

THE penn street LETTER

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The official monthly newsletter of First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth

Prairie Valley Legacy Fund Engages Dozens of Children & Youth Throughout Grace Presbytery



Prairie Valley was a rustic, church-owned, small group camping facility serving the Presbyterian congregations in the south and west ends of Grace Presbytery. It was managed by representatives from 21 congregations who made financial contributions to a not-for-profit corporation. When the property was sold in 2010, per a prior agreement, the proceeds reverted to First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth, with the proviso that the money be used to provide "a program of Christian camping." Now, these funds are used to benefit the congregations, children, and youth of Grace Presbytery, with priority given to children and youth from the 18 remaining congregations that were part of the Prairie Valley Camp Corporation.

For many children and youth, this fund is their only chance to experience camps that are so vital for building faith-based friendships, studying the Bible, learning how to serve others, and more. Christian educator, Sue Suneson, shares, "I am very grateful for the Prairie Valley Fund, because camp grows bonds among our children, and bonds with their greater Presbyterian family. Our youth program is stronger because of the camp experience." Expressing her love of Eco Camp, Isabella says, "It gave me a chance to connect with God a lot more than usual- I loved it."

The Prairie Valley Legacy Fund supports the following programs: KidQuake, YouthQuake, JHAMs (Junior High and Middle School Conference at Austin College), and Eco Camp (Ferncliff Presbyterian Conference Center in Little Rock, Arkansas).

In addition to these programs, \$25,000 was approved by the



Session of First Presbyterian Church Fort Worth in the Fall of 2016 and has, to date, been used to scholarship 105 children and youth from Grace Presbytery churches at attend any PC(USA) camp or conference. These included the above programs as well as others; such as Gilmont Summer Camp, Montreat Youth Conference, Mo-Ranch Leadership Development and Summer Camp, Synod Youth Workshop, church Mission Trips, and Youth Celebration.

The 105 children and youth represent 16 churches in Grace Presbytery and are shown on the chart above.

First Presbyterian thanks God for the opportunity to be entrusted with the Prairie Valley Legacy Fund resources and rejoices for the hundreds of children and youth engaged each year!

PASTORS' LETTER



Dear friends,

Anne Lamott once observed, "Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes...including you." This is my new mantra. It speaks to me on a number of levels.

For starters, I love technology. Ever since I was a kid and got my first "calculator watch" for Christmas, I was hooked. To this day, technology plays a big part of my life, including my career (i.e. communicating with youth through technology is a necessity). Recently, during the summer, my 2 year old daughter picked up my cell phone and proceeded to hold it in front of her face and exclaimed, "Cheese!" Then, her twin brother grabbed the cell phone away from her, put it up to his ear, and walked away from us while saying, "Hello! Yaya! Bababababa!" It was cute, for sure -- however, their mirroring of my activity on a cell phone also caused a sobering conviction deep within me...namely, that my 2 year olds associate a lot of what I do and who I am with my strong connection to technology. Technology is super helpful and a wonderful tool in my life, but its overuse can also distract me from remembering and interacting with what matters most: my God, my faith, and my family. This life lesson hit me square between the eyes in a very real way. Since then, I am thankful that our 2 year old twins are continuing to teach me the importance of putting my technology in its proper place.

This fall, I felt led to set some new technology boundaries for myself as well as for the young people in our Youth Group. With the 10-year birthday of the famous iPhone this year, it was high time to do this. Our goal has not been to get rid of all of our wonderful technology, but we do focus on avoiding the "solitary use" of screens (i.e. individual cell phones, smart devices, tablets, etc.)...this means that when we do use technology, we make sure to use it together as a community. With the help of some wonderful adult volunteers, we are also experimenting with a "charging station" in our Youth Center to see if this would encourage our young people and adult leaders (yours truly included!) to choose to charge their devices electronically while Youth Group charges together spiritually during our community-building activities. I'm thrilled to say that it is all going really well, and our young people are continuing to teach me more and more on this subject matter. They are, after all, an extremely connected generation and their sensitivity and passion are such important gifts to all of us in the church.

Is there anything in your life that is creating a barrier to your ability to be fully present in the moment? Are there distractions keeping you from being aware of the truly precious gifts and blessings that God gives us each new day? Think about it. Pray about it. Ask God for help. Take a moment to let go of those pressures and anxieties. Then, spend some time listening. After all, as Anne Lamott said, "Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes...including you."

Keep on keeping on,

Generosity Reminder: Pledge Cards

If you have not yet turned in your pledge card, following Generosity Sunday on October 29, you may do so in the following ways:

ONLINE: Visit fpcf.org/give and submit the form.

BY MAIL: Complete the pledge card you received in the mail and return it using the provided envelope. Extra cards are available in the Narthex outside the Sanctuary and at the Welcome Desk outside the Great Hall.

AT CHURCH: Bring your completed pledge card to church on Sunday and place in the offering plate at worship or drop by the church office during regular business hours (M-F, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

EARLY DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS!

Submissions for the December issue of the newsletter are due **Wednesday, November 8**. This is one week earlier than in previous months due to Thanksgiving. Please send to Teresa Tysinger at ttysinger@fpcf.org or bring by the church office.

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Make Plans to Attend a Very Special Worship Service on Wednesday, November 1 at 7 p.m.

All Saints Day, Wednesday, November 1, is designated for the remembrance of departed sisters and brothers in Christ, who having lived this life in faith, inspire us to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. Held in God's faithful and eternal love, we gather to remember those dear to us, and especially First Presbyterian Church members, who have died during the previous year. This beautiful service includes scripture, prayers, communion, and several musical offerings from the Chancel Choir that inspire and comfort us. The choir will be singing *How Lovely is Thy Dwelling Place* from the Brahms *Requiem*, a beautiful new arrangement of *It is Well with My Soul*, and a tender arrangement of *Children of the Heavenly Father*. Childcare is available for the service.

Please feel free to invite family and friends to attend this beautiful and moving service with you as we remember all those dear to us who are now a part of the great cloud of witnesses.

All Saints Day Labyrinth Walk

From 3-6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 1, you are invited to walk the outdoor stone labyrinth in the Memorial Garden in memory of a loved one. If you are unable to walk the labyrinth, a Labyrinth Guild member is happy to walk in your place as you sit nearby. Watching another walk in remembrance of your loved one(s) can be moving, while being less physically taxing on you. Members will also be available to provide information. *Note: An indoor labyrinth will be provided in event of bad weather.*

Brunch & Chili Cook Off

On Sunday, November 5 at the All Church Brunch (seatings at 11 a.m. and Noon), the Fellowship Committee will bring back the popular Chili Cook Off! The actual meal will be provided (\$7 per person; \$25 family max) and will include Chef Katie's chili, cornbread, salad, and dessert. You are invited to bring a crock-pot(s) of your best chili recipe for the competition! Others are invited to sample and vote! Awards will be announced at the end of the meal. Don't miss this fun fall festivity at FPC.

Register your chili by November 2 at [fpcfw.org/chili](https://www.fpcfw.org/chili).



Our third annual Christmas Toy Store to families with children 5th grade and younger who have been involved in ministries through Community Crossroads will be on Saturday, December 9th in the FPC gym. Parents sign up in advance (for a small fee) and shop at the store (for each child, they select 2 toys, a book, socks and underwear and then 1 family game). The store offers the parents both dignity and choice in selecting gifts for their children.

How You Can Help:

SHOP. Look for the manger scene outside the Great Hall and in the Narthex on the Sundays in November. Select a "star" containing the child's age and gender for you to purchase item(s) for that child. Bring your unwrapped gifts back to the manger scene toy receptacle on November 26th and December 3rd. Purchase and donate items from the following list:

- New books for kids 5th grade and younger
- Family games for children 5th grade and younger
- 2 toys per child (please do not spend more than \$40 per toy; a printed suggestion list for age appropriate toys will be available)

GIVE. Not a shopper? Give gift cards and check donations (memo line: Christmas Toy Store 2017); other church members who love to shop can purchase more gifts to stock our store.

VOLUNTEER. We need volunteers to set up the store on Friday, December 8 during the day and to volunteer on Saturday, December 9 in shifts. We especially need Spanish speakers on Saturday! To volunteer, contact Mary Kay Roberto or Donna Laminack.

Carter BloodCare Drive

The Carter BloodCare Bus will be at FPC on Sunday, November 5 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for you to donate blood. With recent natural disasters, the need is great! Did you know...

- Three lives are saved by one pint of donated blood
- Someone needs blood every 3 seconds
- The shelf life of donated red blood cells is only 42 days

Sign up today at https://www.greatpartners.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/92430.

BE INSPIRED...

Below are some upcoming opportunities for being inspired into a life of discipleship through church events in the coming weeks.

MOMS Schedule

MOMS (Mothers Offering Mothers Support) meets the 1st Thursdays and 3rd Wednesdays from 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. in the Parlor for lunch (\$7), discussion of the book of Ruth, and friendship. Meetings in November are the 2nd and 15th. Please RSVP for one week prior at fpcf.org/moms. Childcare available.

Special Advent Singing Opportunity

On Sunday, December 17, the Chancel and Fellowship Choirs, accompanied by brass and organ, will offer Daniel Pinkham's Christmas Cantata as a sung sermon in the 11 a.m. service. New singers are welcome to join in this exciting Sunday! Rehearsals are held in the weeks leading up to the service, with an initial Saturday, November 4 combined rehearsal. Meeting from 10 a.m. – 12 noon, the rehearsal will include a full read through the Cantata. If you would like to join the choirs for this exciting and moving opportunity to celebrate the season in song, please contact the Rev. Dr. Michael Waschevski in the church office. (817-335-1231 ext. 229 or michaelw@fpcf.org)

Boomers' Fall Fiesta!

The Boomers ("Baby Boomers") will enjoy dinner on the covered patio at Joe T Garcia's on Sunday, November 12 at 6 p.m. Cost is \$10 per person. Let's celebrate the fall season together! Please RSVP to Ruth Petersen in the office by November 8.

Turkey Bowl: Youth vs. Parents/Adults!

The annual Youth Group Turkey Bowl will take place Sunday, November 12 from 1-3 p.m. at Game On Arena Sports. The indoor turf field is located at 251 Settle-

ment Plaza Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76108. This Youth vs. Parents/Adults Turkey Bowl is a non-tackle flag football game. We will have a middle school (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12) game. No cleats allowed, participants must wear tennis or turf shoes. A refreshments stand will be available. Please bring a personal water container. Water for refills will be provided by the church!

Book People

For the Monday, November 13 meeting, the group will discuss Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*. For further information contact Elizabeth Johnson Pense. Book People meets at noon in Room 304. Everyone is invited and encouraged to participate in this fun and lively group.

Dancers Needed for Christmas Eve

Those interested in participating in dance during the morning worship service on Christmas Eve (10 a.m.) to "O Holy Night" are encouraged to please contact Margo Dean at 817-738-7915 or Karen Steffler at 817-313-5169 or karen@stefflerdesign.com.

PW's Celebration of Christmas

The FPC Presbyterian Women (PW) invites all women to its annual Celebration of Christmas on Tuesday, December 12. Come celebrate the season with festivities and friends! The event begins with wassail at 10:30 a.m. (3rd Floor Concourse), followed by worship at 11 a.m. (Sanctuary) and lunch at 12 p.m. (Great Hall). Please RSVP by Monday, December 4 to Celeste Falter in the church office at cfalter@fpcf.org or 817-335-1231, ext. 261.



WOMEN'S 2018 RETREAT

All women are invited to attend the 2018 Women's Retreat for a weekend of spiritual growth and fellowship with other women from the FPC community.

The retreat will be February 10-11, 2018 at Camp Crucis in Granbury, TX. Our theme is "Finding Calm in the Chaos," and will welcome speaker and acclaimed author Kathleen Long Bostrom as our guest.



Kathleen Long Bostrom

Author & Speaker

Registration is now open! Register by **November 15** before the price goes up! Full details can be found at fpcf.org/womensretreat or in a brochure that can be found throughout the church building.

Don't miss this chance to get to know other FPC women in a beautiful setting.

ENGAGE THE WORLD...

Below are some upcoming opportunities for engaging the world through church outreach mission efforts in the coming weeks.

Habitat Interfaith Build Continues

The Habitat for Humanity Interfaith House Build with other area faith communities continues November 4 for the Sohail family. Learn more and sign up at fpcf.org/habitat.

Give to PDA for Hurricane Relief

FPC is still collecting donations for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to benefit those affected by recent hurricanes. If you'd like to give, please make a check out to First Presbyterian Church with "PDA" in the memo. Thank you!

Christmas Party for the Blind

Drivers are needed for the 72nd Christmas Party for the Blind from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, December 7. This intergenerational mission event, organized by the Youth Committee, welcomes those blind or visual impaired from Tarrant County and those who work directly with them. Together, we celebrate the season with dinner, fellowship, entertainment, and more. To volunteer as a driver, please contact Jayne McFarland in the church office at ext. 224 or jmcfarland@fpcf.org.

Current Community Crossroads Needs

The following needs are current at Community Crossroads. Can you help?

- 2 people to serve dinner Wednesday night at WOW (5-6:30 p.m.) Contact Kathy Parr.
- 1 person for third Wednesday sack lunches (11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.) Contact Dori Davis at ddavis@fpcf.org.

Prayer & Poverty

Saturday, November 4
9:30 -11:30 a.m.
Room 237

Gerry Straub, award-winning author, former Hollywood producer and now director of a children's home in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, will be visit First Presbyterian Church on Saturday, November 4.

For years Gerry has used the power of film to raise world-wide compassion for the plight of the poor. Now, he and his Haitian wife, Ecarlatte, have dedicated their lives to living with and caring for almost 50 live-in Haitian children. He tells remarkable stories of caring for their most basic needs of food, clean water, shelter and safety, while teaching lessons of love.

Join us for a stirring, challenging and inspiring conversation about a life of faith lived out in the most difficult of circumstances.

Brought to you by JustFaith FPCFW



The FPC Mission Outreach Committee has, over the last three years, contributed \$50,000 towards the construction of the newly dedicated **Junkin Campus Ministry Center at Schreiner University**. In addition, FPC members Ted and Nancy Paup serve on their board. How wonderful it is to see Presbyterian Colleges investing money in the religious life of their campuses!



BASKET PROJECT

Donations Collected
November 12 & 19

*In Partnership with the
South Central Alliance of Churches*

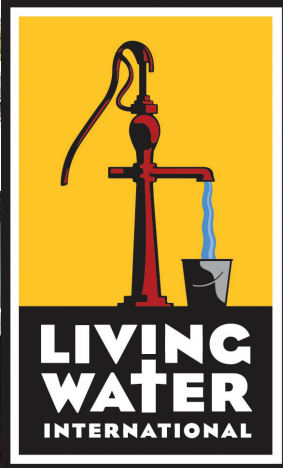
Once again FPC invites you to help prepare and contribute food bags with items for a Thanksgiving meal given to those in need.

Please bring donations to the red carts outside the Great Hall and in the Narthex on November 12 and 19. Donations of money are also appreciated; checks can be made out to First Presbyterian Church with "Thanksgiving Baskets 2017" in the memo.

SHOPPING LIST:

- 15 oz. can yams
- 15 oz. can cranberry sauce
- 15 oz. can corn
- 15 oz. can green beans
- 15 oz. can fruit
- 15 oz. can chicken broth
- 5+ oz. box instant mashed potatoes
- 6 oz. pkg. Jell-O
- 14 oz. bag stuffing mix (or 2 Stove Top Mix)
- box cake mix
- can cake frosting
- container Crystal Light, Koolaid, or small box tea bags

Please stay with sizes requested.



One Drill Rig Makes Dreams Possible

by Carol Long

Searching for good news among current headlines? Here's some life-giving news.

Clean water from recently drilled wells flows steadily in Haiti thanks to the new, first-ever Presbyterian drill rig that PW and FPC helped fund in 2015. Between February and the end of September, 16 new water wells were completed by Living Water International teams. Yes, 16! That means some 6,400 people are no longer thirsty. Now these communities have access to safe water where none existed before. This is especially heartening since many Haitians suffered setbacks during the recent Caribbean tropical storms and hurricanes.

Most of the new wells were drilled in rural areas and serve between 300 and 500 people. Fewer girls and women haul water that often made their families sick, and fewer children miss school due to water-related disease. The chance for diplomas, home gardens and micro-enterprise has risen substantially. These Haitians are healthier physically and



encouraged spiritually after working with Living Water International teams to complete local wells, to understand the key links between hygiene and health, and to hear Bible stories of love and forgiveness. Thanks be to God for this life-giving news.

The Presbyterian rig was manufactured in 2016. It arrived in Haiti in January where a local drill team was hired and trained by Living Water International to operate the rig. The rig is positioned to serve northern Haiti. Cumulative giving from God's people to God's people made

the \$100,000 Presbyterian rig possible. In 2016 FPC Presbyterian Women won a grant that was matched by FPC, Fort Worth and four other Presbyterian churches. Living Water International has partnered with FPC on water projects since 2012 and provides water solutions in 23 developing countries.

A FPC team will work alongside Living Water International on a short-term mission trip to drill a well in Central America during 2018. For information, join Robyn Michalove on Sunday, October 29 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 235.

JOYS & CONCERNS

Following are the joys and concerns shared as of October 17, 2017 (due to printing deadlines). To respect the privacy of those listed, names are included only when the individuals grant their permission.

Our loving sympathy to...

Mike and Lea Cane on the death of her father, Bradford Davis, who died October 11. Other surviving family includes granddaughter, **Michelle Cane**.

Family and friends of **Leora "Lee" McFarlane**, who died on October 9.

Family and friends of **Bill O'Grady**, who died on September 26. Surviving FPC family members include wife, **Emily O'Grady**; daughter, **Kathy Guymon**; and grandchildren, **Lily Guymon** and **Flint Guymon**.

Family and friends of **Jane Drew**, who died September 26. Surviving FPC family members include son, **Bobby Drew** and **Heather Ciavolella** and husband Ben.

Family and friends of **Kathryn Schutts**, who died September 24. Surviving FPC family members include son, **Philip Schutts** and wife, **Heidi**; daughter, **Suzy Rhodes** and husband Ray; granddaughter, **Emily Jones** and husband Sherman; granddaughter, **Katy Hobbs** and husband **Sam**; granddaughter, **Molly Campa** and wife Naomi; and great-grandchildren, Gage and Lowdon Hobbs and Reagan and Aspen Jones.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with...

Ann Bracey, **Donald Deshauters**, **Lisa Priddy**, and **Sara Swift**, who are recovering from surgery or injury. **Dwight Mason**, **Rush Hart**, **Phyllis Propes**, **Emma Coley**, **Marjorie Lewis**, **Rev. Floyd Kinser**, **Dorothy Kinser**, **Indi Butler**, **Nona Cobden**, **David Nation**, **Corinna Nation**, **Lisa Shiner**, **Jacquitta White**, **Marge Shiner**, **Elizabeth Bean**, **Frances Blake**, **Gene James**, **Carolyn Lischio**, **Mac McCoy**, **Nancy Nelson**, **Ed Martin**, and **Dalia Scott**, who are dealing with illness or undergoing treatment. **Jane Watson**, who is on hospice.

Our caring prayers for extended family include...

Don Laminack (brother of **Vance Laminack**), Robert Bull (son-in-law of **Bob and Jean Gorham**), Warren Brown (son-in-law of **Betty Tefft**), Bess Hunt (mother of **Martha Zaborowski**), Melissa Denton (cousin of **Pat Gordon**), Evan Wilson (grandson of **Henrietta Bailey**), Glenda Burger (sister of **Vance Laminack**), Janet Laminack (cousin of **Julie Sphar and Vance Laminack**), Susan Williams (cousin of **Pat Gordon**), John DeMore (son-in-law of **June Sprott**), Lisa Koenig (niece of **Clark Williams**), Kathy Kline (**Maxine Kruse's** daughter), Marty Kinard (**Larry and Bettye Kinard's** daughter-in-law), Mark Bryant (**Joanne Sarsgard's** son), and Susan Chenault (**Frances Chenault's** daughter).

Prayers for peace in our world, for the safety of Nathan Gunter (**Russell and Vivian Norment's** nephew) who is stationed in Korea. Also for the safety of **Diego A. Saldivar**, who is serving in the US Navy; Diego is the son of **Becky and Rene Saldivar**.

Our congratulations and best wishes to...

Ashley and **Ryan McColl** on the birth of William Ryan McColl on September 23.



CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Below are some **highlights** of special events happening in November For a complete calendar, visit fpcfw.org.

SUNDAYS IN NOVEMBER

- 8 a.m. Worship in Chapel
- 9 a.m. Worship in Great Hall
- 10 a.m. Church School for All Ages
- 11 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary

WEDNESDAYS IN NOVEMBER

- 5:30 p.m. Dinner & Worship on Wednesdays at Community Crossroads

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1

- 3-6:30 p.m. All Saints Day Labyrinth Walk (come and go)
- 7 p.m. All Saints Day Worship Service

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4

- 8 a.m. Habitat Build Day for Interfaith House
- 9:30 a.m. Prayer & Poverty Event

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5

- 9 a.m. Carter BloodCare Drive (through 1 p.m.)
- 11 a.m. All Church Brunch & Chili Cook Off (and 12 p.m.)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12

- 1-3 p.m. Youth Group Turkey Bowl
- 6 p.m. Boomers' Fall Fiesta at Joe T. Garcias

NOVEMBER 12 through NOVEMBER 19

- All Day Collection for Thanksgiving Basket Project

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19

- All Day Peanut Butter Sunday (donations collected)
- 6:30 p.m. Taize Worship in Chapel

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23-24

- All Day Church Office and Early Education Center Closed

NOVEMBER 26 through DECEMBER 3

- All Day Collection of Items for Christmas Toy Store



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 LETTER

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 POSTMASTER:**

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WWW.FPCFW.ORG

“We cannot hide from God, nor do we need to.”
 - Karl Travis
 First Presbyterian Church

Listen to the Sermon Online @fpcfw.org

“If the good shepherd has prepared a table for you in the presence of your enemies, with whom do you need to share a communion meal?”
 - Karl Travis
 Pastor, First Presbyterian Church

Listen to the Sermon Online @fpcfw.org

“God doesn’t expect perfection; God nourishes faithfulness.”
 - Karl Travis
 Pastor, First Presbyterian Church

Listen to the Sermon Online @fpcfw.org

“God still blesses the world through families. Still, we must each of us choose to be a blessing.”
 - Karl Travis
 Pastor, First Presbyterian Church

Listen to the Sermon Online @fpcfw.org

“Any place can become holy ground when we open our eyes, hearts, and minds to God who is already and always present among us.”
 - Michael Washveski
 Pastor, First Presbyterian Church

Listen to the Sermon Online @fpcfw.org

“Our hope is not in Washington, or Charlottesville, or Pyongyang. **IT IS IN JESUS,** so we lock our eyes on his, and we keep walking.”
 - Karl Travis
 Pastor, First Presbyterian Church

Listen to the Sermon Online @fpcfw.org

“Maybe our **QUESTIONS** propel us into deeper faith than our **ANSWERS** ever could.”
 - Robyn Michalove
 Associate Pastor, First Presbyterian Church

Listen to the Sermon Online @fpcfw.org

“Are there relationships in your life begging for reconciliation that only your confession can begin?”
 - Karl Travis
 Pastor, First Presbyterian Church

Listen to the Sermon Online @fpcfw.org

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