

The Virginia Christian

August 2023



Prayer Concerns

Pastor Junior Wimbush, Sr. passed away Sunday morning, 8/20. After 36 years of serving the good people of Antioch Christian Church, Spencer, VA, and mentoring many over his lifetime, he will be missed. A great servant of God now fully rests in the eternity with the God whom he followed in this life. Please keep his family in prayers. For now, please take time to send his daughter a note of support and prayer - Evonne Wimbush - evonnewc@gmail.com.

Death of the father of Pastor Andy Rose - Over the weekend I also received word that Pastor Andy Rose's father (a current student minister, member at Holly Grove Christian Church & current president of District 10), died suddenly. Please keep his family in your prayers and send him a note at Andy Rose - nrfarmshg@gmail.com

I want to lift up our Rev. Kevin McNeil in the loss of his stepfather. Rev. McNeil is the pastor of Bethany Christian Church in Roanoke, VA and the immediate past Moderator of the region. His stepfather was Pastor George H. Bowling. I invite you to show some love and support for Kevin by sending him a note at revymac@yahoo.com.

BSD



A Message for Church Leaders regarding encouragement of your pastor:

Jesus throughout his life, intentionally went away to a remote place or up on a mountain to rest, pray and replenish his body and spirit. When I install or ordain/commission a minister I always emphasize this point because, as one of those pastor types, I am sometimes guilty of thinking that I cannot take time off because my people need me. That is also why in those same services I ask the congregation to make a promise to ***“encourage your minister, nudge them and even, if needed, pack up their car and send them on vacation to be able to spend time as family or just to get away and refresh their body, mind and soul.”***

I say this again in this **NOTE TO CHURCH LEADERS** because: ***“ministers are known for caring for you and sometimes they just need that extra support to know its ok to rest.”***

In particular, I ask that you make the extra effort to let your pastor know that you support them taking time away (and you will cover the expense) to attend the upcoming **Virginia Clergy Retreat on September 24-26 at Eagle Eyrie**. If not this Clergy Retreat, then nudge them to take other intentional time away.

Thank You for being the best church you can be!

Blessings

BSD

[Clergy Retreat at Eagle Eyrie, September 24-26, 2023](#)

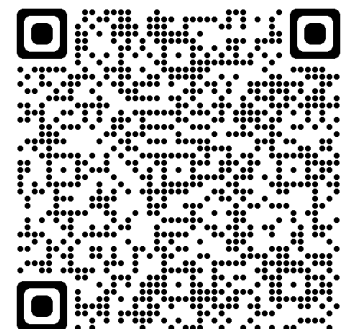
Clergy - rest, relax, commune, connect with friends, make new friends, be quiet, play games, welcome God's loving spirit, renew your spirit. We hope you will come and share in this retreat time and enjoy opportunities to connect with one another as we find our rest and renewal in this lovely setting.

Congregations - please treat this as a gift for your ministers to keep them physically, mentally and spiritually healthy in order that they can take care of their congregations.

BSD
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/19FS6mbG1GNdgZ9jdDTCsNmZJ0w6OiVoR/view>



Register Here: https://wmt.suran.com/tool/event_registration_v2/attendees?guid=fe2095beb78611eda318c8f5c02df89c



FREE TO ALL CLERGY - Spiritual Rest Housing Accommodations at Craig Springs - A Gift to all Disciples Clergy in Virginia!

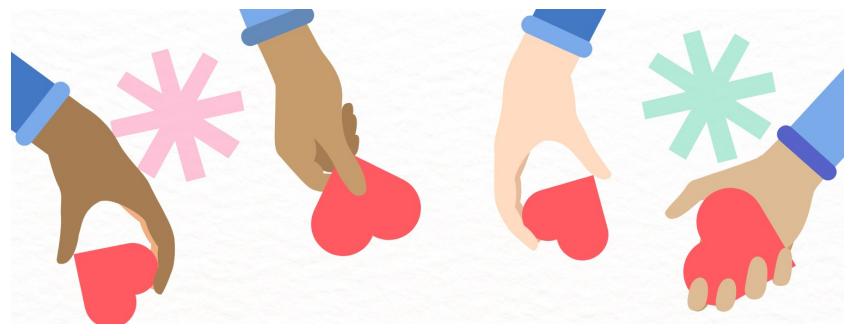
In recent months/years, the property team and many volunteers have focused on the remodeling of Oak Lodge at Craig Springs Conference and Retreat Center. There is now a year-round apartment available for all clergy to get away for rest or study. This area contains a kitchen/living room for preparing your own food and two bedrooms with private bathrooms. ***These spaces are available during non-camp season, but other spaces can be arranged even throughout the summer. Send an email to Ron Schwarz at admin@craigsprings.org for further information and reservation. Please take time to rest so that you can care of those in your ministry orbit!

Here is an opportunity for online Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation training:

Clergy and Laity welcomed. We thank our partners in the Indiana Region for offering this online training.

October 7, 2023 via ZOOM 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Register Here: https://wmt.suran.com/tool/event_registration_v2/attendees?guid=85ca7072-7667-11ed-85c0-209cbd2df89c



**ANTI-RACISM/
PRO-RECONCILIATION
TRAINING**

**September 9, 2023
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

The Pro-reconciliation/Anti-Racism Initiative was founded upon the need to make visible God's beloved community. It invites the church to listen to the once silenced voices of its racial/ethnic communities, learn from their wisdom and gain insight from their leadership. It calls the church to discernment and prayer, study of the scriptures and reflection, dialogue and table fellowship. The true goal is to transform, strengthen and deepen the church's spirituality, resulting in a community that understands its mission to be about bringing justice and salvation to the world.

**Seventh Street Christian Church
4101 Grove Ave., Richmond, VA 23221**

Lunch Provided

Clergy and Lay Leaders invited. Ages 16+

Please register by August 28 at:

<https://www.ccinva.org/arpr>

For more information: revhollie@seventhstreetchristianchurch.org

Grant Request Funds Available:

Please consider applying for a grant to help your ministry. The Administrative Council will review all requests during their every other month meetings. Dream Disciples Dream!

(Anti-Racism actions and events, New Church Exploration Grants and the newly established Ministry Dream Seed Grants made possible through sale of the Summit)

Apply now at: <https://forms.gle/6Uqqi2atPrLyMModA>



JOIN US!

OCTOBER 6 - 9, 2023

CRAIG SPRINGS CAMP

WORKWEEKEND



Registration: <https://forms.gle/dd1KwHeujWrvWcNr8>



**IF YOUR CHURCH WOULD LIKE TO
COME ANY OTHER WEEKEND, PLEASE
CONTACT RON SCHWARZ AT
ADMIN@CRAIGSPRINGS.ORG
540-864-5768**

Craig Springs Fall Work Weekend- 2023
October 6th -> 9th (meals available from Friday dinner to Monday breakfast)

While the Spring might be a far more exciting time to come to Craig Springs and help “open” the camp, Fall is just as important. The better we leave everything in the Fall the better it will weather the Winter and the easier it will be to open in the Spring. In addition to the general clean-up and putting things “to bed”, there are of course other tasks that can happen any time a willing soul or skilled worker is available. Below you will find a list of projects on the ToDo list, some will NEED to be completed this Fall, others will flow into the Spring list if not completed. If you have specific questions about any of the tasks, please ask for details.

GENERAL TASKS

It would be good to complete the following tasks prior to closing. For the most part they require labor and tools and supplies that the camp keeps on-hand. That said if you want to bring some of your own tools and supplies it will be greatly appreciated, and will stretch those we have.

Inspection: All rooms in all buildings need to be left in good order & checked for needed repairs. Confirm that the water heater, lights, and fans are off ... that all windows and doors are closed and locked.. Check all alarms, lights, doors, screens, etc. This inspection will provide a basis for a spring repair list. IF you have a great attention to detail, this would be a great task for you!!!

Leaf Removal: To protect the buildings from rot and allow them to dry, any leaves that have already accumulated need to be removed and spread them into the woods. If you have a favorite rake, bring it so that those rakes we have will be available to people who do not.

Landscaping: If you have a green thumb, bring your own equipment or use what we have and work on the various flower beds. Weeding, thinning, and in general preparing the beds and bushes ready for the winter.

Labyrinth: Clean, weed, and mulch.

Specific Projects/Tasks - contact admin@craigsprings.org so that provisions can be made to do these projects.

Skilled Projects: We have a variety of projects that require a carpenter, electrician, plumber, general “handyman”, small engine mechanic, painter, drywall installer, or other skilled labor. A Few are in the lists below, but please email Ron (admin@craigsprings.org) and ask about tasks in your area of expertise.

OLD trash trailer: If there is a small crew available on Friday (or another weekday), the old trash trailer is full of old mattresses, refrigerators/freezers, and misc other construction debris that needs to be taken to the transfer station and MANUALLY unloaded. It can be towed with the camp truck or yours. Assistance with this project would be GREATLY appreciated.

Trail Work

Needs: Trail Crew, Tools

Description: We are making progress in reopening the “North Mountain Trail” ...This trail work can be done at any time, it is not limited to work weekends. If you are interested in helping with the trail work contact me directly (admin@craigssprings.org) for information.

Garage Maintenance Area Cleanup and Organization

Description: I have a leader for this task, but he will need help sorting, moving and organizing. So if you would like to assist in this endeavor, come prepared to lend a hand.

Games

Description: There have been some initial attempts to sort through the “games” and determine which are worth keeping because they are actually used, and which should be moved out either because they are never used, or because they are missing too many pieces. This would be a good project for kids with adult supervision.

General Reorganization

Description: We need to have some beds and other furniture moved from one building or room to another and set up for usage. Mostly this needs a small crew and manual labor, however a pickup or small trailer might make some of the moves easier

In addition the Nursing Supplies in Oak need to be packed up and temporarily stored for the move back to the renovated Logan in the Spring. The room currently setup for the infirmary needs to be converted back to a bedroom.

Floor Sanding

Description: One of the bedrooms in Oak needs to have the floor sanded with a rented floor sander in preparation for clear finish. There is a minor repair that needs to be made in one place, and the bathroom flooring needs to be removed to see what if any repairs need to be made. If anyone is interested in this project I will need to know ahead of time to make arrangements for the sanding equipment, or you will need to bring your own equipment.

Ceiling Fans

Needs: Electrician and Electricians Helper

Description: We have a donor who would like to over a period of years fund ceiling fans for all the cabins currently without fans. Please contact Ron (admin@craigssprings.org).before arrival to ensure that I have everything on hand that you should need.

Equipment

Needs: Small Engine mechanic

String Trimmers ... Service, Repair, determine useful for parts or need to be disposed of.

Hand (push) Mowers ... Repair, determine useful for parts or need to be disposed of.

There are many other projects that need to be completed... many hands make for light work ... if you happen to know of a project not on the list that you would like to tackle, please let me know and I will add it to the list with your name attached. Ron (admin@craigssprings.org)



First Annual Virginia Regional Mission Trip

Nine adults and three youths from the VA Region spent the 4th of July week in Western Kentucky helping in tornado recovery. The group, representing five churches of our region, traveled to Princeton, Kentucky on July fourth. They stayed at First Christian Church, Princeton which converted their Sunday School rooms into bunk rooms to house volunteers. Each day they went to Dawson Springs Kentucky. This small community was devastated after a tornado on December 10, 2021. Almost 70 percent of homes were destroyed. Our group did the following projects that week:

- Rebuilt a deck including a roof for a young tornado survivor family. While they were there, the family brought their premature baby home from the hospital when we were working on their deck.
- Laid flooring in a Habitat for Humanity home for another young tornado survivor family.
- Moved walls for Habitat for Humanity homes for tornado survivors. This was part of the work of the Help Build Hope Program. At our General Assembly, participants had an opportunity to build a home in the convention center for a family in Graves County, KY.
- Did yard work for an elderly disabled couple who were tornado survivors.
- Gave support to repair a porch and tear down a shed for disabled man and his wife who were tornado survivors.
- Gave support to replace windows in a mobile home of a disabled man who was a tornado survivor.
- Worked in the community garden of First Christian Church, Princeton. The veggies were then distributed to senior citizens, tornado survivors and others in the community.

We had morning watch each day and devotionals every evening. We were the first group ever to use new devotionals written by Rev. Caroline Hamilton-Arnold, Associate Director of Week of Compassion, for mission trip groups. We also had a lot of fun including stops at Bu-ceeds, Independence Day fireworks, ice-cream at Dairy Queen and Disc golf. We ended our time together at Kentucky Region's Camp Kum Ba Yah with a late afternoon of swimming, kayaking, fishing, hotdog roast and meaningful concluding worship.

The trip was led by Rev. Dr. Jonathan Webster and participants were Kendra, Dianne, Emily and Lilly from Bon Air Christian, Larry, Sarah, and Harley from Perseverance Christian, Eric and Hayden from Broad Street Christian, Abby from Olive Branch Christian and Vanessa from Pembroke Christian. We also had a very generous donation from a Virginia Disciples of Christ member which allowed us to purchase materials for the homes we worked on. It was a time of service, transformation and joyous fellowship. We hope we can have more people on next year's trip. Tentative plans are to go to Charleston, SC from June 17-22, 2024, and help in recovery from Hurricane Ian and other community development work. The mission trip is multi-generational and is open to anyone 11 years of age and older. If you have any questions please contact Rev. Dr. Jonathan Webster by email: jonathanwebsterbcc@gmail.com or text/call 434-774-8494.



Calling All Disciple Women/CWF Circles:

The CWF/DW Circle at Perseverance Christian Church will be leading a workshop on giving at this year's Virginia Disciple Women's annual retreat in Lynchburg, October 6 - 8, 2023. As you know, our respective circles have a history of giving locally as well as giving beyond the local community. Would you be so kind as to send a short summary for the ways in which your circle(s) presently give and the ways in which you raise funds to support your ministries. Summaries can be emailed to perseverancechurch@gmail.com or mailed to Perseverance Christian Church, PO Box 157, Dundas, VA 23938. Please include the name of your circle(s) and the name of your church. The information received will be compiled and distributed in the workshop. The deadline for submission is September 20, 2023. Thank you for helping us make our workshop informative.



JESUS



FAITH



HOPE

REGISTER NOW!!

2023 DWM WOMEN'S RETREAT OCTOBER 6-8, 2023

HILTON GARDEN INN; LYNCHBURG, VA

Questions? CONTACT: Marney Brickhouse

cbrickhouse6@cox.net; 757-880-2545

LOVE



Speaker: Rev. Kelsey Creech

Workshops:

Catina Martin
Donna Webster

Tiffanie Hairston
Jane Hatcher

"Diversity", "The Walk of Love"
"Disciple' Women: Who We Are
& What Holds Us Together"
"Mindful Movement"
"Fall Craft Easy & Fun"

Silent Auction

Talent for Missions

Basket Drawing

To register go to
<https://www.ccinva.org/disciple-women>

THIS IS THE FIRST DAY OF THE REST OF YOUR LIFE
Virginia Disciples Women's Ministry (VDWM)
2023 Fall Retreat October 6-8
Hilton Garden Inn, 4025 Wards Road, Lynchburg, VA

REGISTRATION

Registration Deadline August 31, 2023

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

Phone (Cell) _____ (Home) _____

Email _____ Home Church _____

Registration Fee: \$155.00

includes all programs, 3 Saturday meals, Sunday breakfast

Dietary restrictions _____

NOTE: Your registration fee provides a significant conference room discount.

*Please make checks payable to & mail check & registration form directly to:
Christian Church in Virginia; 1290 Enterprise Dr; Lynchburg, VA 24502-5744*

Hotel Reservations must be made on your own.

Hotel Discounted Rate Deadline: September 6, 2023

The VDWM rate: \$151/night, including all taxes.

Phone Reservations-Call: 434-239-3006 (front desk)

Use group code VDW or Virginia Disciples Woman's Retreat for discounted rate

Book Online-use the following link to get the discounted rate:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=LYHLVGI&groupCode=VDW&arrivaldate=2023-10-06&departuredate=2023-10-08&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT>

Please let the hotel know of any mobility challenges that may require attention.

~see over for hotel amenities & driving directions

If Your DWM Group would like to donate a basket of goodies for our raffle and/or have any questions, please contact "Basket" Chairman Linda Hutchens at 757-912-6953 or "Retreat" Chairman Marney Brickhouse at 757-880-2545.

- Each room is equipped with a microwave, a refrigerator, Keurig® coffee maker, hair dryer, iron and ironing board.
- Wireless and High Speed Internet are complimentary in every room.
- Enjoy the hotel's indoor heated pool with spa and state-of-the-art fitness center featuring Precor® fitness equipment
- 24-hour complimentary access to our business center which includes copies, faxes and the use of two PC terminals for our registered guests
- The Garden Grill and Bar® offers sumptuous dining and features upscale American cuisine. It is open daily for breakfast and dinner.
- 24-hour Pavilion Pantry® convenience mart.

Driving Directions

Driving South US-29 BUS S/Lynchburg Expressway:

- 1) Take Left Hand Exit for US-29 BUS S/Wards Road (Signs for Danville)
- 2) Stay Right at the fork, continue on Wards Road
- 3) Drive 1.3 miles and turn left at Aspen Dental
- 4) Follow service road .02 miles to HGI entrance on left

Driving North on US-29:

- 1) After passing the entrance of Lynchburg Regional Airport turn right after 2nd light
- 2) Travel .02 miles past Aspen Dental to HGI entrance

Driving East on RT 460:

- 1) Take Exit for US-29 BUS N ramp to Lynchburg
- 2) Travel .04 miles turn right at Aspen Dental
- 3) Follow service road .02 miles to HGI entrance on left

Driving West on RT 460:

- 1) After Passing Liberty University take exit for US-29 BUS N
- 2) Stay in right hand lane and make an immediate right at Aspen Dental
- 3) Follow service road .02 miles to HGI entrance on left

Loving Our Neighbors

Update on the International Ministry at Ashland Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Imagine having to leave all your friends, family and the only country you have ever known and come to a foreign land where you don't speak the language, have no money, don't know anyone and only have the clothes on your back. There are more and more refugees finding themselves in this situation that come to the United States lost, alone and scared. This provides us with the unique opportunity to show love to our neighbors in so many ways even when we can't speak their language. We have taken this to heart at Ashland Christian Church (DOC) in Ashland, VA. Last year we partnered with First Baptist Church, Ashland and undertook the mission of helping the refugee and international community. We started an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESL) class and at first it was intimidating for us as volunteers to put ourselves out there but then we realized that the refugee families are a lot more intimidated than we are and we all worked together to ensure that they felt comfortable to get in our cars and come with us to our church to learn English. Almost immediately friendships began to form, and connections were made especially when we learned that some of their kids were in the same school as our kids. We began with a simple English conversation class which turned into the springboard where many friendships were made.

During one of the classes, one of the students asked us why people are putting pumpkins and skeletons on the front porch, and we realized that we need to include a discussion about Halloween and other holidays in our class. This led to us throwing a Thanksgiving party at Ashland Christian Church with our new Afghan and Hispanic friends. It was a great experience where we literally were able to break bread together and share some of their food as well.

The day before the Thanksgiving feast one of the students told us that she didn't have clothes to wear. Within 24 hours of asking area neighborhoods and friends for donations, we had a roomful of clothes to give away. When the families came for the feast, we invited one family at a time to pick whatever clothes they wanted. This led to the birth of our Disciples Depot. Now once a month we open the church doors to the refugee and international community to come and get clothes, toys, and a new item each month. This has truly been the best way to engage the local community to help the refugees in need. Each month we feature a new item (soap, shampoo, diapers, etc.) and ask area neighborhoods and churches to donate these items as well as gently used clothes, toys, and household items. The response has been phenomenal! There are a lot of people wanting to help but they just don't know exactly how. We were able to provide them with that opportunity. In order to make sure the refugee community was aware of our event we advertised to social services and resettlement organizations as well as asking our ESL students to spread the word. A key detail was that we made sure to advertise our flier in English, Spanish, and Dari, the language they speak in Afghanistan. This was done using google translate but it makes all the difference in the world when people see a flier in their own language. It helps them know that they are truly welcome!

We followed up with a Christmas party where we showered our new friends with gifts provided by an online angel tree that we created for both churches and the community to participate in. It was a beautiful celebration where one of the Afghan dads came up to us and said, "We have been in this country for several months and have had many struggles but thank you for finally putting back the smile on my child's face." During Christmas time we also decided this was a great time to take our ESL students out into the community for a practical English class, so we headed to our first field trip to Target. Through some donations at the church and donations from Target, the students, especially the moms, were able to finally be able to buy some items for their kids from an American store.

Loving our Neighbors (continued)

By March, the ESL families were asking when the next big get together will be. We decided to have a big party for them for the Persian New Year. It was a wonderful celebration where these families were able to forget about their worries for a few hours and dance and break bread with their American friends. They were so excited to share their food with us but knowing that they are all on food stamps we didn't want them to be out of supplies so we gifted them with large bags of rice and platters of fruit. It was such a joyous experience to be able to share their food and culture.

To be able to support a newcomer and share not only in their joys but in their struggles as well is the best way to "love thy neighbor as thyself." They especially feel so supported when we go with them out and about in the community. Knowing they can rely on their church friends to come with them to the store allows them the freedom to venture out of their comfort zone and start becoming a part of the American society. The field trip aspect of our English class has continued with trips to the local library, strawberry picking, and most recently the science museum. Not only do these trips give our English class students a chance to practice what they learn but it also allows an opportunity for their kids to meet and spend time with the church volunteers and get to see a lot of different places that they may otherwise not see.

The love and gratitude given by these families back to our volunteers was something we never anticipated when we first embarked on this journey of helping refugees. Our community is now much stronger because of these bridges we have built. Just recently we were able to sponsor a documentary Anahita at our local theater. This is a story of an Afghan mom and how she escaped and came to America with her children. Films such as this help inspire others to join in the ministry as well. Several other churches have now come to offer their assistance as well and it is in working together that we can truly serve as a beacon of light for all.

As we have gotten to know each family, they each have needs that we are able to help address. Some have such limited knowledge of English that they aren't able to read letters they receive to renew their food stamps, for example. With help from church volunteers, we are able to get that straightened out, so they are able to receive money to feed themselves. We have taken several members of our English class families to job interviews and have been able to help some of the younger generation enroll in college. All of these are necessary steps to help assist these families with so they can eventually attain the goal of self-sufficiency. Though the road is long and arduous, some of the support we have received from the Regional Disciples of Christ church has allowed us to help in many ways including to help a family pay rent when their only breadwinner had to undergo surgery or help a single refugee mom with her bills. We have also been able to help 2 families obtain cars, which is critical in getting them to work.

Through generous donations and grant funding we are able to help more and more families rebuild their lives in their new country- the land of freedom and opportunity- and the best part is we are able to truly serve as the hands and feet of God and show love to our neighbors. We hope you will also be encouraged to do whatever you can in your own areas to help refugees and the international community as well!

"For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Matthew 25:35

Two Churches Seeking Bivocational Pastor:

Zion Christian Church

While we are a small congregation, we are very engaged in loving and lifting our community. We are seeking a pastor that will deliver scripture-based sermons that address the issues in today's lives and challenge us to be God's people in all areas of our lives. We need pastor to care for our congregation. We desire a pastor to partner with us to guide, teach and assist each of us in growing our church, in person and virtually through livestream, and in attracting young families and children. We love music, in our worship and in our lives, we are open and accepting of people and change and we are very active in our community.



Saumsville Christian Church

Quotes from the Congregation:

"I have been going to Saumsville Christian Church since I was 10 weeks old and I am now 95. Some of my family helped build the church and laid the foundation of my Christian life. I am a very active member in many ways. I was appointed as one of the first women elders. Now one of my favorite things is helping with Meals-on-Wheels. My life will always be "The Saumsville Christian Church." - Rebecca Fuller

"Being a member of Saumsville Christian Church is like coming home to a warm meal on Sunday. Someone always greets you with a hello, a smile, but most of all the love is over-whelming. I have raised both my kids here, sat next to my mother in the same pew for 51 years. Everyone is missed when they are not home on Sunday for dinner. This is Home to me." - Melissa Rice



Bill Spangler-Dunning, Regional Minister / bsdinvirginia@gmail.com
Mary Anstice, Administrative Assistant / ccinvaoffice@gmail.com
Susan Gordon, Secretary / ccinva_sg@hotmail.com

Subscribe to VA Christian Here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/10gtChGiRvfJBoNJK4SkKS65-PpNFpzxU7tJqTiAUgO4/edit>

