 26. Please keep our confirmation students, parents, and guides in your prayers as they continue to explore what it means to be disciples of Jesus!



Hungry Jar Offering for March West Salem Community Assistance Fund

The West Salem Community Assistance Fund has been around for over 30 years helping those in our community and those passing through who are in need of assistance. The funds are used to help get a few groceries and/or gas for the car, and on occasion other needs. It is supported financially by some of the local churches and area businesses.

The Community Assistance Team includes people from the schools, law enforcement, area businesses, Gundersen, and two of the churches. Upon the retirement of Pastor Larry Olson from the Presbyterian Church, the fund is now managed and distributed by Our Savior's. Please be generous as we support this important ministry in our community.



“Youth and Family Ministry We Stand Together”

From Wendy Kane, Interim Youth Director

Breakfast Club

High school and middle school
students –
Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Kitchen)



Each Sunday is an experience all its own and everyone that comes in enjoys making breakfast and eating what they made, as well as enjoying each other's company and laughs. There is always room for more. Come join us and experience it for yourself!

MISSION POSSIBLE

Mini Mission Trip Update

Thank you to Carolyn Karl,
Bennett Fennigkoh, Elliott

Sjoquist, Scarlett Fullwood, Kylee Gander, Brooke Gander, Eve Twite and her friend Victoria! Everyone learned so much about the Warming Center in LaCrosse, and they all did an amazing job deep cleaning the facility. Our guide for the day was so thankful for all the items that our Church collected and for the hard work the kids put into cleaning.

Watch for details for the next Mini Mission Trip. We hope to see more kids joining in the learning and hands-on experience each location can bring.



ELCA Youth Gathering 2021 June 29-July 3 Minneapolis

It's time to start planning for next year's Youth Gathering!

There will be an **informational meeting** for those who may be interested in attending the Gathering on **Sunday, March 22 at 11:45 am** (following the 10:30 worship service) in the Youth Room. We will discuss tentative costs and fundraising opportunities. If you have an interest or questions, but can't attend the meeting, please contact Wendy Kane (youth@oursaviorswestsalem.org) or Pastor Jean.

In the meantime, check out the information on the ELCA website: www.elca.org/gathering.



You are invited ...

This new group is a great way to connect with moms and their children through the church. Feel free to join us between worship services on **Sundays in the library** for coffee and conversation while the children are busy in Sunday School. Check out the Facebook page to find information for upcoming events and to share ideas.

OSLC West Salem Mom's Group



As our students are either away from home or studying in challenging environments, we keep them in our thoughts and prayers. This month please pray for:

college
connection

Molly Hunter (Univ. of St. Thomas, MN),
Alysha Hesse (WTC), **Sydney Fitzpatrick** (WTC),
Delaney Schomberg (UW-L), **Abby Johnson** (UW-L),
and **Olivia Haun** (Winona State).

Strolling...



Confirmation Style!

Adam Kennedy's confirmation group invites – welcomes – even challenges(?) you to join them in a leisurely stroll to connect with the neighborhood, the outdoors, and God. **Sunday, March 29, between services.**

We begin at 9:30 AM at church...walk down to Lake Neshonoc, then return for worship at 10:30 AM. Everyone is welcome to join the group. This will be a morning of conversation and reflection as we take in the fresh spring air prior to worship.

And strolling some more...



Forward: Fearless and Faithful (style)!

Coming soon...the next "FFF" outdoor walk. April 19, we head again to the Experimental Forest to see where God is poking up in the midst of creation, the coming of spring, and the renewal of the land. Almost 30 made the walk in January – how about in the light of Easter? Watch for details!

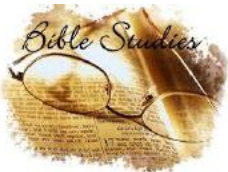


**Prayer Journey
March 9
@ Salem Terrace
9:30 am**



Join us for breakfast and conversation

The coffee is perking as we gather for fellowship and study. We meet in the small kitchenette off of the parking lot between Salem Terrace & Mill Street Manor. Feel free to invite your friends.



Confused and Bewildered?

So am I! The gospel reading in worship is sometimes like “Greek” to me – how about you? So, what’s one to do about it? Join our Wednesday morning Bible, at 9:30 AM, in the Library. Each week we look at the coming Sunday’s Gospel text, and maybe even contribute some thoughts toward the sermon (but don’t worry, writing it is still the pastors’ task!). No experience or prior knowledge necessary – just a thirst for God’s Word and for good conversation!

OWLS



On March 26 the OWLS will be touring Havenwood, an independent and assisted living facility, located in Onalaska.

Elizabeth Meyer, a spokes-person for Havenwood said after the tour of the facility there will be a discussion about issues important to seniors and plenty of treats. If you are interested in touring the facility please call Judy Long at 786-1142 or put your name on the sign-up sheet. We will meet at Church at 1:00 PM to car pool to the facility.



Coffee & Conversation at Linda's Bakery
9:15 AM on Tuesday, March 10



Don't forget to spring ahead March 7



Living Lutheran subscriptions

Living Lutheran is the magazine of the ELCA. Our Savior's makes this publication

available to those who would like to receive it. We ask you to consider helping to defray the cost of \$10/year. If you are interested in receiving a subscription, or making a change to your current subscription, please contact the office.



Thank you

Thank you to all those who helped to make the new pictorial directory a reality. It was a labor of love that took lots of work. We will be putting the final touches on in March and hope to have the directory available in April – watch for details.

Thank you to ...

... those who had their pictures taken or submitted them
 ... those who made phone calls – Connie Blunck, Carla Burkhardt, Karen DeSchepper, Judy Gilbert
 ... those who hosted and greeted folks – Steve Ahles, Carla Burkhardt, Cheryl Fosler, Jan Goetzinger, Jon & Maryrose Hetland, Ken Isler, Judy Long, Kay Niemeier, Velma Schmidt, Joe & Carol Stekel, Chad Vick
 ... those who worked behind the scenes – Kris Seeger, Josh Corning, Pastor Jon, Pastor Jean

And a special **THANK YOU to Marion Stensven** for ALL that she did (which was pretty much everything - coordinating, calling, scheduling, hosting). We couldn't have done it without you!



Calling all Pray-ers

Over the last many years, we have had a faithful group of folks lifting up prayers for those in need – whether it's celebrating an event, asking for healing and wholeness, sharing the grief of loss, and all other needs. Requests are shared with the pastors and the prayer petition is then sent out via e-mail to those who have volunteered to pray on their behalf. Keeping privacy in mind, the names of individuals being prayed for may or may not be the person's real name, but God knows who they are and that's all that matters.

In the transition to new computers last fall, Pastor Jean lost all of her contacts, including the list of those who had volunteered to be pray-ers in the past. So ... if you were on that list or if you would like to be added to the list, please send Pastor Jean an email (so she has your email!) at pastorjean@oursaviorswestsalem.org.



Let's not have prayer fall through the cracks!



Our Savior's Loves New Members!

If you are new to Our Savior's, but have not joined the congregation, we welcome you to consider membership with us. While EVERYONE is welcome in worship, and our ministry involves ALL of God's children, members help us by making a commitment to this community of faith, and by taking a role in leading our ministry. Regardless of where you are coming from, we would love to have you, and to partner with you in your journey of discipleship. See Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean for more information.



Thank you ...

... to the February newsletter mailing crew –
Connie & Larry Blunck, Bev Bockenbauer,
Saundra Holthaus, Carolyn Karl, Judy
Morzinski, Velma Schmidt, Barb Schomburg,
Marion Stensven, and Betty Whitlock.

From others ...

I want to thank the Prayer Shawl ministry for the bright yellow shawl that a member crocheted. Also, I very much appreciated Pastor Jon's visit and the congregation prayers and well wishes. Our Savior's is a great church family that means so much during hospitalizations.

Carol Stekel

Thank-you for the prayer blessing and the prayer shawl for Meryl Kirkeng. We are very grateful for your kindness. She is doing well at Mulders Health Care Facility.

Meryl and Family

Thank you all for the cards, sweet gifts and kind words you have sent. It is greatly appreciated. Blessings,

Alice Hesselberg

In Loving Memory

Memorial Gifts Received ...

In Memory of Steven Bartz

From The Brooks Family

**For Endowment Fund from Eric & Lynette Ender
Bonnie Ender**





Congregation Council Review

The Congregation Council met on Monday, February 10, with Pastor Jon calling the meeting to order. At this meeting the council:

- Welcomed new council members: Jaime Fortier, Bonnie Gensch, Naoko Giblin, Carolyn Karl, and Chad Vick.
- Elected Steve Ahles, President; Tracy Beckley, Vice President; Wendy Kane, Secretary; Jill Iliff, Treasurer.
- Received the pastors' reports and financial reports for January, approved the minutes of the January council meeting, and the minutes of the Annual Meeting.
- Heard updates on Forward: Fearless and Faithful; Stewardship for All Seasons; the child safety policy review; the financial practices review and audit.
- Discussed business for the council in 2020 including the membership review, Wednesday worship, revitalizing the youth committee, and increased youth ministry staffing.

The council meets again on Monday, March 9. See Steve Ahles or one of the pastors if you have any questions.

New Congregation Officers

New year, new leaders! The Congregation Council has elected new leaders for 2020.

- President – Steve Ahles
- Vice-President – Tracey Beckley
- Secretary – Wendy Kane
- Treasurer – Jill Iliff

Thank you to all our officers for their willingness to serve the church – and Jesus – in this way!



Our Savior's Mission in the World

Want to make a difference in someone's life?
And your life at the same time? Pray! And
that's what we do at Our Savior's – we pray!

We pray in worship – and when we offer the
prayer petitions, WE pray – whoever wants to
pray speaks the prayer – even children!



We also have a prayer labyrinth in the lot across the street
from the church. ANYONE can walk the labyrinth, lifting up
prayers with each step into the labyrinth and also as you walk
out. There are scripture passages along the way for your
inspiration, and a bench in the center to provide a place to sit
and pray for as long as you want before you begin the journey
out of the sacred space back into the routines of daily life.

Other prayer ministries include prayer shawls created, blessed,
and offered in worship, then gifted to someone in need. Need
a prayer shawl for someone you know or yourself? See one of
the pastors!

And...Our Savior's also has an email prayer chain. Prayer
requests are received by the pastors and then Pastor Jean sends
the requests out to the pray-er, with an appropriate level of
confidentiality. If you want to be included on the prayer chain,
please let Pastor Jean know.

All sorts of prayer ministries to keep us connected to a good
and gracious God. Gotta love it!

***Thank you for your support of our prayer ministry and all our
ministries at Our Savior's. You make a difference in the lives
of many – and you are a gift to all of us!***

Celebrate West Salem Business Expo



The annual Celebrate West Salem Business Expo will be held on Sunday, March 15 at the West Salem High School from 11:00 am -2:00 pm. This impressive event features a wide variety of businesses and organizations from the area. Look for fellow church members at a number of the booths and be sure to stop by the Our Savior's table to sample the best lutefisk and meatballs you can fit in a 3 oz. cup!



Thrivent Choice Dollars

Remember that if you are a Thrivent member you may have “Thrivent Choice Dollars” to direct. Our Savior's is one of the many potential recipients of your choice dollars, but your direction needs to be made each time. See Thrivent's web site for more information or stop by the office and we will help you out.



Shopping Online?

Our Savior's now has an account with “Amazon Smile.” If you shop with Amazon, you can support our work together by designating your “Amazon Smile” contribution to Our Savior's.



Powered By Vanco Payment Solutions

New! Electronic giving options!

Giving via electronic transfer...

- At oursaviorswestsalem.org, click the “Give” tab at the top.
- Click *Give Online*.
- Your contribution is made directly from your financial institution, and is protected by secure software.
- When making your first gift, set up a GivePlus account.
- You can make a one-time gift, or set up recurring gifts.
- Recurring gifts can be changed at any time.
- Bank transfers have the lowest fees for Our Savior’s, allowing for the greatest amount of your gift to go toward the ministries of Jesus Christ!

Giving via mobile app...

- Visit the App Store or Google Play and search for “GivePlus Church” to download the app for free.
- Select Our Savior’s as your default church.
- Tap *Donate Now*.
- Enter your payment information.
- Review & complete your donation.
- Easily create an account to set up recurring donations and review your giving history.

Giving via text...

- Text to 608-471-7267
- Enter amount
- Send
- The first time you use texting, you will be asked to register your payment information; after that, enter the amount and send the text.

Give in confidence!

At Our Savior’s we take seriously the need for integrity in our financial practices, and we strive to make certain that our resources make a difference in the world. Periodic audits and public reports ensure that we are good stewards of your gifts! And ***thank you for your support!***

WORSHIP LEADERS - Feb 29-March 1

6 p.m.

Acolyte Morgan Quackenbush
Reader Connie Pinski
Communion Assistant Judy Morzinski
Ushers



8 a.m.

Acolytes Brandon Riley
Readers Ilene Pavelko
Communion Assistants
 Bonny Goodenough
 Melody Schmitz
Baskets Brooke Gander
Ushers Kyle Twite Family
Home Communion Betty Whitlock / Diane McClintock
Altar Guild Pam Gresens / Jill Iliff

10:30 a.m.

Sophia Taylor
Jim Quamme

Jane Frank
Stacey Sjoquist
Jayden Hansen
Stefferdud Family

***ALTAR GUILD FOR MARCH -** Cindy Averbeck / Jaime Fortier

WORSHIP LEADERS - LENT March 4

5:30 p.m.

Acolytes Ella Beal
Ushers Conf. Small Group

7 p.m.

Eva Clements
Conf. Small Group

WORSHIP LEADERS - March 7-8

6 p.m.

Acolyte Elly Goodenough
Reader Bev Bockenbauer
Communion Assistant Judy Gilbert
Ushers Steve & Sue Ahles

8 a.m.

Acolytes Ben Fleckenstein
Readers
Communion Assistants

Vicky Johnson

10:30 a.m.

Alena Donahue
Stacey Sjoquist

Carla Burkhardt
Jane Frank

8 a.m.

Baskets Danielle Christianson
 Ushers Dale & Kathy Anderson
 Home Communion Marjorie Anderson

10:30 a.m.

Cade Donahue

WORSHIP LEADERS - LENT March 11**5:30 p.m.**

Acolytes Jacob Helgeson
 Ushers Conf. Small Group

7 p.m.

Kendra Hillyer
 Conf. Small Group

WORSHIP LEADERS - March 14-15**6 p.m.**

Acolyte Ruby Hughes
 Reader Kay Niemeier
 Communion Assistant Judy Morzinski
 Ushers Tim Goodenough Family

8 a.m.

Acolytes Morgan Kammel
 Readers Lynette Ender
 Communion Assistants
 Marjorie Anderson
 Judy Long
 Baskets Madison Elsen
 Ushers Dennis Baumgartner
 Larry Blunck
 Home Communion Dottie Baumgartner
 Communion Bread Karen Tiber

10:30 a.m.

Brett McConkey
 Kristin Tschumper

 Kyle Twite
 Carolyn Karl
 Baylee Faucett
 Paul & Tracey Beckley

WORSHIP LEADERS - LENT March 11**5:30 p.m.**

Acolytes Morgan Quackenbush
 Ushers Conf. Small Group

7 p.m.

Brandon Riley
 Conf. Small Group

WORSHIP LEADERS - March 21-22

6 p.m.

Acolyte Siri Anderson
Reader Karen DeSchepper
Communion Assistant Bonnie Gensch
Ushers Tony & Jennifer Bell Family

8 a.m.

Acolytes Mia Bahl
Readers Kathy Wehrs
Communion Assistants
 Pam Gresens
 Eric Ender
Baskets Bennett Fennigkoh
Ushers Ron & Twila Bores Family
Home Communion Bev Bockenbauer

10:30 a.m.

Benjamin Bakkum
Michelle Witte

Wendy Kane
Michelle Witte
Jaxson Hauser
Tom Campbell Family

WORSHIP LEADERS - LENT March 25

5:30 p.m.

Acolytes Derek Bores
Ushers Conf. Small Group

7 p.m.

Adelyn Burt
Conf. Small Group

WORSHIP LEADERS - March 28-29

6 p.m.

Acolyte Noah Campbell
Reader Andy Bakkum
Communion Assistant Jon Hetland
Ushers Jon & Maryrose Hetland

8 a.m.

Acolytes Sophia Clements
Readers _____
Communion Assistants
 Sharon Olson
 Eric Iliff
Baskets Aidan Hillyer
Ushers Rich Clements Family
Home Communion Judy Gilbert

10:30 a.m.

Haley Chandler
Dottie Baumgartner

Denise Jones
Chad Vick
Parker Hundt
Kyle Twite Family

Web Site: www.oursaviorswestsalem.org
OUR SAVIOR'S STAFF

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Kathy Brisson, Organist
Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director
Karen DeSchepper, Financial Secretary
Josh Corning, Custodian



**Family Farm Project
2020
“Synod Barn Raising”**

Raising Awareness of the
Family Farm.
Raising Money for World Hunger.

Watch for details in the coming
weeks.
Each farm is \$715

EASTER GARDEN



Once again you will have the opportunity to fill the sanctuary with flowers in memory or honor of a loved one(s). The cost of the spring flowers will be \$20.

The money will be used to buy an assortment of spring flowers from Stems Floral for an Easter display.

Please fill out this form and submit the \$20 to the Church Office by **April 5**. These gifts and names will be acknowledged in the Easter Sunday Bulletin.

Name _____ \$ _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
359 Leonard St N
West Salem, WI 54669

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
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West Salem, WI
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