



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

REFOCUSED

December 2018

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF
ST ETHELDREDA'S CHURCH
WITH ST LUKE'S CHURCH



BISHOP'S
HATFIELD

Letter to the parish from Fr. Darren—Christmas 2018

Once upon a time there was a little boy called David. It was during World War I and David's father was a soldier fighting on the front line. In September the father wrote to his son David asking him 'What would you like more than anything in the whole world for Christmas?' David wrote back 'Daddy, I would love to have a puppy. I would love to have a little puppy dog more than anything else in the world.'

Well, on the evening of December 24th there was a knock on the door. David answered and there was Santa Claus who asked 'Is your name David?' 'Yes, my name is David'. 'What would you like more than anything in the whole world for Christmas?' 'I would like a little puppy dog'. Santa reached down into his big bag, opened it up, and brought out a lovely little Spaniel puppy. David was so happy.

Months passed, the war carried on, and soon it was September again. So, the father wrote to his son and asked 'What would you like for Christmas this year?' The son wrote back 'Daddy, I wish you would come home, but Mum says that you can't, so I would like a train set'. Soon it was Christmas Eve and there was a knock at the door and sure enough it was Santa who asked 'Is your name David?' 'Yes'. 'And what would you like for Christmas?' Santa soon brought a train set out of his bag and David was happy.

Life passed, months passed, and David's father was still fighting on the front line. He wrote to his son the next September, 'David, I am still in the war and can't come home yet, but what would you like for Christmas more than anything else in the whole world?' David wrote back, 'I want you, Dad. I want you to come home and be with me. That is what I want'. The father replied 'I can't come home yet, but what else would you like for Christmas?' David wrote back reluctantly, with an inner sadness, 'a bike'. Time passed, it was soon Christmas Eve, there was the traditional knock on the door and Santa knelt down to the little boy and asked 'what can I give you for Christmas this year?' David finally broke down and cried on

Santa's shoulders 'I want my Dad. That's what I want. I just want my Dad to come home'. Santa said 'Is there anything else—like a bike?' 'OK' said David. As he was trying to balance on his new bike, he glanced over and saw Santa was taking off his white beard and his red hat and his white hair, and...and...it was his Dad!!! David ran over and threw his arms around him, hugged and squeezed him, saying over and over again 'You're home. It's you. You're finally home'. His Dad said 'It was a long journey David, but I had to come home to be with you this Christmas'.

You see, more valuable than puppies, train sets and bikes; more valuable than gold, diamonds and rubies. More valuable than all of these things is, the gift of one's self in love. What is gold compared to that – compared to the gift of giving one's self in love to other people and to God?

That is what Christmas is all about. Christmas is about that night when God came down to give himself to you in the Christ child. Today, and every day, God knocks at the door of your heart and your house to give himself to you and me once again, to give us his spirit, his self, his love, his peace. What is gold compared to that?



Christmas

2018

*Our centre page
pull-out
provides full
details of all
our Christmas
events*

Parish of Bishop's Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke regular services

St Etheldreda's Church

Sunday: 8am Holy Communion
9.30am Holy Communion with Sunday School
3rd Sunday of month: 9.30am All age Eucharist

Tuesday: 9am Morning Prayers
Wednesday: 10am Holy Communion
Thursday: 7pm Holy Communion or Compline

St Luke's Church Holy Communion Sunday: 11.30am with hymns

Children's Sunday School: meets at 9.20am on Sundays in term time at 12 Fore Street (STEPS office)

December/January Weddings & Baptisms

Baptism: 10th December—Jacob Thomas Sam Barry Lake-Watson
Wedding: 5th January—Nicholas Saunders and Rebecca Khoshnoodi

Please contact Fr Darren to book your Wedding or Baptism t: 01707 256638 e: frdarren@yahoo.co.uk

What's on in December at St Etheldreda's & St Luke's Churches

- 2nd December 6pm Advent Carol Service at St Etheldreda's Church
- 16th December 4pm Nativity on the Farm Hatfield Park Farm
- 22nd December 4pm Carol Service for Shoppers at St Luke's Church
- 23rd December 6pm Nine Lessons and Carols at St Etheldreda's Church
- 24th December 5pm Crib Service at St Etheldreda's Church
- 24th December 11.30pm Midnight Mass at St Etheldreda's Church
- 25th December 9.30am First service of Christmas at St Etheldreda's Church
- 25th December 11am First service of Christmas at St Luke's Church

What's on in December in the Bishops Hatfield Team

- 1st December 8am Men's Breakfast at St Michael and All Angels Church
- 1st December Day Trip to Canterbury Market. St John's Church, South Hatfield. Places still available. £15
- 6th December 7.30pm Advent Discussion group at St John's, Lemsford
- 8th December 10am Ramble leaving St Michael and All Angels Church
- 11th December 2.30pm Friendship Teas in The Annexe St John's Church, Lemsford
- 13th December Inter-Faith Group Pilgrimage II Venue to be arranged
- 13th December 7.30pm Advent Discussion group at St John's Church, Lemsford
- 16th December 6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols at St Michael and All Angels Church
- 19th December 7pm Community Carol Singing at St Michael and All Angels Church
- 20th December 9.15am Birchwood School Christmas Service at St Michael and All Angels Church
- 20th December 7.30pm Advent Discussion group at St John's Church, Lemsford
- 21st December 2.30-4pm Poetry Group at St Mary's Church, North Mymms
- 24th December 4pm Crib Service at St Michael and All Angels Church
- 24th December 4.30pm Crib and Christingle at St John's Church, South Hatfield
- 24th December 9pm Midnight Mass (only earlier) at St Michael and All Angels Church
- 24th December 6.30pm Carols by Candlelight at St John's Church, South Hatfield
- 24th December 11pm Midnight Mass at St John's Church, South Hatfield

Father Darren Collins, Team Rector

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What's On at Hatfield House in December

Music for Christmas

9th December @ 7.00pm

Join us for another memorable evening as once again, the Old Palace will be filled with the joyful and uplifting sound of Hertfordshire Chorus. Get the Festive season going with a wonderful mix of Christmas carols and songs old and new, including a chance to join the choir in singing some familiar favourites. And don't forget to enjoy seasonal refreshments before the start of the concert.



THE OLD PALACE

The performance will take place inside The Old Palace, a 15th century banqueting hall once belonging to Queen Elizabeth I which still boasts a large amount of the original features – from painting to brickwork. Doors for the performance will open at approximately 6:30pm, with the singing beginning at 7pm. Seating will not be allocated and is selected on arrival based on availability.

TICKETS & PARKING

Adult tickets £16, Child tickets £11.

Parking is in the main visitors car park, known as George's Car Park, enter through George's Gate (AL9 5HX)

'A Victorian Christmas'

Songs and Music by Countess Anne School Choir
and generously sponsored by Lady Salisbury

in the Riding School, Hatfield House

Monday 17 December, 10 am – noon

Tickets £10 from School or at the door

Light Refreshments will be served

Parking at George's Car Park (AL9 5HX)

All proceeds towards refurbishment of the school annexe

More Info: www.hatfield-house.co.uk/events/
01707 287010 e: visitors@hatfield-house.co.uk

Why is Christ's nativity so important?

by Mary Rathbone, Reader in Training

The ancient Latin word '*nasci*' developed into '*nativitas*' and over time evolved into the English word '*nativity*' - meaning '*to be born*'.

So it would follow, that as you and I were also born, we too have a nativity. However, mention of a nativity today generally refers to Christmas plays about the birth of Jesus.

Why, you might ask, was Jesus's birth so important? We can only say that it is a mystery that cannot be properly understood by mere mortals such as us. But in faith we believe that the holy spirit visited the virgin Mary to tell her she would give birth to Jesus, the son of God. So, when Christ was born (His nativity) God the son Jesus, and God the Father (dwelling within Jesus), both came to live amongst us. The birth of Jesus, unlike ours, brought the divine to life on earth.

Christmas plays about the birth of Christ are now often shortened to just The Nativity, where proud parents watch their children performing a recreation of Joseph and Mary managing the birth of baby Jesus whilst being a long way from home. Perhaps a better description of the plays might be The Nativity of Jesus Christ.



At St Etheldreda's and St Luke's this Christmas, as always, we celebrate The Nativity of Jesus. We have a recreation of the events of His birth on the farm at Hatfield House at 4pm on 16th December and our Crib Service on Christmas Eve in the church at 5pm. Both these nativities share the story (to children of all ages) of how God came to live amongst us through the birth of Jesus Christ.

Some might prefer, to come to our midnight service on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of Christ, and/or our Holy Communion on Christmas Day. All are very welcome to join us at our celebrations this Christmas of the time when Jesus/God came to live amongst us here on earth.

Full details of all these events are on pages 6 & 7

The Great War — Hatfield Roll of Honour — WW1 1914—1918

Remembering those WW1 soldiers from Hatfield who died in service to their country in December

On Sunday 11th November 2018, Hatfield remembered 180 of their sons who gave their life in the Great War of 1914-1918. The project, which took a year in planning, was managed by : Hatfield Town Council, Gascoyne Cecil Estates, the Royal British Legion Women's Section, St Etheldreda's Church and many other organisations. Three remembrance services, to mark the signing of the armistice on 11th November 1918, were held followed by the lighting of a beacon of peace in the evening.

The first service, at the war memorial in Hatfield House, was at dawn. A good crowd turned out of 60+. Led by Father Darren Collins, it included readings from Lord Salisbury.

At 10.45am a parade starting from the Red Lion Pub traffic lights on Great North Road, marched to the Memorial Gardens, opposite the station. The service there was led by Bishop Stephen Venner and attended by local dignitaries. Representatives of a wide range of Hatfield service providers laid wreaths after the service. The memorial garden was filled to capacity and the congregation was banked back outside, right over to the station.

Afterwards everyone was invited to follow the clergy's procession into the grounds of Hatfield House where a further service was held from the steps at the north front of Hatfield House. This was a re-enactment of the Great Thanksgiving Service held there after the signing of the armistice in 1918. It included the hymns that were sung at the 1918 service, and was led again by Bishop Stephen, Lord Salisbury and Father Darren. The congregation, was invited by Lady Salisbury to take refreshments afterwards at the Riding School. See photos on back page.

It was estimated that 1000+ were in attendance on the day, it was a deeply moving occasion and good will prevailed. Afterwards people mingled in the Riding School, talking of the changes the war had brought about, and how well the loss of our Hatfield sons had been honoured in the events of the day. The Hatfield Local History Society had a museum set up, with extensive information gathered over the years, of how WW1 had affected Hatfield and its people. It provided a good focal point for discussion.

At 7pm a beacon was lit within the grounds of Hatfield House, along with over 1000 others across the country, symbolising the light of peace that emerged from the darkness of four years of war. The church bells, which had not rung during the war, other than a chime at midday to remind people to pray for our forces, rang half muffled at the morning services, but were fully 'open' in celebration of the peace, as they were in the celebrations of the armistice.

Albert Arnold Age: Approx. 33

Rank: Private

Regiment: Bedfordshire Regiment

Date/Cemetery: 2nd December 1916/Newport (St Woolos) Cemetery

Randle William Gascoyne Cecil Age: 28

Rank: Lieutenant

Regiment: Royal Horse Artillery & Royal Field Artillery

Date/Memorial: 1st December 1917/Cambrai Memorial Louveral

John Hipgrave Age: 42

Rank: Corporal

Regiment: 2nd Bn. Bedfordshire Regiment

Date/Memorial: 2nd December 1914/Ration Farm Military Cemetery

Arthur George Hunt Age: 22

Rank: Stoker 1st Class

Regiment: Royal Navy HMS Natal

Date/Memorial: 30th December 1915/Chatham Naval Memorial

Robert William Moore Age: Approx. 36

Rank: Private

Regiment: Border Regiment 11th Bn.

Date/Memorial: 2nd December 1917/Tyne Cot Memorial

George A Powell Age: 27

Rank: Second Lieutenant

Regiment: Royal Flying Corps

Date/Cemetery: 7th December 1916/St Luke's Church Yard

Robert Tims Age: 25

Rank: Rifleman

Regiment: London Regiment (London Irish Rifles) 2nd/18th Btn.

Date/Memorial: 23rd December 1917/Jerusalem War Cemetery



Remembering by Jo Roscoe

The last veteran of the Great 14 – 18 War has died, and that World War has slid into the historical past.

Several years ago we wrote a piece about a long time parish resident Dee Parr. It was a generally light hearted piece about the 106 year old's life. One of her vivid memories as a six year old – which has stayed with me – was standing in the street with neighbours and family, seeing black parcels dropping from the blazing airship overhead at Cuffley. The 'parcels' were of course men falling from a disaster-struck Zeppelin

The War Poets wrote powerfully about the depravity and waste of war, and their words will live on. But I have been more deeply moved by descriptive passages in the novels of such writers as Sebastian Faulks* and Louis de Bernieres**: they give insight into the utter awfulness of hours spent in the wet muddy stench of the trenches, the living and the decomposing dead trapped in a dreadful nightmare, waiting for the next command, the next attack.

And we are now left with silent acre upon acre of white crosses. The poet says 'We shall remember them.' And I say 'Dear God, we must never forget them.'

* 'Birdsong'

** 'The Dust That Falls From Dreams'

The last word from Father Darren

Throughout this year, we have remembered all from our parish who gave their life in service to their country in WW1, and as much as we are able to, the many sacrifices made by those on the home front.

One last thing that we should remember also, is mortalities on the home front caused by military action.

The Zeppelin (mentioned in the article above) was one of sixteen airships launched over the north sea, heading for London. It was the largest air raid on the UK during WW1.

Another Zeppelin in the air raid turned and fled north that night, after witnessing one of the fleet destroyed at Cuffley. As it passed over Essendon it jettisoned its bombs to gain speed. The house of the local blacksmith was hit and two of his daughters were mortally wounded. Frances and Eleanor Bamford were laid to rest in Essendon churchyard.

So far as we know the two girls were the only local civilians to lose their life as a result of military action in WW1.

As we bring our year of reflections on WW1 to an end, we should continue to cherish the peace upheld between the nations today. Also appreciate and value the considerable effort it has taken to build and maintain the peace which now underpins our lives.

The United Nations has a wall outside its New York head office bearing the inscription:

*They will beat their
swords into plowshares
and their spears into
pruning hooks. Nation
will not take up sword
against nation, nor will
they learn war anymore.*

Isaiah 2:4

A bronze statue was created by the Soviet artist Evgeniy Vuchetich, it is called 'Let Us Beat Swords into Plowshares'. The statue was gifted in 1959 to the UN by the, then, Soviet Union. It is symbolic of the prophet Isaiah's vision of world peace, in which men would beat their war weapons into agricultural tools in God's new world.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swords_to_plowshares

Jesus said, 'blessed are the peace-makers' - and we pray continually, at St Etheldreda's and St Luke's, that God's grace will motivate, inspire and bless all who work for world peace.

But we believe that true peace flows from God and we need to allow Christ's love and wisdom to rule in our hearts as a starting point for world peace.

Father Darren

Christmas at St Etheldreda's St Luke's congregation will join St Etheldreda's for these services

The Advent Bells Ring Out Again so begins John Betjeman's famous Advent poem. Advent heralds the period leading up to Christmas Day; it is a time of preparation for the wondrous celebration of Christ's birth. Our modern world has found new ways of celebrating this season, but at its heart, and in our Churches, the old traditions prevail: music, laughter, solemnity and joy. Our programme is laid out below. Keep it close to hand; come join us for some or all of it; you will be most welcome, Christmas cheer is for sharing.

December 2nd 6pm – (about 1 hour long)

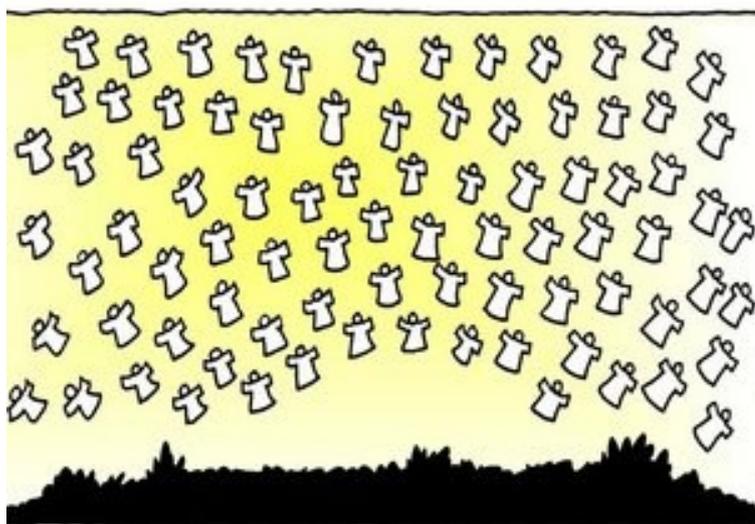
Advent Carol Service - and so we begin the Advent journey. This candle—lit service takes place in the oldest part of our historic church, with seating in the Salisbury and Brocket chapels; it is here that we start our journey towards Bethlehem, and journey with Mary and Joseph towards the stable. During this service we listen to readings from the bible that foretell the coming of Jesus. Through scripture, prayer and wondrous music we take our first steps on our Advent journey.

December 16th 4pm – (1 hour plus refreshment time)

The Nativity of Jesus recreated at Hatfield House Rare Breeds Farm - this is one for all the family. Perhaps you came last year and know what a lovely time everyone had; this year it is tweaked a little, telling the story of our Saviour's birth from a different perspective, that of the Arch Angel Gabriel. With lights, costumes and animals to see and stroke and a different route around the farm we keep the telling of the story fresh. Starting from George's car park, we move into the farm. Candles (battery ones) in jars will be issued to the children so that as it gets dark, the scene becomes infused with mystery and delight. On our journey from stable to stable we accompany the angels, shepherds and Wise Men on their search for the Promised Messiah. At our story's conclusion, and after taking photos of your children with the characters in the stable, we adjourn to a barn for mulled wine, soft drinks and mince pies. (*This is free entry and a retiring collection is shared between The Donkey Sanctuary and the church.*)

December 20th 8pm – (stay till closing if you like!)

Carols in the Pub – after a Compline service (7pm, shortened evening prayer) in church, we will gather in the Eight Bells for an informal time of drinks – bring your own mince pies – and song. Come to both or one; we'll be there!



Saturday 22nd December 4pm

(1 hour plus refreshments)

Readings and Carols at St Luke's—this service will appeal to young and old, family and singles. We hope that you might have just finished your Christmas shopping, or perhaps you are just ready to get Christmas started and have some festive fun. Whatever the case, St Luke's warmly invite you to drop in for an informal service of readings and traditional carols by candlelight—followed by Christmas refreshments.

St Luke's Churches 2018

Parking is available for all services in George's Car Park Hatfield House

December 23rd 6pm – (about 1 hour long)

Nine Lessons and Carols – now a traditional Candle-lit service, though only for the last hundred or so years, it will be celebrated in churches all around the world. In that sense it is a truly family service, sharing worship and fellowship with Christians in Syria, Lebanon, Europe, America, Australia and Africa – in places of plenty and in places of famine; in places of peace and quiet and in places of war and strife. We listen to nine simple readings from Genesis, the prophet Isaiah and the gospels, the story of God's promise to humankind. The service will begin with the choir processing in with the ethereal solo first verse of 'Once in Royal David's City', before they and we join in raising our voices in the beauty of this hallowed place. If you are only able to make it to one service, this is perhaps the one to choose. And mulled wine and mince pies to follow.

December 24th 5pm – (about 45 minutes long)

The Crib Service – This is an event organised by our Sunday School for families and children of all ages. All children are invited to come dressed as an angel or a shepherd and join in our recreation of the nativity of Jesus. Many in our Hatfield community tell us that for them Christmas doesn't start until they have watched the children gather around the crib to sing 'Away in a Manger'.

December 24th 11.30pm – (about 1 hour long)

Midnight Service – A traditional and much loved service. Perhaps we find some meaning in coming in from the dark outside cold into a warm and welcoming church ablaze with light, just as Mary and Joseph thankfully entered the stable warmed by the breath of the ox and the ass. We sing full voiced – aided by our wonderful choir—the familiar carols and hymns which speak the words our hearts would say. As the clock strikes Midnight, we join with Christians all around the world celebrating the birth of Jesus. A wonderful way to begin your Christmas day.

December 25th 9.30 am – (1 hour long)

First service of Christmas – and so we come to Christmas day. We can rejoice in the birth of Our Lord and Holy Communion, sharing in the true Christmas meal. This is a family Eucharist and it would be lovely, if Santa has been, to have children choose one of their presents to bring and show us. A happy time, a happy day.

St Eth's & St Luke's Churches wish

a Happy and Blessed Christmas

to all our Readers



Countess Anne sings for Lady Salisbury!

On Monday 17 December at 10 - noon, Lady Salisbury is kindly hosting a 'A Victorian Christmas' a concert of Songs and Music by pupils from Countess Anne School.

Countess Anne of Salisbury gave her name to the school which she founded in the late 18th century. The school and its premises have undergone changes since that time but successive Lady Salisburys have continued to take a benevolent interest.

The present Lady Salisbury, who has long supported the children and youth of the town, has generously offered to host this event in the Riding School at Hatfield House.

Under the expert direction of music and drama (as well as Deputy Head) teacher Emma Byrne, the children will sing songs old and new, including from their Christmas production of Mary Poppins. And if I know Emma, there will be some fancy foot and hand movements too!

Funds raised will go towards completing the conversion of the school's Annexe (the former YMCA nursery) to provide accommodation for artwork, counselling, the breakfast club and many more school activities. Eventually it is also hoped the Annexe will be a useful addition to serving community needs.

It promises to be an entertaining and joyous event. Don't miss it! *Jo Roscoe*

Tickets – price £10
[free to children] – are
available from the school
and at the door on the day

Christmas Wreaths

Decorating and Making workshops
at St Eths with Carrie Shannon.

Saturday Dec 1st 1-3pm for
Christmas wreath decorating

sign up at the back of church
or RSVP:

CarrieShannonUK@gmail.com

St Eth's Prize Draw

The big draw on 9th December is starting to feel a bit nearer but there is still plenty of time to sell lots more tickets and plenty of really good opportunities to do so.

There are some really great prizes on offer and a hugely important project to work for, but we need some of your time to make it all happen. There is a list of different events at the back of the church and if you could put yourself down for an hour or two that would be a very big help.

Could you help us to sell tickets?

We will be doing this in teams at the Farmers and Antique markets in Stable Yard as well as various concerts in church and at Hatfield House. If you can help us at these events, then there is a sign up sheet at the back of church.

Vacancy

Countess Anne C of E Primary School has vacancies for two Foundation Governors

A Foundation Governor must be a person of Christian belief and practice, not necessarily a member of the Church of England but one whom the local church and Diocese would be happy to recommend.

As you give and receive gifts this Christmas, and especially thinking of the price paid 100 years ago by so many so that communities such as ours may continue, give a thought to how you might give something back.

For more details contact: Murray Gifkins (murray.gifkins@ntlworld.com) or Jill Knight (jill.jkmusic@gmail.com)

St Eth's Christmas Mini-Market—10.30am on 16th December



Our November Christmas Mini-Market raised £200 in sales—which is wonderful. But would you support us further by attending our next, December, Mini-Market? Your purchases will help us get nearer to our target of £500 to contribute to the fund raising project for improvements to St Eth's West End.

The Mini-Market offers for sale; homemade jams, chutneys, cakes and savouries. Also a raffle, for a Christmas hamper. We hope to see you on the 16th December.

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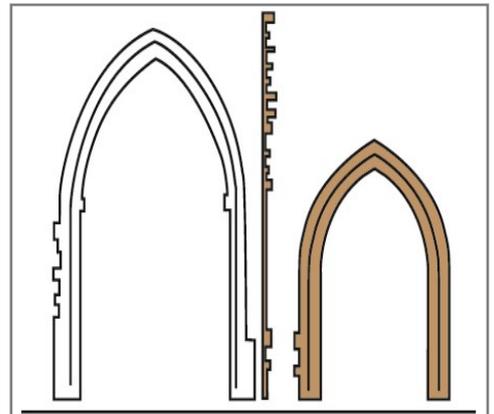
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11th November 2018

A re-enactment of the Great Thanksgiving Service held at the North Front of Hatfield House after the signing of the armistice on 11th November 1918 *Photographs courtesy of Lynn Stevens*



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